

2, April 2010



President Leif Svanstrom
Chair
Division of Social Medicine and
WHO Collaborating Center on
Community Society Promotion
Department of Public Health Science
Karolinska Institute

Dear Professor Leif Svanstrom,

On behalf of the City of Yokohama, I am pleased to inform you that Sakae Ward, City of Yokohama has started safety promotion in March based on the Safe Community concept.

Yokohama, with a total population of 3,670,000 people, ranks as the second largest city in Japan after Tokyo, and is comprised of 18 wards. Sakae Ward, located in the southernmost area of Yokohama adjoining Kamakura City, is the second smallest ward in Yokohama with a population of 125,000 people. With many trees and fields, it is a calm area. However, a river running through the center of the ward often overflows, and local people have joined the efforts for measures to prevent flooding. At the same time, they are active in crime prevention, and the crime rate in Sakae Ward is the lowest in Yokohama. In a survey of the citizens' image of the ward, 'helping each other in the neighborhood' is at the top of the list of reasons they are proud of their ward, and its utmost problem is listed as the 'inconvenience of the traffic network'. On the other hand, regarding causes of death, the ratio of deaths due to injuries in Sakae Ward cannot be said to be low among the wards, and the figures by age group turned out to be the same as the average of the city as a whole.

Sakae Ward is becoming an aging society with a declining birth rate at a relatively quick pace among the wards of Yokohama, and we need to take drastic measures to deal with the problem. We recognized that one of these measures would be to promote the building of a Safe Community, and the start of Safe Community activities was included in the Ward Administration Management Policy announced last June. Furthermore, the "Safe Community: Sakae Ward" project was included in the Community Planning Action Plan announced this February, and we have moved forward with full-fledged preparations since then.

Based on a local officer's proposal: "Let's make Yokohama a Safe Community City", the City of Yokohama has started its own Safe Community project in 2005, and we have been investing our efforts into introducing and promoting a Safe Community ever since. This fiscal year, the fifth year of the project, it was decided that Sakae Ward would aim to achieve a Safe Community designation as a model case within the City of Yokohama, and we have just begun our preparations to do so.

Therefore, it would be an honor if you would allow us to become a community under the Safe Communities Designation in consideration of our efforts and enthusiasm for safety promotion. We hope for and would appreciate your guidance and support in leading us to become a member of the SC network in the future.

Sincerely,

光田清隆



Kiyotaka Mitsuda
Director General of Sakae Ward