

Preparing Guidelines for Houses for Child Rearing

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1. Introduction

In the Basic Housing Plan (Nationwide), approved by the Cabinet on March 28, 2016, “Realizing a housing environment where the young generation or child-rearing families who wish to marry and have children feel assured” was stipulated as Target 1. In an interim report of the safe housing policy research conducted by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), published on April 17, 2015, “Setting a guideline for the promotion and diffusion of houses where people can feel assured and raise children” was designated as one of the priority measures that should be taken.

In response, research was conducted to identify what should be taken into consideration when designing a house that should be suitable for child rearing (hereinafter called the “houses for child rearing”) in FY2016. The levels of the privately designed houses for child rearing and consumer needs for such houses were investigated. Based on the result and from the standpoint of technical and social validity, draft guidelines for the houses for child rearing were prepared.

2. Outline of the Draft Guidelines for Houses for Child Rearing

As shown in Table 1, 50 items that need to be taken into consideration are extracted and categorized from four points of view in the draft guidelines. For each item, the necessity, the age of the child who needs the arrangement (categorized into infant, early or late childhood, children in early or late elementary school years and junior high school student), and concrete ideas of improvement and its level are stipulated (Table 2).

The types of the dwelling (owned house, owned apartment house, or rented apartment house), newly built or existing, and the degree of the importance of the item (essential or preferable) are also clearly specified.

3. Reflection of Future Achievement

Guidelines are to be drawn up based on this proposal and planned to be published by the Housing Bureau. A new support system for the houses for child rearing will be established based on the guidelines.

Table 1: Items that need to be taken into consideration and are specified in the draft guidelines for the houses for child rearing

Viewpoint	Items that need to be taken into consideration	Applicable space*
1. Safety of children and women in pregnancy	(1) Prevention of accidents by collisions	Exclusive/Shared
	(2) Prevention of accidents by falling	Exclusive/Shared
	(3) Prevention of accidents by dropping	Exclusive/Shared
	(4) Preventing fingers from getting caught in a door/window	Exclusive
	(5) Prevention of intrusion or being locked in dangerous spaces	Exclusive/Shared
	(6) Prevention of electric shock and burns	Exclusive
	(7) Arrangement of the rooms that help parents watch children.	Exclusive
	(8) Prevention of intrusion by suspicious individuals	Exclusive/Shared
	(9) Prevention of danger caused by a falling object	Shared/Site
	(10) Prevention of motor accidents on the site	Site
	(11) Located in the area where road safety is assured	Living environment
	(12) Located in the area where crime is effectively prevented	Living environment
	(13) Safety on an evacuation route at the time of an earthquake	Exclusive/Shared
	(14) Preparation for life as an evacuee after a disaster	Shared/Site
	(15) Safety of the location against a natural disaster	Living environment
2. Healthy growth of children	(16) Use of interior material taking health into consideration	Exclusive
	(17) Sunlight and ventilation secured	Exclusive
	(18) Kitchen is large enough and easy to use	Exclusive
	(19) Living room is large enough and easy to use	Exclusive
	(20) Bathroom is large enough and easy to use	Exclusive
	(21) Bedroom is large enough	Exclusive
	(22) Toilet is large enough and easy to use	Exclusive
	(23) Storage and equipment that help children become independent	Exclusive
	(24) Environment where children can live close to soil and water	Site/Shared
	(25) Appropriate private rooms prepared, keeping pace with the growth of children	Exclusive
	(26) Environment where parents and children can have interaction easily	Shared/Living environment
	(27) Environment where children can have interaction with people of various generation in the community	Living environment
	(28) Environment where children can have interaction with their grand parents	Exclusive/Shared
	(29) Satisfactory consultation services for child rearing provided in the region	Service
	(30) Satisfactory child care services provided in the region	Service
3. Comfortable environment for child rearing	(31) Convenience of day nursery and childcare facilities	Living environment
	(32) Convenience of kindergarten and child education facilities	Living environment
	(33) Proximity to elementary and junior high schools	Living environment
	(34) No facilities that are inappropriate from the viewpoint of education	Living environment
	(35) Convenience of parks where children can play	Living environment
	(36) High noise barrier performance	Exclusive
	(37) Community is broad-minded about noise from daily life	Living environment
	(38) Sufficient and easy-to-use storage space	Exclusive
	(39) Sufficient area for parking bicycles	Site
	(40) Arrangement of the rooms that takes into consideration the line of flow of housekeeping chores	Exclusive
4. Comfortable life of parents	(41) Easy to clean	Exclusive
	(42) Able to hang the laundry on a rainy day	Exclusive
	(43) Easy to move with a baby buggy	Shared/Site
	(44) Easy to go out by car with children	Site
	(45) Easy access to public transportation	Living environment
	(46) Proximity to medical institutions	Living environment
	(47) Convenience of shopping food and daily necessities	Living environment
	(48) Space for relaxation secured for husband and wife	Exclusive
	(49) Convenience of commuting	Living environment
	(50) Environment where parents can have interaction with friends and acquaintances	Living environment

* “Exclusive” means space for exclusive use (house and resident area of an apartment building).
“Shared” means shared areas of an apartment building. Living environment includes the activities and communities of local residents as well as the site of the facility.

Table 2: Sample of the Items with Concrete Information (summary)

(1) Prevention of accidents by collision

Necessity	- There is a risk of an accident because infants walking while holding on to something and children running around may collide against walls, pillars, and furniture.
Age	Infant and early and late childhood
Concrete improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Chamfer the outside corner of a wall, pillar and built-in furniture. ii) Consider the arrangement of rooms to avoid making an outside corner of a wall. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use sliding doors. Use a door stop for a hinged door. iii) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use an alcove in front of a shared corridor to avoid a front door from protruding into a corridor. iv)