

JAPAN SCHOOL NEWS

Caroline Pover, Inc.

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MONTHLY NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN JAPAN

<http://www.japanschoolnews.com>



J's International School students show off their creative talents. J's INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Works of art from J's International School students

J's International School students have been exploring different styles of art throughout history, and finding out that, as their teacher explained, "there is no such thing as right and wrong in art."

Using popsicle sticks and a variety of paints, the children experimented with mixing colours and using careful strokes in their painting. With time, the children's movements became bigger and bolder, and beautiful images formed. They were very proud to present these paintings to their parents who could not help but "ooh and ahh" over the pictures.

The activity was topped off with a visit to the National Art Exhibition where they were able to see some of the real paintings they had read about.

— MANA ORTIZ

Gap year programs for Japan from Rustic Pathways

Teen Travel Company Rustic Pathways has completed a successful summer season. With students returning to their home countries to prepare for a new school year of high school or college, Rustic Pathways wanted to thank all the participants from international schools in Japan. A special thanks to Hokkaido International School, who helped kick off the 2011 summer season with a group visit to participate in community service activities at the Ricefields Base in Udon Thani, Thailand.

Rustic Pathways continues to run gap year programs for both individual students and groups throughout the year. Rustic Pathways has also announced that they will be opening programs in Japan next year. "Pat's Happy Holidays" will extend its scope to include Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Macau. This trip has been quite popular and this year visited Singapore, Phuket, Bangkok, and Chiang Mai.

Rustic Pathways and the Rustic Pathways Foundation are teaming up with the ministries

of education in Iwate and Miyagi prefectures to provide travel opportunities and cultural exchanges between Japanese students affected by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami, and Rustic Pathways' students.

A very special program that has just been created for summer 2012 is "Bridge to Japan — A Friendship Tour." The tuition paid by each Rustic Pathways student will enable one Japanese student to come along on this cultural adventure. Students will meet at the Rustic Pathways Ricefields Base in Thailand and embark on a journey through temples and orphanages, experiencing Thai culture and reaching out to local communities. The final days of the tour will end in Japan with a donation and opportunities to volunteer in devastated Japanese communities, as well as a celebration of the new friendship.

For more information about Rustic Pathways' programs, see <http://www.rusticpathways.com>. — GEORGE WEID



Students from Hokkaido International School, among other schools, during this summer's Rustic Pathways program in Thailand. RUSTIC PATHWAYS

Sign language at PAL

PAL International School is now teaching American Sign Language as an additional communication tool for students to use with teachers and friends. Sign language has been found to be helpful for young children who are learning two or more languages.

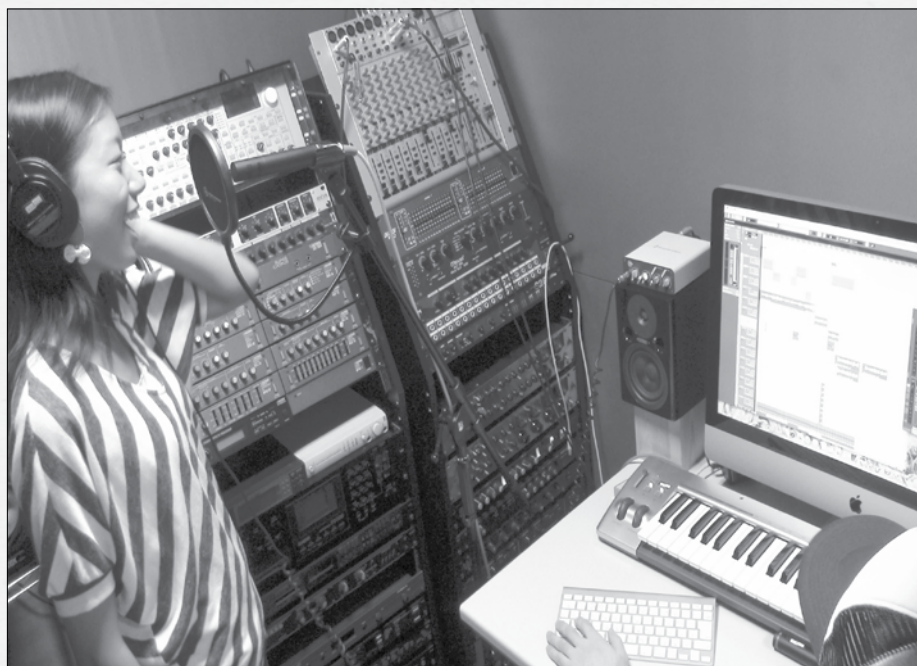
PAL starts with teaching simple but often-used words such as "please," "thank you," and "sorry," and then moves on to more difficult words or

songs. Younger students find it easy to express their needs, and older students can show their feelings even if they don't want to speak.

PAL's summer intensive program lasted for nine weeks this year, with over 850 attendees. The new school year started on August 25, and sees the introduction of a new tuition system, which reduces fees by about 20%. For more information, email info@pal-school.com. — MAKIKO KOIDE



18-month-old Kai started using sign language when he was seven months old. PAL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



A student at LIVEJAM music school's studio using the state-of-the-art recording facilities — now available to the general public. KEN TAKAGI

LIVEJAM music school launches recording service

LIVEJAM, the music school for teenagers, recently launched a recording service so that anyone who has ever wanted to record themselves singing, or produce a demo tape for their band, can now do so.

LIVEJAM is offering musicians a chance to record themselves and their band live in a professional quality rehearsal studio. Musicians can also take advantage of the option to record each instrument separately, known as multi-track recording, then later mix and edit the recording. This is quite an intense experience — six microphones are used to record the drums alone!

LIVEJAM also offers many other fun ways to get involved in recording activities. Musicians and singers can take instrumental or karaoke versions of their favourite songs and record themselves singing using music composition software (such as ProTools or GarageBand). After that, background

vocals and other instruments can be added to enhance the recording.

After the recording is finished, the editing and mixing begins. Editing options are unlimited, but typically a compressor is used to smooth out the dynamics of the voice and to blend it in with the instrumental background. Also, effects such as auto-tune can be added to the voice to make it sound like some of the current pop stars. When the mixing and mastering of the song is completed, musicians can produce a CD, or even record a video and produce a music video.

This service is available to the general public, and is not restricted to LIVEJAM students only. Interested parties may also like to find out about the school's music composition/digital music course and learn more about recording. See <http://www.livejam.co.jp/english> for more details. — KEN TAKAGI

Chateau des Bambini's musical summer camp

Summer camp at Chateau des Bambini was extended until the end of August. Aside from water play, the school also focused on dramatic play, and music and movement exploration.

The children had a great time playing different musical instruments such as the recorder, flute, triangle, drums, ukulele, maracas, xylophone, guitar, and piano. They sang, danced, and expressed their feelings as they played each instrument.

A volunteer high school student also visited and played the trumpet. The children were very happy and excited to hear their favourite songs: "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" and "Skip to My Lou."

Chateau des Bambini, formerly known as Rainbow International Montessori School, was

established in 1993. Enrolment for the autumn semester is still open. Interested parents are invited to contact the school. See <http://www.montessori-rainbow.com>. — MARIA VALDEZ



Volunteer Stephanie Valdez from the Christian Academy in Japan, playing the trumpet during Chateau des Bambini's summer camp. MARIA VALDEZ

e-Learning at Aoba

The Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) e-Learning High School is up and running. Underway with a small group of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12, the program offers opportunities for learners to tailor their own program through comprehensive course selection and flexible scheduling.

A-JIS offers over one hundred online and classroom-based courses for its high school students, with additional course options coming soon. For a more detailed overview of the program and a complete listing of all A-JIS high school courses, please visit the school website at <http://www.aobaonline.jp>. — ROYCE JACOBS

New IS open days

New International School's orientation and seminar schedule for the year is now posted at <http://newis.ed.jp>. Members of the public are welcome, regardless of any intention to enrol their child(ren) in the school. For further information or to make a reservation, please call 03-3980-1057.

New student council members elected at BST

The Student School Councils at the British School in Tokyo play an important role in school life, and have made considerable charitable donations over the last few months.

At the start of each year, two students from each class — Year 1 to Year 11 — are elected by other pupils and are required to attend monthly meetings and publish agendas. The councils discuss issues raised by students or by teachers, approve action plans, and then send recommendations to the school Senior Leadership Team for consideration and action.

Past councils have been responsible for creating a recycling program, organizing school discos, and choosing a school charity to support. In the last few months, the councils have worked really hard to raise money for charities both at home and overseas. The Shibuya Primary council had a *senbei* snack sale and raised over ¥20,000 for their chosen charity, ARK, which has been rescuing pets from the region affected by the March 11 earthquake. The Secondary Student Council raised a fantastic ¥137,815 for the Tabitha Foundation, which manages house-building projects in Cambodia.

The new student councils will be elected in September and are open to all students. The school is looking forward to hearing about what new and exciting projects they will get involved with this year.

The British School in Tokyo is a co-educational international school providing early learning to A level education. The school follows the English National Curriculum. For more information, please see <http://www.bst.ac.jp>. — NANCY JENKINS

Back to school at MIS

Children return to Makuhari International School (MIS) on August 30. The school is expecting a few student additions as well as four new teaching staff who are due to start work.

While the children are away, staff have been giving the whole school a thorough cleaning, as well as carefully tending the elementary field extension that will soon be ready for children to play on.

Staff are back in school on August 29 for a day of training — this year by the British Council — focusing on the use of teaching strategies within class that will promote better understanding of the curriculum for children with different learning styles.

The term ahead is going to be a busy one. April 2012 enrolment application details will soon be published on the school website, information sessions for prospective families will be organized, and the school's third sports day will be held on October 1. There will also be a music recital this term. — PAUL ROGERS

ASIJ loves to learn!

Even before the first day of classes, learning had started at The American School in Japan. While Japanese students (including some from Ishinomaki in Tohoku) at the Summer Day Camp enjoyed a variety of activities, the school's leadership team was involved in an intensive two-day workshop with leading educationalist Robert Garmston. "For a school, learning should be the focus at all levels, from students to parents and faculty," says Head of School Ed Ladd. "These professional learning opportunities are a valuable way that we can continue to grow as educators."

Garmston is a world-renowned consultant and co-developer of the cognitive coaching model and co-founder of the Institute for Intelligent Behaviour with Dr. Arthur Costa. Garmston, who is Professor Emeritus of Educational Administration at California State University, specializes in leadership, learning, and personal and organizational development and is the author of the seminal book *The Adaptive School*. During the workshops with the ASIJ administrators, faculty, and counsellors, Garmston outlined various techniques involved in cognitive coaching.

For more information about The American School in Japan, see <http://community.asij.ac.jp> — MATT WILCE



ASIJ staff getting ready for the new term. ASIJ

Katoh Kindergarten's farewell to their old building

On July 9, Katoh Kindergarten bid farewell to their 44-year-old building in order to make way for the new kindergarten building that is currently under construction.

The day began with a ceremony, which included a special farewell song and a few words from Dr. Masahide Katoh, Katoh Gakuen's president. Afterward, students and their families were invited inside to write messages of thanks on the walls and floors of the building. There was also a "Keyaki Corner" where students drew pictures on memorial plaques made from the keyaki tree that was a part of the kindergarten's playground.

In addition, there was a slide show that displayed plans for the new building, a display filled with pictures of former teachers and students from over the years, and booths where one could enjoy some popcorn or cool off with a refreshing shaved-ice treat.

What could have been a melancholy day was, in actuality, one of celebration and remembrance. Many thanks go to the event's committee, school staff, and parent volunteers from the PTA for



Kindergarten students at Katoh creatively said goodbye to their old school building. KIMBERLY GORE

organizing such a wonderful farewell.

For the remainder of this school year, Katoh Kindergarten will be held in a temporary building on school grounds. Everyone is eagerly watching, though, as the new building takes shape, to be filled with new memories in the years to come.

Katoh Kindergarten is located in Numazu, Shizuoka and is part of Katoh Gakuen. — KIMBERLY GORE

Summerhill staff excited about the new term ahead



Staff at Summerhill International School welcome old and new students at the start of term. SUMMERHILL

The teachers and students of Summerhill International School are excited about getting the autumn term under way, with lots of new improvements having been made to the school.

There is a new outdoor play area for the youngest students to enjoy, providing them with yet another place to explore with their classmates. The school library has also been expanded and will be the location of a weekly after-school reading time open to all children under the age of eight and their parents.

In addition to the physical changes on campus, the teachers are preparing for the school's annual open house. This year's open house will take place on September 9. The staff will explain what can be expected throughout the school year, and give current and prospective parents the opportunity to see what makes Summerhill International School so special.

For information about the reading club or the open house please send an email to jeff@summerhill.jp. Also see Summerhill's website at <http://www.summerhill.jp> — JEFF KRATZ

Reflecting on the early days at Hitokoe Yokohama IS



The HYIS kids and teachers cool off from the summer heat with a lively group dance and a delectable treat of Halo Halo. HITOKOE YOKOHAMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Staff and students at the newly established HYIS have been reflecting upon a successful start to their first school year. Spring term events and the "Summer Extravaganza" saw the children absorbed in science and maths discoveries as they explored water, bubbles, summer fruits, plants, transportation, edible volcanoes, insects, treasure hunting, and the sun and the planets.

HYIS parents and their children participated in the Sports Festival, with organized games and endless cheering. The children gave their best as they danced to the beat of the Cha Cha Slide Dance, while welcoming their parents to join in.

Also during the first term, students performed "The Little Red Hen" while learning about the importance of helping others. The kindergartners continue along this theme as they raise money for the Tohoku disaster relief and recovery program — such activities are integral to the HYIS curriculum.

There was further involvement in the performance arts, with students learning "Old McDonald had a Farm" on steel drums, a piano rendition of "Fishing," and "Under the Sea" body percussion; just a few of the assembly performances

that the HYIS community enjoyed as the children developed their self-confidence and skills.

The school year has also so far included food fun, water play, EcoArts and crafts, and vegetable harvesting. There have been field trips to Zoorasia, the Kids' Planetarium, and Miracle Dinosaur World, all of which were incredibly fun as well as being educational. On site, the children were engaged in interactive whiteboard puzzles and memory games; playing in the schoolyard's mist, sand pits, and park; and dancing at the *bon odor*.

After four weeks of the exciting HYIS summer school program, everyone is looking forward to the cooler autumn and winter months, and plenty more memorable activities. There will be an array of thematic-based child-centred activities and jaunty events starting with Grandparents' Day through to winter revel. HYIS activities are always designed with the school's motto in mind: "Learning is a path cultivated with pride, uniqueness, and discovery."

Fall term applications are being accepted. Email contact@hyis.org or see <http://www.hyis.org>. — PATRICIA ALDANA

Lights, Camera, Action! Filmmaking 101 at Aichi

Over the course of one week, twenty students at the Aichi International School summer program came together to produce a series of independent films and one collaborative project. With only five days to complete the course, they had to quickly work toward this ambitious goal.

It was a hands-on learning experience and the students were quick to familiarize themselves with the equipment and processes from day one. From storyboarding to setting up shots and editing film in front of a green screen, it truly was a crash course in filmmaking where the class came together to produce an outstanding body of work and a wonderful short film.

The aim was for this session to be project-based, with a strong focus on integrating technology into the program. Staff with backgrounds in computers and technology were excited to incorporate computers, video equipment, smart phones, and even an iPad into a week's worth of lessons. Guidance was provided on how to use the equipment, but once the students were comfortable they were free to work on their own. The students were amazed by what they were able to produce by themselves.

By the end of the first day, the students had already established a direction they wanted to take and had come up with some very innovative approaches to telling a story through a medium they had never explored before. Each morning, students set out the goals for that day, with everybody having a clear role in the project. The students worked in teams but were free to move around and participate in every aspect of the film production. They met throughout the day to discuss the progress being made and the challenges facing everyone. Then everybody gathered together to watch the footage that had been shot that day, and to discuss how shots could be incorporated or how they might be approached differently. Students encouraged one another and offered each other support and assistance throughout the week. It truly was a collaborative effort. — LORIER REYGEL

Gymboree's event for earthquake relief

Gymboree raised over US\$1,500 for the Kids Earth Fund at their "Circle of Friends" event on July 31.

During the event, participants enjoyed a puppet show with live background music, a live concert of Gymboree songs, refreshments, and a bazaar offering children's clothing and toys. Families also had the chance to win wonderful raffle prizes from sponsors, which included coupons for facials, massages, and restaurant meals. All proceeds from the event (entrance fee, bazaar sales, cash donations, etc.) went to the Kids Earth Fund in order to help children affected by the March 11 earthquake.

After the earthquake and tsunami, the Kids Earth Fund visited Iwate, Fukushima, and Miyagi prefectures to deliver relief supplies and hold special art workshops for children. They have also used donations to purchase electric pianos to be delivered to elementary and junior high schools in Miyagi prefecture to help restart their music programs.

Gymboree Play & Music is the global leader in classes for children from 0–5 years old. Free trials are offered daily at both locations. For more information, see <http://www.gymboree.jp>. — NICOLE YAMADA



Gymboree staff and students at their recent event to raise money for the Kids Earth Fund. GYMBOREE