

Other security measures

In many instances, local boards of education have sent e-mails to registered parents with information regarding prowlers. Some school administrators have made security maps showing where prowlers have been reported in their school zones. Some schools distributed Integrated Circuit tags which show electronically show childrens' whereabouts to parents. Other schools have posted announcements such as, Children are now on their way home from school to call on local residents to watch out for them. One teacher said, "Our judgement of people is getting sharper and colder. We report to the police as soon as we see a suspicious person. It seems that we have fanned our fear." Another teacher explained a friend's experience of escalated security measures, while pondering

at a park at night, my acquaintance was reported to the police."

Our research findings revealed that teachers agreed that loitering and playing on the way home from school is necessary for a child's personal growth. Children are supervised most of the day, at school by teachers and by parents at home. "We are concerned they are always supervised and have no free or alone time - time free from the eyes of parents and school staff. On one hand, we encourage children to be kind to others while simultaneously teaching them to be suspicious of others. It is distressful for us as teachers to make such contradictory statements."

Evicting the Homeless is not the Solution

Interview with Suzuko Yasue

Since the 1990s, the homeless have been forced to move out from train stations and parks because it has been considered that they have illegally occupied these public places. With the increasing presence of homeless in public places, there have been claims that they make public places and parks unsafe for walking and unattractive for businesses and the general public. Since 95% of the homeless are single males, some of them drink a lot or occasionally have flights. These facts do not mean that the crime rate is very high among the homeless; however, it is often said that areas where the homeless live are unsafe. It is even rumored that the homeless drag women into their tents to rape them.

On the other hand, the homeless always fear being attacked by civilians, who often throw cigarettes and empty cans at the homeless. It is not certain if the civilians (office workers)

feel relaxed and free when they are off duty, but these incidents of "bullying the weak" tend to happen on weekends. Faced with the unwelcoming attitude of civilians, there are many homeless people who are stressed out and become depressed.

As the number of the homeless increases, we fall into an easy solution of forbidding living on the street, but this is wrong. Moreover, measures that treat the homeless as dubious characters are very cruel. Although they are poor, the homeless take pride in working hard to earn money. The issue with the homeless is not about poverty. The important measure we need to come up is for drawing the homeless back into the circle of society as functioning members while we let them choose the way they would like to lead their lives.

Suzuko Yasue, Shinjuku Homeless Shien Kiko