

Make Every Day Women's Day — Start with Equal Pay, Better Workplace Policies

3月8日は国際女性デーです。この日は、女性への感謝を伝えるだけでなく、働き方や生活について考える機会でもあります。日本では、男女の賃金の差や育児の負担など、さまざまな課題が指摘されています。よりよい社会にするために、どのようなことが必要だと思いますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

March 8 is International Women's Day, as designated by the United Nations. The UN first proposed it in 1975, International Women's Year, and it was passed by the UN General Assembly in 1977.

In Italy, it is customary for men to give women mimosa flowers as a token of their gratitude. So, in that nation, it is also popularly called "Mimosa Day."

The appearance of countless yellow mimosa flowers heralds the arrival of spring. With the implied meanings of "gratitude," "true love," and "friendship" conveyed by these flowers in mind, why not take this opportunity to express the feelings you experience every day for the women in your life? The list should include your grandmother, mother, wife, other family members, and your female friends.

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1. Article

Ideally, you could also use this opportunity to think about related roles and relations. For example, how to respect and balance the roles of women — in the home, their physical and mental health, and the ways they work.

It is important to create a society where women can fully demonstrate their individuality and abilities both at home and in the workplace.

To **achieve** that goal, one problem that must be dealt with is the wage gap between men and women. As of 2024, if we assume the wage rate for male workers in Japan was 100%, the corresponding rate for women was just 75.8%.

Admittedly, the gender gap is narrowing. But it is still large compared to other Western countries. The main reason cited is the low **proportion** of women in managerial positions.

In April, the revised Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace will come into effect. Companies with 101 or more employees will be required to disclose the percentage of women in management positions and the wage gap between their male and female employees. Until now, companies have not been required to **disclose** the ratio of managers. And wage gap disclosure was limited to companies with 301 or more employees.

The original Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace came into full force in April 2016. It was scheduled to expire 10 years later, at the end of March 2026. However, its goals had not yet been realized. Therefore, the law was amended and its application extended for an additional 10 years.

Going forward, there needs to be increased **transparency** regarding gender **disparities** in treatment and promotion. Additionally, all of Japan should steadily work to correct them.

Women face specific health challenges, and those must not be forgotten either. The new law requires companies to constantly review their internal systems to ensure they do not hinder continued employment or career development for their female employees.

At home and at work, care and consideration should be afforded to women experiencing menopausal symptoms or physical discomfort due to menstruation. Then, too, they may suffer from gynecological diseases, such as ovarian and uterine disorders. Or they may be undergoing fertility treatment.

"Single parenting," a term used to describe child-rearing performed mainly by the mother, is another point of concern. This can be a contributing factor in the appearance of postpartum depression.

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1. Article

In FY2024, 40.5% of men took childcare leave, exceeding the 40% threshold for the first time. Nevertheless, there is still a startling disparity between male and female employees, as 86.6% of women take childcare leave.

To achieve a better balance between men and women, more men must be encouraged to participate in childcare.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. achieve 達成する

Seiya worked hard to **achieve** his dream of becoming a pilot.

2. proportion 割合

A large **proportion** of the budget is spent on education.

3. disclose 開示する

The company must **disclose** its financial results every year.

4. transparency 透明性

The government promised greater **transparency** in its decisions.

5. disparity 格差

There is a **disparity** in access to clean water in many regions of the world.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is the wage rate for women compared to men in Japan as of 2024?
2. Why is the gender gap still large in Japan?
3. What percentage of men took childcare leave in 2024?
4. How can society better support women in balancing work and family life?
5. How can men be encouraged to participate more in childcare?

4. 国際女性デー 役割や生き方考える日に

3月8日は国連が定めた記念日「国際女性デー」だ。国際婦人年の1975年に国連で提唱され、77年に国連総会で議決された歴史を持つ。

イタリアでは、この日に男性が女性に感謝の気持ちを込めてミモザの花を贈るならわしがあるため、「ミモザの日」としても親しまれている。

無数の黄色い花を咲かせるミモザは、春の訪れを告げることで知られる。花言葉である「感謝」「真実の愛」「友情」などを胸に、祖母や母、妻などの身内や、友人を含め周囲の女性らに日頃の思いを伝えてはどうか。女性の家庭での役割、心身の健康、働き方などについて考える機会にもしたい。

重要なのは、家庭でも職場でも女性の個性と能力が十分に発揮できる社会にすることだ。

そのために改善すべき課題の一つが男女間の賃金格差である。令和6年は男性を100とした場合、女性は75・8だった。その差は縮小傾向にあるが、欧米諸国に比べると大きい。主な要因として挙げられるのは、女性管理職の割合が低いことである。

改正女性活躍推進法が今年4月に施行される。従業員101人以上の企業に対し、管理職に占める女性比率や男女間の賃金格差の公表を義務付ける。これまで管理職比率の公表義務はなく、賃金格差の公表は301人以上の企業に限っていた。

平成28年4月に全面施行された女性活躍推進法の期限は、10年後の令和8年3月末までだった。だが、役割は終えていないとして、法改正で10年間延長された。待遇や登用における男女格差について透明性を高め、着実に是正を図るべきだ。

女性特有の健康面での課題も忘れてはならない。企業は就業継続やキャリア形成の支障にならないよう、社内の仕組みを不断に見直すことが求められよう。家庭でも職場でも、更年期の症状や生理に伴う体調不良、卵巣や子宮をはじめとする婦人科疾患、不妊治療などへの気遣いや配慮がほしい。

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4. 国際女性デー 役割や生き方考える日に

女性に子育てが集中する「ワンオペ育児」は産後うつを招く要因とされる。6年度の男性の育児休業取得率は40・5%となり、初めて4割を超えたが、女性の取得率は86・6%で、男女で開きがある。男性の育児参加をもっと進めたい。



出典：国際女性デー 役割や生き方考える日に
[Japan Forward](#)