

Men's Child Care Leave Exceeds 50% for First Time

日本では、男性が育児休業を取ることが少しずつ当たり前になりつつあります。厚生労働省の調査では、男性の育休取得率が初めて5割を超えました。一方で、大切なのは「取ったかどうか」だけではなく、実際に育児に関わり、家族を支えられる環境が整っているかという点です。あなたは、男女がともに育児に関わりやすい社会にするために、職場にはどのような工夫が必要だと思いますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

The rate of men taking child care leave in Japan rose to 50.9% in fiscal 2025, exceeding 50% for the first time, according to a survey by the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry.

The government had set a target of having 50% of eligible men take child care leave by fiscal 2025.

The rate was up 10.4 percentage points from the previous fiscal year, marking the 13th consecutive year of growth, suggesting that child care leave for men is becoming increasingly established in the workplace.

The concentration of child-rearing responsibilities on women, sometimes described in Japan as "one-operation" child care, is considered a factor contributing to mothers' isolation and postpartum depression.

Continued on next page.

Source: Men's Child Care Leave Exceeds 50% for First Time

Japan Forward

1. Article

The burden has also been cited as a factor that can hinder women's [participation](#) in the workforce, limit their opportunities to increase their income, and discourage them from having children.

The government has expanded the requirement for companies to disclose the rate of male employees taking child care leave, from firms with more than 1,000 employees to those with more than 300.

It has also made it mandatory for employers to individually notify employees of their child care leave options and confirm their intentions when an employee reports a pregnancy or the birth of a child.

These measures, introduced in recent years, appear to have encouraged more men to take leave.

At workplaces with five to 29 employees, the rate rose from 25.1% in fiscal 2024 to 42.9% in fiscal 2025.

The increase at small and midsize companies, where securing replacement workers is generally more difficult than at large firms amid labor shortages, is a positive development.

Making it easier for employees to take child care leave requires workplaces to establish systems in which duties are not concentrated on particular employees but can be shared among several people.

Such systems can also help when employees need to take extended leave because of illness or to care for family members.

Meanwhile, the rate for women was 88.3%. The government has set a target of raising the rate for men to 85% by 2030. A survey of young people conducted by the ministry found that 83.5% of men said they wanted to take child care leave.

At the same time, the survey showed a significant difference in the length of leave taken by men and women.

The most common period of leave among men was one month or more but less than three months, accounting for 30.3%. Among women, the most common period was 12 months or more but less than 18 months, at 31.4%.

This does not mean that men and women need to take exactly the same amount of leave. However, the figures raise concerns that some men may be taking leave in name only, without actually being able to provide the level of child care their families need.

Source: Men's Child Care Leave Exceeds 50% for First Time

Japan Forward

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

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

1. rate 割合

The passing rate on this test is about sixty percent.

2. leave 育児休業

Masato went on leave from work to care for his young daughter.

3. responsibility 責任

Everyone in the family shares responsibility for keeping the house clean.

4. factor 要因

Weather was an important factor in the success of the music festival.

5. participation 参加

Participation in a first aid course is necessary if you want to work here.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why is the Japanese government strongly encouraging new fathers to take child care leave?
2. How much did the rate of men taking child care leave increase from the previous fiscal year?
3. What was the most common period of child care leave among men?
4. Why do you think it is important for workplaces to make it easier for employees to take child care leave?
5. Do you think men and women should take similar amounts of child care leave? Why or why not?

4. 男性育休5割超え 一層の促進と中身充実を

男性の育児休業取得率が令和7年度に50・9%となり、初めて5割を超えた。厚生労働省の雇用均等基本調査で分かった。

前年度比で10・4ポイント増えた。上昇は13年連続である。政府が掲げてきた「令和7年までに50%」という目標に達した。

男性の育休が定着しつつあることを示しており、望ましい傾向だ。父親として仕事だけでなく育児も担い、家族を支える責任を果たすことは重要である。一層の広がりを期待したい。

子育ての負担が女性に集中する「ワンオペ育児」は、母親の孤立や産後うつを招く要因とされる。女性の社会進出と収入増を妨げ、出産意欲を低下させるとの指摘もある。夫婦で育児を分担し、安心して子供を産み育てられる環境を整えることが肝要だ。

政府は、男性の育休取得率の公表義務対象を従業員1千人超の企業から300人超に拡大したほか、育休取得の意向確認を事業主に義務付けた。近年の取り組みが、男性の育休取得を後押ししたといえる。

従業員5～29人の事業所では、6年度の25・1%から42・9%に伸びた。人手不足で代替要員の確保が大企業に比べ難しい中小企業で、取得率が上昇したことは前進である。

育休を取りやすくするには、業務を特定の社員に集中させず、複数の社員で担える体制づくりが欠かせない。こうした職場への転換は、病気や介護などで社員が長期にわたり職場を離れる場合にも役立つ。

一方で、女性の取得率は88・3%だった。政府は12年に男性を85%にする目標を掲げている。厚労省が実施した若者の意識調査で、育休の取得を希望する男性は83・5%に上った。希望する男性が取得しやすい職場環境を整えていくことが求められる。

次頁に続く

出典：男性育休5割超え 一層の促進と中身充実を
[Japan Forward](#)

4. 男性育休5割超え 一層の促進と中身充実を

もっとも、取得率の向上自体が目的になってはいけない。基本調査では、男性の取得期間は「1カ月以上3カ月未満」が30・3%と最も多かった。女性の最多は「12カ月以上18カ月未満」の31・4%だった。

同じ期間ずつ休めばよいというわけではないが、取得期間があまりにも短かったり、取得してもほとんど育児をしなかったりする「取るだけ育休」では意味がない。