

NHK Makes Decisive Responses to the Coronavirus Pandemic

TOKYO, March 19, 2020—In the midst of public anxiety about the coronavirus pandemic, the Japanese public broadcaster NHK is using every possible platform to push forward in its mission to help people stay calm and informed.

NHK is striving to minimize public anxiety about the coronavirus by preventing an infodemic. A team created last month monitors reliable information from medical and research institutions around the world and feeds it into output such as news programs, science programs, and specials. The flagship NHK Special documentary slot (<http://www6.nhk.or.jp/special/index.html>) will carry programs on the latest coronavirus-related research findings, medical challenges, and social issues. NHK will produce English versions for NHK WORLD-JAPAN and other broadcasters around the world.

A daily magazine show offers practical information on ways in which families can protect themselves from coronavirus infection. Other programs also offer information and advice for people of all ages. For instance, they offer instructions for making face masks (sold out in stores), recipes for meals that boost the immune system, and exercise routines for people who are working from home or not allowed to go outside.

NHK also launched a special portal site on January 22nd, where all related news items and special programs can be searched by the key words. (<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/special/coronavirus/>)



NHK for School (NHK's portal site for learning content)

All schools across Japan are closed because of the new coronavirus. In response, the NHK Educational TV channel is using diverse platforms including subchannels (special channels created using frequencies that are not being used for other

purposes) and websites to deliver a wide range of programs for children seamlessly without distinction between TV and digital. The TV channel provides educational content

in the mornings and programs that help kids stay healthy by encouraging them to dance, sing, and do physical exercise in the afternoons. Programs include subtitles for children with hearing disabilities. NHK radio has created program segments that invite and share requests and messages from children. Also, NHK's satellite TV channels are focusing their programming on science and history content that's educationally beneficial for students at junior high schools and high schools and on content that children and their parents can enjoy together.

NHK is also enhancing its digital content. The NHK for School website (<https://www.nhk.or.jp/school/>) has a redesigned front-page layout that's optimal for children who need to study by themselves. It offers video playlists for different school years and different types of school (including special-needs schools). Content also includes recommendations (developed in partnership with teachers and other experts) for effective ways to use the site. Also, a website-based initiative called Watching Alone, Not Learning Alone supports children who are studying by themselves at home by enabling them to share reviews of video content. Every day, NHK news programs include messages for children from homeroom teachers at elementary, junior high, and high schools. These messages help teachers and their classes feel united so they're better able to overcome their anxiety. They can also be watched on a dedicated web page.

The school closures in Japan are forcing parents and children to spend longer periods in close quarters. Experts have pointed out that there's an accordingly high risk of abuse. NHK has responded by extending an abuse-awareness campaign that it ran last month. Specifically, NHK is addressing the concerns of parents and children by rebroadcasting related content and by continuing to run the campaign's website.



NHK live special "Minna No Sotsugyoshiki"
(A Graduation Ceremony for Everyone)

In Japan, March is the time for school graduations. The graduation ceremonies are an important milestone for Japanese youngsters, but many have been cancelled or scaled down because of the coronavirus. Consequently, NHK is planning a graduation-ceremony-style live special

(<https://www.nhk.or.jp/kodomo-pj/sotsugyo.html>)

that will create precious graduation memories. The show will include graduation songs created by popular artists to show youngsters that people across Japan are celebrating with

them. It will also include young people's thoughts and personal stories about graduation. NHK is collecting contributions from young people in partnership with social networking sites and local news outlets. The live special will go out on TV and radio on March 24. Executive Producer Mizuto Tanaka says it will encourage youngsters at a difficult time and enable them to show everyone in Japan that they're positive about the future.

NHK has redesigned its services so that they can be used by as many people as possible on an anytime-and-anywhere basis. These services include the video-streaming service NHK Plus, which began trial operation this month and will go into full operation on April 1. Catchup playlists on NHK Plus include programs offering the latest information on the coronavirus and programs that answer coronavirus-related questions from viewers.

About NHK

NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) is Japan's sole public broadcaster. Funded entirely by receiving fees from Japanese households, it has a reputation for impartial, high-quality programming. Through its six nationwide TV channels, NHK reaches about 50 million households. Most of NHK's programs are available internationally through NHK Enterprises, Inc. (<http://pf.nhk-ep.co.jp/>)

About NHK WORLD-JAPAN

NHK WORLD-JAPAN is the international service of NHK. It provides the latest information on Japan and Asia through television, radio and online to a global audience. (<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/>)