

# Aiming to create a consumer civil society

## Advancing consumer education

The intention behind consumer education is to lead consumers to be able to live a safe and affluent life on their own by acquiring knowledge and skills associated with their consumption activities and link them to appropriate behavior. Another role of consumer education is to foster people so as to make them capable of spontaneously joining in the formation of a consumer civil society and contributing to its growth.

In December 2012, the Act on Promotion of Consumer Education came into effect for the purpose of promoting consumer education in a comprehensive and integrated fashion.

In accordance with this Act, the “Basic Policy on the Promotion of Consumer Education” was decided by the Cabinet in June 2013. It states that the national government and local governments should provide opportunities so that anyone, regardless of where he/she lives, can access consumer education in various settings, including school, home, community, and workplace, throughout a lifetime from young age to elderly. The basic policy was revised in March 2018 based on the implementation status of measures for promoting consumer education and in response to changes in the environment surrounding consumers.

The Consumer Education Promotion Council that was established pursuant to the Act on Promotion of Consumer Education discusses issues, such as whether to promote consumer education targeting young people, systematic consumer education designed to correspond with the characteristics of consumers, which were presented as “the current important matters” when the basic policy was revised. Also, the Consumer Affairs Agency strives to spread and create awareness of sustainable consumption among consumers as part of its initiative to create a consumer civil society. Sustainable consumption refers to consumer activities friendly to people, society, and the environment. Carefully thinking about the meaning, it is clear that each person engaging in consumer activities come up with a solution to social challenges or support business operators addressing such challenges. Moreover, sustainable consumption also serves as a specific model case of consumer behavior in the sense that consumers contribute to the creation of sustainable society as specified in Goal 12 of SDGs: “Responsible consumption and production.”

For the purpose of spreading sustainable consumption and creating awareness of it among consumers, the Consumer Affairs Agency conducts various promotional and educational activities such as collecting information about and publicly releasing initiatives on progressive approaches, producing awareness-raising leaflets, and creating a momentum in cooperation with entities in various fields in addition to holding the “Symposium on Sustainable Consumption” as an awareness-raising event while hoping that these events become a driving force of similar activities conducted by local governments.

# Systematic Map for Consumer Education

	Characteristics of Each Stage	Infancy	Primary School	Junior High	High School	Adulthood		
		At this stage, you have various experiences of "awareness," through which you start to have interest in your family and things around yourself and learn from them.	At this stage, you are expected to develop the fundamental part of your ability as a consumer through your spontaneous behavior and interest in society and the environment.	At this stage, you become able to go to a lot of places, understand your rights and responsibilities, and then are expected to know a way to solve your problems.	At this stage, you are expected to understand the importance of life plan and management based on your lifelong forecast and social responsibilities, and spontaneously make your decisions.	Youth	Middle Age	The Elderly
Creating a Consumer Civil Society	Understanding Influence of Buying Activity	Have interest in running errands and shopping.	Think about the flow of things and money arising out of consumer activities.	Think about the influence of consumer behavior on the environment and economy.	Think about the influence of production, logistics, consumption and disposal on the environment, economy and society.	Get into the habit of thinking about the impact of production, logistics, consumption, and disposal on the environment, economy and society.	Put into your mind the impact on the environment, economy and society caused by production, logistics, consumption and disposal before acting.	Talk with other people about the importance of caring about the impact of consumer activities on the environment, economy, and society.
	Sustainable Buying Activity	Treasure your belongings.	Be aware that there is a correlation between your life and environment and add some twists to the way to use things.	Think about the influence of consumer activities on the environment and try to live in an environment-friendly manner.	Think about lifestyles aiming for sustainable society.	Explore lifestyles aiming for sustainable society.	Act according to a lifestyle appropriate for sustainable society.	Talk with other people about lifestyles useful for sustainable society.
	Consumer's Participation and Cooperation	Understand the importance of cooperation.	Pay your attention to consumer issues around you.	Think about solutions to consumer and social issues familiar to you and think about creating a fair society.	Understand the importance of addressing consumer/social issues familiar to you and creating a fair society in collaboration with other people.	Pursue more opportunities to act for realizing a fair society, solving consumer and other social issues.	Work with others in your community and workplace to solve consumer and other social issues, and create fair society.	Create fair society and solve consumer and other social issues in cooperation with other people.
Product Safety	Ability to Understand Product Safety and Avoid Risk	Identify risks in your life and find the way to use things safely.	Avoid risks and get clues to safely use things.	Avoid risks, learn a safe way to use things, and try it.	Understand the importance of aiming for a safe life and consumer society without taking risks.	Get into the habit of leading a safe life without taking risks.	Realize a safe life and consumer society without taking risks.	Talk with other people about the importance of a safe life without taking risks.
	Ability to Cope with Trouble	Inform people close to you of any troubles you have.	Talk with someone about your problems.	Understand the characteristics of marketing methods and learn about laws, legal systems, and consultation agencies for solving troubles.	Learn the usage of laws, legal systems, and consultation agencies for solving troubles.	Get into the habit of using laws, legal systems, and consultation agencies for solving troubles.	Create society that enables you to easily use laws, legal systems, and consultation agencies for solving troubles.	Use laws, legal systems, and consultation agencies in cooperation with other people.
Life Management and Contract	Understanding and Thinking about the Way to Choose Products/Services as well as Rules for Contracts	Keep your promise and rules.	Think about the way to choose and buy things and then make an appropriate purchase. Learn about the importance of promises and rules, and think about them.	Choose products in an appropriate manner, learn about a contract and its rules, and think about a better way to have a contract.	Act based on your appropriate decision making. Understand a contract and how to use its rules.	Get into the habit of understanding and carefully checking the details and rules of a contract before signing it.	Understand a contract and its rules and then utilize the knowledge for your life.	Share with other people useful knowledge for a life without contract-related troubles.
	Life Design /Management Ability	Think carefully when there is something you want and learn to be patient sometimes.	Realize the importance of things and money, and think of ways to use them according to the plan you make. Think carefully when you use your allowance.	Utilize your life management skills concerning consumer activities. Make a plan for shopping and saving money.	Try to design your life. Come up with ideas for a plan and management of your household economy based on your lifelong forecast.	Design and manage your life so that you can live in accordance with your life plan based on your lifelong forecast.	Cope with changes in economic society and lead a life according to your plan based on your lifelong forecast.	Cope with changes in your living environment and work with other people for better life management.
Information and Media	Ability to Collect/Transact/Transmit Information	Realize various information around you.	Understand the way to collect and utilize information about buying activity.	Acquire skills for collecting and transmitting information about consumer activities.	Think about the appropriate usage of information and information technologies taking into account not only internal affairs but also global relations.	Get into the habit of appropriately using information and information technologies.	Lead a life appropriately using information and information technologies.	Appropriately use information and information technologies in cooperation with other people.
	Understanding Rules of Information Society and Information Ethics	Treasure yourself and your family.	Understand information ethics such as protecting personal information about yourself and your acquaintances.	Learn about copyrights and responsibilities for the information you transmit.	Think about preferable information society, information ethics, and security.	Get into the habit of keeping to the rules of information society and information ethics.	Develop information society where there are not many troubles and information ethics are abided by.	Develop an information society where there are not many troubles and information ethics is abided by in cooperation with other people.
	Critical Thinking About Consumer Activity Information	Check information around you and think "Why."	Understand the purposes, characteristics, and importance of choosing consumer activity information.	Learn about the way to evaluate and select consumer activity information and know the importance of decision making.	Learn about the way to evaluate and choose consumer activities information and understand the relationship between such information and society.	Get into the habit of spontaneously examining the information about consumer activities.	Spontaneously evaluate information about consumer activities before acting.	Use consumer activity information in a smart manner by cooperating with other people.

\*This systematic map systematically explains topics for consumers to learn at school and home or in a community to facilitate consumers' understanding and does not show correlations with educational guidelines.

This systematic map shows when and what you are expected to learn to become an independent consumer serving as a part of a consumer civil society. It functions as a diagram visualizing a consumer educational system for consumer education providers while working as something akin to a roadmap for each of you to develop individual abilities as a consumer.