

We are the BRIDGE

April 14th, 2020

Dear Sirs,

Re: Cancellation of BRIDGE Summer Camp 2020

On behalf of the board of directors of "Asian-Pacific Children's Convention in FUKUOKA (APCC)" and the Operating committee of "BRIDGE KIDS PROGRAMS 2020", let us express our sincere gratitude for your continuous support and contribution to our projects in the past years.

After careful consideration, and in deep concern for the health and safety of our participants, host families, volunteers and all the people involved, we regret to inform you that the APCC board of directors has decided to cancel the BRIDGE Summer Camp 2020 to take place on July 12-25, 2020 in Fukuoka.

Since last October, our volunteers and staff have been preparing for BRIDGE Summer Camp 2020: APCC's biggest summer program since its launch in 1989. During preparation, since the beginning of 2020, we have seen the rapid escalation of the COVID-19 virus. Thus far, while monitoring the outbreak closely, we did our utmost to collect information on the situation regarding the infection spread and to discuss the feasibility of executing our program safely by taking every possible measure.


As you might know, on March 24th, 2020, the Japanese government and IOC have agreed to postpone the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics in response to the significant increase in COVID-19 cases around the globe. This announcement drastically changed the sense of urgency in our country and our decision making process on whether or not to pursue the execution of the BRIDGE Summer Camp 2020. On top of that, the Japanese government declared a state of emergency in Fukuoka and six other prefectures on April 7th after a surge in confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths across the nation.

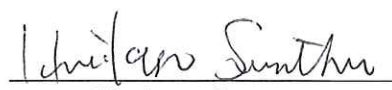
Given the situation, we, APCC, have concluded that there is no viable option other than cancelling this program in order to prevent participants from being affected by this infectious virus. Considering the vulnerability of the Junior Ambassadors, who are only 11 years old, and the nature of our large-scale program that invites children from countries and regions across the world to Fukuoka, Japan, it is impossible to guarantee participants health and safety. In addition, the negative influence that hampers our effort to provide the participants with rich and fruitful experiences through the program was undeniable. Some delegations will be forced to withdraw their participation due to the international travel restrictions taken place on them, and a number of obstacles will affect the quality of this program, such as the temporary closure of local elementary schools in Fukuoka.

Though deciding to abort the BRIDGE Summer Camp 2020, in addition to the cancellation of the BRIDGE Challenge Trip 2020, was extremely difficult, we are grateful for your understanding and warm support as we navigate through this crisis. It was exceptionally painful and disappointing to make this decision for all the participants: Junior Ambassadors and Chaperons who enthusiastically took part in training to prepare for their experiences, their families who supported them in their participation, members of the BRIDGE CLUB who dedicated their time and effort for their training program and the Liaison Officers who worked closely with us to make this program possible. Lastly, for everybody in Fukuoka, including host family applicants and volunteers, who had been looking forward to welcoming our overseas guests in July.

The APCC are confident that we will recover from this harrowing virus and we will work hard in the near future to continue to provide rich intercultural experiences and opportunities. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,


Yutaka Aso
Chairperson


Hirokazu Suematsu
Senior Executive Director


Masaomi Fuji
Operating Director of
BRIDGE KIDS PROGRAMS 2020

APCC

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