

Culture: Coming of Age Traditions from Around the World

The second Monday of January in Japan is 成人の日 *seijin no hi* or “Coming of Age Day.” On this day all across Japan, local governments hold ceremonies for the youth in the



area turning (or who have just turned) 20 years old. Even here in Hokkaido, you may see young women in 振袖 *furisode* or a formal kimono with long sleeves and young men

in suits or 袴 *hakama*, which are traditional wear for men.

In this month’s “Culture” segment, we take this opportunity to ask our own CIRs (coordinator

for international relations) about “coming of age” traditions and “being an adult” in their own countries:

Elaine from America:

There isn’t an all country ceremony like Japan, but turning 16 is a big deal for most Americans. I nor my friends did this, but throwing a massive party for your “sweet 16” is a must for some. Some parents gift their child with a vehicle on their 16th birthday, a sign of freedom for the typical teenager.



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Trivia: Get Your Car Blessed!

You probably own a few, or have at least seen them around. お守り *omamori* are amulets that you can purchase at shrines or temples all over Japan. They are believed grant you protection by various deities. There are many different kinds of *omamori* for different uses such as, traffic safety, safe birth, good health, love and of course, good luck.



In some cases you may want a little extra divine help on your side. This is where the お祓い *oharai* ritual comes in. With a donation to the shrine or temple, you may request the religious official for a special blessing. One common request is to have your car

豆知識:車のお祓い

blessed! This is called 車のお祓い *kuruma no oharai*. Car blessings are commonly done on brand new cars, but there are no rules when you can or should get a *harai* done.

If an *omamori* isn’t enough to keep you safe on the winter roads, consider getting a *harai* for your ride!



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Events (pg 2 & 4)



Coming of Age Traditions from Around the World (pg 1 & 3)



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Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

When	What	Where/Contact
1/11 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	International Mini-Volleyball Night Meet new friends from around the world while enjoying a fun and easy sport.	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
1/14 (Sat) 18:00-19:30	59th International Talk Learn more about the countries of the world and exchange ideas with other participants. This month's guest is an AFS student from India. She will talk about South Indian culture, food culture, language and more.	
1/21 (Sat) 10:00-11:30	39th Kids Playground Come with your children to learn and play while meeting local families. This month you can enjoy "New Year" themed songs, stories and games.	
1/28 (Sat) 16:00-18:00	Japanese Conversation and Learning Table Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment.	
1/21-2/26 (Sat-Sun)	Tokachigawa Swan Festival "Sairinka" 十勝川白鳥まつり「彩凜華」 Come and enjoy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a fantasy show of lights and sounds • snow rafting • walking in the forest of lights, including a stamp rally • a tunnel of beautiful lights & a "zoo" of lights • a winter playground (slide, frozen bubbles etc.) • resting at the warm ice promenade with Moor Choc-o-lait (chocolate and milk drink), Moor Pork Sausages, etc. And many more events and activities will be held!	Tokachi Gaoka Park 十勝が丘公園 音更町十勝川温泉観光協会 0155-32-6633 http://www.tokachigawa.net/
1/22 (Sun) 10:00-11:00	Fish Day 魚の日 Every 4th Sunday is "fish day." To celebrate, fish and other ingredients taken from the sea are used to make healthy dishes native to the north. A variety of products will be on sale for the event.	Hiroo Town Fisheries Cooperative Food Division 広尾漁協食品部(広尾郡広尾町会 所前2丁目79番地先) 0155-82-3202
1/21-1/22 (Sat-Sun)	10th Parent & Child Snowman Contest 第10回 親子雪だるまコンテスト Try building the best snowman with friends and family! Building will be done on the 21st from 10:00-16:00 and the 22nd from 9:00-11:30. The entry fee is 100 yen and up to 30 groups may participate. The snowmen will be judged in front of the visitor center deck from 13:30 on the 22nd. First place will receive a 15,000 yen gift certificate and second place will receive a 5,000 yen gift certificate. 10 groups will receive a 3000 yen gift certificate and all participants will receive a certificate of participation.	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp
1/22 (Sun) 9:00-14:30	2017 Ecology Park Winter Festival 2017エコパ冬まつり Enjoy this festival of winter activities including a Bob-sledding class for children, Karuta in the snow, passing out of treats, food and more!	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp
1/28-3/20 (Sat-Mon)	Lake Shikaribetsu Kotan (Village) しかりべつ湖コタン "Kotan" is the Ainu word for "village." Seen only in the coldest time of year, you can come and experience an entire village made of snow and ice. Try dipping in a hot spring made of ice! There are free buses running from Obihiro Station to Lake Shikaribetsu! Please refer to the homepage for more information.	Lake Shikaribetsu 然別湖 しかりべつ湖コタン実行委員会 0156-69-8181 http://www.nature-center.jp/kotan/index.html

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Different states have different laws, but most states, including my home state of Hawaii, set the driving age from 16 years old. In Hawaii you can practice driving with a licensed adult from 15 and a half, so it is possible to get your actual license on your 16th birthday (that's what I did!)

	Japan	America	China	Brazil	Thailand
Adult	20	18	18	18	20
Driving	18	16	18	18	18
Voting	18	18	18	16	18
Alcohol	20	21	18	18	20
Tobacco	20	18	18	18	18

Karen from Brazil:

Like America we don't have a large ceremony either. But some families with a



daughter turning 15 years old may throw an extravagant party for her. I've heard that in ancient times when Brazil was still a colony of Portugal, wealthy families would

An extravagant 15th birthday party in Brazil! hold a large party to show everyone around that their daughter had turned 15 years old.

For the most part, you are an adult from 18 in Brazil. Voting is possible from 16, but it is only optional. It becomes mandatory from 18 years old. A typical 18th birthday could include a night out at the clubs with friends and drinks.



"Top Knot Cutting" in process.

Gan from Thailand

Similar to Japan, the adulthood starts at 20 years old in Thailand. Driving, voting and smoking is legal from the age of 18. It isn't commonly done anymore, but there is a event called "Khon Juk" or the "Top Knot Cutting" ceremony. Males turning 13 and females turning 11 can participate in this ceremony of praying and having their hair cut off. This ceremony was popular in the mid-

1800's but is very rare nowadays. Modern Thailand "coming of age" is becoming more America and Brazil, with a night out on the town is legal.

Tao from China

Currently, 18 is the age from which one is an adult. In ancient China there were two different ceremonies for males and females. For males turning 20, they would have a capping ceremony called "Guanli." Females turning 15 would have "Jili," a



A young women experiencing her "Jili."

ceremony of getting their hair pinned up.



Putting on the hat of a man for this young male's "Guanli."

Unfortunately these traditional ceremonies are not longer common in most of China. 18 year olds in China are high school seniors who are usually too busy with studies to have a ceremony. Some schools choose to hold a smaller event in which a representative from the school makes a speech about adulthood.

Do you wish that you got a car for your 16th birthday? Maybe an extravagant party for your 15th birthday? Thank you to the 4 CIRs for their contribution to this eye-opening article!

Movies At Cinema Taiyo, in Obihiro

(Nishi 3, Minami 11)
Tel: (0155) 20-1525

Times and movies are subject to change! (for space reasons not all movies are listed)

To confirm, call or check online at: http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/theater/_obihiro/movie.shtml



Title	Language	Dates
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them	English and Japanese	Until 27th
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story	3D Japanese 2D English	All Month
Resident Evil: The Final Chapter (バイオハザード Biohazard)	English	All Month
Doctor Strange	TBD	From 27th

Events Continued

When	What	Where/Contact
1/28 (Sat)	6th Wood Candle Night 第6回ウッドキャンドルナイト Ice candles and wood candles made from local pinewood will light up the town.	Michi no Eki Ashoro Ginga Hall 21 道の駅あしよろ 銀河ホール21 0156-25-6131 http://www.ashoro-kanko.jp/
1/28 (Sat)	Honbetsu Mamemaka Night ほんべつ豆まかナイト Enjoy Setsubun (changing of the seasons holiday) with the village famous for beans, Honbetsu. Throw beans to scare away the demons and bring the good luck in!	本別町体育館(本別町北2丁目) 本別町商工会 0156-22-2529
1/28 (Sat) 9:45-12:00	Ecology Park 「Finding Footprints」 エコパ探検隊「足あとを見つけたい」 Let's look for footprints! The participation fee is 500 yen, which includes snowshoe rental and snow rafting fees. This event is for elementary school students and up.	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp
1/28 (Sat) 10:00-11:00	Ecology Park 「Winter Camping」 エコパ体験隊「冬のキャンプ」 Work with your comrades to camp overnight in the cold! The camp will start on the 28th from 10:00 and end at 11:00 the next day. Up to 15 people can participate for 3000 yen each. This event is for elementary school students and up.	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp
1/28 (Sat) 17:00-20:00	Ecology Park Night Café エコパナイトカフェ Enjoy a relaxing winter evening at Ecology Park. There will be live music performed by a local Tokachi artist.	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp
1/29 (Sun) 10:00-13:00	Ecology Park "Saijiki" Bean-Throwing Event エコパ歳時記「豆まき会」 Join in with your friends to defeat the Ecology Park demon! There will be a rock-paper-scissor event, along with bean-throwing.	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp

Obihiro Pioneer can be found at the following locations: Obihiro City Hall, Tokachi International Relations Center, Obihiro University International Center, Obihiro Tourism and Convention Center inside the Obihiro JR Station, Obihiro Public Library, Tokachi Plaza, Cinema Taiyo, Joy English Academy and online at www.city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp (click on "Information for Foreigners")

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