

Important DatesSeptember

19 & 20 - AJET Biwa Bike Trip
 21 - Respect for the Aged Day
 22 - Autumnal Equinox Day
 24 - SDC Day 1 Planning Meeting (Tentatively Cancelled)
 30 - Orientation Materials Due

October

19 - SDC Day 2-3 Planning Meeting (TBD)
 22 - SDC Day 1 (Tentatively Cancelled)



The Shiga Situation

Orange you glad it's fall?

New Arrivals and Orientations

It's seeming less and less likely (but not impossible) that we'll have any new ALTs in Shiga this year. The arrivals that were scheduled for September have been postponed, and if no new travel dates are decided by the end of September, then we won't be receiving any new JETs until early arrivals in 2021.

Since no new ALTs will be arriving in September, the scheduled survival and job orientations have also been cancelled. Those who had volunteered to present will instead be creating new digital resources to better the [ShigaJET website](#). Here's a big THANK YOU to all our volunteers!

Skills Development Conference

Thank you to those you who answered the recent survey pertaining to SDC. Your responses are helping us to determine the best way of proceeding with this year's Skills Development Conference. We are moving forward with preparations for a digital delivery this year. Current plans are for a shortened SDC to be delivered over two days in November with ALT and JTE/HRT sessions to be delivered as 'Materials-Only' sessions, while ALT-only sessions will be held via online conferencing. These details, however, are not finalized and subject to change. Thanks again for your thoughtful presentation applications and stay tuned for more info.

PA Applications

The forms to apply for the position of PA (starting Aug. 2021) will be sent to your schools in October. I will send out an email once this has been done. Those interested in applying will have to complete the application form and prepare a western-style resume. Prospective applicants or anyone interested in the PA position are welcome to participate in a virtual session that will be given in October about the role (more info coming soon!). Please note that participation will in no way impact your application for the position.

Typhoons

September is still peak typhoon season in Japan. Though Shiga is relatively shielded compared to some other parts of the country, severe storms can still cause damage and flooding. It's important to be prepared in case of a serious typhoon: take anything unsecured indoors (laundry poles, plants, etc), stay indoors unless absolutely necessary, have an emergency bag ready with necessary supplies and keep a look out for evacuation warnings sent to your phone.

See: <https://shigajets.weebly.com/natural-disasters.html>

For Your Health

During the coronavirus pandemic, a lot of people's habits have had to change. Sometimes these changes are for the worse, and things can start to wear on you. It's important to remember there are plenty of simple things you can do today to improve your mental health during these stressful times:

Eat healthy: McDonalds or Famichiki might be tempting, but eating better will help you feel better. Fresh fruits and veggies might be expensive in Japan, but the health benefits of a balanced diet are worth the price.

Drink water: Many adults don't drink enough water daily. Dehydration has a lot of adverse effects that you might not realize you're experiencing, from fatigue, difficulty concentrating and a dampened mood. It's a good idea to bring a big bottle of water with you to work. Drinking water between classes will help ensure you stay hydrated throughout the day.

Exercise: When you're physically active, your body releases endorphins that positively affect your mood and help relieve stress and anxiety. As the weather cools, exercising outside is much more comfortable than in the summer. Evening walks or runs are a great way to end the day (and explore your neighborhood). Try it out!

Sleep well: Lack of sleep has a lot of negative effects on your health and can contribute to depression. Picking a regular time to sleep and a regular time to wake up, and sticking to them (even on your days off), can help improve your health, immune system, mood and productivity.

Talk to someone: As an ALT, sometimes it can feel like we're on our own island at work, and it's possible to spend a whole day without talking to anyone. Couple this with social distancing after work and loneliness can set in. The good news is social distancing doesn't mean you can't be social. Video chats, phone calls or simply messaging are great ways to stay connected to people you care about. A good conversation can go a long way.

We're Here for You

There have been a lot of stressors recently. Don't forget the PA's are here for you, as well as a variety of other resources that are available when you need support.

Kevin - kenchopa@gmail.com

Emilie - shigapa@gmail.com

[Web Mail - JET Counseling Service](#) (no limit)

Login Password: clairjet2020

[Skype - JET Counseling Service](#)

Login Password: clairjet2020

[AJET Peer Support Group](#): 050-5534-5566

Skype: AJETPSG

[TELL Counseling Services](#)

[International Mental Health Professionals Japan](#)

Otsu Matsuri Light

Shiga JETs have long enjoyed the honor of pulling the lead float, crowned with a ratty, old, dancing taxidermy tanuki, in the centuries-old Otsu Matsuri held every year in October. This year, unfortunately, will be different due to the continued concerns surrounding the spread of COVID-19. The festival, while not being cancelled, is going to be significantly scaled down and will no longer include the crowd-drawing procession of floats.

Participation in the Otsu Matsuri is a great experience, and for those of you who haven't had the pleasure (and plan to stick around another year), I wholeheartedly encourage you to join in the fun in 2021.

