

**THE
LESSON 4**

Special Support for Men

Men often react to trauma and the frustration of life in emergency housing by drowning their sorrows in drink.

This can lead to depression, alienation and, too often, to suicide or death from other causes.

The “Ohashi Men’s Club” was set up in tsunamistricken Ishinomaki in July, 2012 to address such problems among men in temporary housing. Calling it a “men’s club” was key as few would have gone to a “health workshop aimed at reducing alcohol dependence,” which is what it was meant to be.

Club activities, decided in consultation with the participants, included cooking and exercise classes as well as courses on health: oral hygiene, checking blood pressure, measuring body weight, etc.

A total of eight sessions were held with the number of participants growing throughout the program, which was supported by local government, the nursing association and visiting support workers. Support workers from outside led the planning, but the actual operation grew to include staff (for promoting healthy dietary habits) and volunteers from among the residents.

Cooking, not drinking, at the men’s club.

