

December,2020

## **A message from the counselor for international students No.17**

Counselor for International students, Center for Health Services

by Kaoru Ikuta

### **Though the novel coronavirus is spreading, is Santa coming this year?**

An 8-year-old boy wrote a letter to the prime minister, Boris Johnson, if Father Christmas will be able to come if we leave hand sanitizer by the cookies. The Prime Minister replied by praising his idea to prevent the spread of the virus and told him Father Christmas will be coming safely. The Prime Minister's response was warm, recognizing the boy's dreams and concerns and explaining the importance of sanitization.

This letter reminds me of the 8-year-old girl named Virginia who lived in New York 120 years ago. She wrote a letter asking, "Is there a Santa Clause?" to a newspaper company. The response was delivered to her by the editorial, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Clause. He exists as certainly as they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy." The editorial told her there are unseen and unseeable things in the world, such as faith, romance, care and compassion.

Usually, we spend the New Year holidays with family members and friends. This year we cannot. The outbreak of coronavirus affects our daily lives and we have been experiencing a hard time mentally and physically. Try to feel connected with absent loved ones and to recall the experiences which you enjoyed in the past. You can create a safe place in your mind. Online chatting will be helpful to create a space in your mind.

I hope you can spend a safe New Year holiday by sanitizing your hands and fingers and ventilate properly.

You can get useful information to cope with the novel coronavirus via Health Service Center homepage and previous messages from the counselor for international students.

⇒[Health Service Center, Yokohama National University \(ynu.ac.jp\)](http://www.healthservice.ynu.ac.jp)

⇒[A message from the counselor for international students - For Current International Students - International Student Center / Yokohama National University \(ynu.ac.jp\)](http://www.internationalstudentcenter.ynu.ac.jp)

If you experience any disruptions to your sleeping and eating patterns, anxiety for the future or feel isolated, please come to the Health Service Center to get help. Seeking help is a way to take care of yourself. It isn't a sigh of weakness.

You can make your first appointment for counseling by email or phone. Please refer to the Health Service Center homepage.

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