



# Hotto Hausu

## Social Welfare Corporation for Minamata Disease Patients & People with Disabilities

### Welcome to Hotto Hausu!

As a workplace for congenital and infantile Minamata disease patients, "Hotto Hausu" was started in November 29, 1998, at the center of Minamata City.

Our workplace has diversified operations that try to create jobs using all kinds of ideas and devices regardless of whether members have disabilities or not.

Members are involved in the following activities: telling the story of Minamata disease; production of original bookmarks and business card that have pressed flowers from the fields of Minamata; reusing local newspapers to make eco-bags.





Hotto Hausu is also a meeting place for local people and visitors who would like to learn about Minamata disease.

### Disseminating "Treasures" from the Minamata Disease

The program "Disseminating 'Treasures' from Minamata disease" has continued for 14 years since the organization started. Our members tell of their experiences as patients in joint talks with our staff members.

Our program is suitable for people of all ages. In Minamata, schools at all three levels have us as guest speakers.

"Hope, Future, Minamata" are our keywords when we talk about Minamata disease. Please meet our members and be touched by their struggles and hopes/dreams. You will feel a ray of hope from our members.



**Hotto Hausu: Social Welfare Corporation for Minamata Disease Patients & People with Disabilities**

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# Program Members

## Hotto Hausu's Program Disseminating "Treasures" from Minamata Disease

Our program disseminates "treasures" — precious lessons for the future — from Minamata disease patients



**Yuji Kaneko** Yuji Kaneko was born in Myojin, Minamata in 1955. He was certified in 1962 as a congenital Minamata disease patient. All of his family members are certified. When he was 40 years old, he and other congenital patients founded Hotto Hausu as a workshop. His dream, getting a job, finally came true after 20 years.

**Kenji Nagamoto** was born in Umedo, Minamata in 1959. He was certified as a congenital Minamata disease patient in 1963. He gave a speech on behalf of bereaved families of Minamata disease patients at the Memorial service for Minamata disease victims in 2003 and 2012. When he was bullied in childhood due to his disease, looking at the cranes in Umedo Port cheered him up. He tells of his severe experiences with his poetic expressions and humor.



**Tomoe Yamazoe** was born in Hachinokubo, Minamata in 1956. As an uncertified infantile Minamata disease patient, she protested against the polluting company, Kumamoto Prefecture and the Environmental Agency (now known as the Ministry of Environment) over their inadequate relief measures for 15 years. In search of work, she participated in the founding of Hotto Hausu. Due to her strong desire to study, she started to receive private lessons in reading, writing and math at the age of 50. Her studies have continued for more than 10 years.

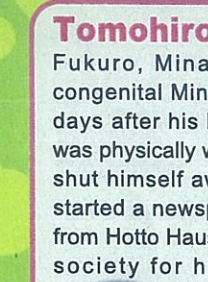


**Yuji Onizuka** was born in Fukuro, Minamata in 1956. He was certified as a congenital Minamata disease patient in 1962. He has lived in Meisuien (a facility for Minamata disease patients) for more than 40 years. He enjoys spending days and nights at Hotto Hausu. He also looks forward to participating in calligraphy class taught by Akio Mizoguchi every Saturday. This has been his lifestyle for seven years.



**Koichiro Matsunaga** was born in Marushima, Minamata in 1963. He was certified as a congenital Minamata disease patient in 1983. His birth came four years after the drainage from Chisso factories was recognized as the cause of Minamata disease in 1959. "What if Chisso had stopped the drainage at the time ." He lamented. He used to commute to Hotto Hausu by bicycle; however, he now uses a wheelchair instead, due to pain in his legs. He is a Shogi (Japanese chess) master.

**Kiyoko Kagata** was born in Tsukinoura, Minamata in 1955. She was certified as a congenital Minamata disease patient in 1962. From age of 7 to 25, she was in the hospital and Meisuien, therefore she has no memory of living with her family. The isolation she felt at that time has not gone away. She tells people about the congenital patients who are not able to speak due to dysfunction caused by Minamata disease. Even though she is confined to a wheelchair, she wishes to push her fellow congenital patients' wheelchairs if she could walk again.

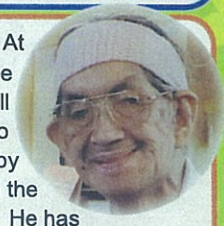


**Tomohiro Mizoguchi** was born in Fukuro, Minamata in 1962. Uncertified congenital Minamata disease patient. Three days after his birth, he had convulsions. He was physically weak child. After high school, he shut himself away from society. In 2003, he started a newspaper clipping service as a job from Hotto Hausu. This was one step back into society for him. He is the son of Akio Mizoguchi, a plaintiff who won a Minamata disease case at the Supreme Court in April 2013. Interaction with supporters through the trial brought more opportunities for Tomohiro to relate to society.

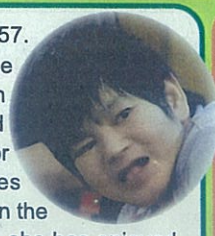


**Isamu Nagai** was born in Izumi City, Kagoshima in 1957. He was certified as a congenital Minamata disease patient in 1963. Due to congenitally deformed legs, he cannot walk; however, he used to go anywhere in his wheelchair until he lost his physical capabilities in 2010. His condition has improved a little bit through rehabilitation and his colleague' s encouragement. His current goal is to go to Kumamoto City on his own. His self-reliance hasn' t disappeared.

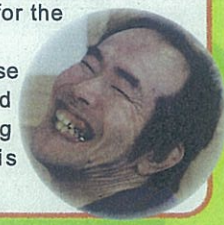
**Eichi Watanabe** was born in Yudo, Minamata in 1952. At the age of six, he was certified as an infantile Minamata disease patient. His seven family members from three generations were all victims of Minamata disease. Eichi' s grandfather, Eizo Watanabe, was the leader of the first Minamata disease action by patients in Kumamoto. Since Eichi lost his mother and brother in the past several years, he is now the only survivor among his family. He has used a cane since he was in his 40' s. He has hand dexterity and a nice ear for music.



**Sueko Iwasaka** was born in Yudo, Minamata in 1957. She was certified in 1962 as a congenital Minamata disease patient. Her parents are certified, too. Most of her siblings remain uncertified. Since 1965, Sueko has lived in the hospital and Meisuien. Because of her serious condition, walking is difficult for her. Even though she has a speech disability, she expresses herself through body language. She has spent most of her life in the facility and has less contact with the outside world; however, she has enjoyed spending days and nights at Hotto Hausu once or twice a week since 2010.



**Kazumitsu Hannaga** was born in Hachinokubo, Minamata in 1955. He was certified as a congenital Minamata disease patient in 1962. He has lived in the hospital and Meisuien since 1965. Because of his congenital illness, he has a speech disability; however, he takes photos to express himself. His photo book "Fureai Toruzo" was published in 1977. Before that, he had a photo exhibition at an international convention in Minamata. This event became the starting point for the creation of Hotto Hausu. Now he comes to Hotto Hausu once or twice a week and looks forward to spending days and nights with his friends.



**Takeko Kato** was born in Fuchu, Tokyo in 1950. Director of Hotto Hausu. In 1988-89, she joined a sit-in, with uncertified patients, in front of the Chisso Minamata factory. In 1992, she moved into Minamata where she actively supported congenital patients' daily life and founded the group Cassiopeia with the patients. Later the group served as a starting point of Hotto Hausu. Her life' s work is disseminating "treasures" from Minamata disease. She goes anywhere if anyone is interested in the program. 292