

# Getting Involved in the Community

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## Intro) Why get involved?

- JET stands for Japan Exchange and Teaching
  - Of course your job is education, but if that's all you do, then you're not fulfilling your mandate
  - You've heard it before, but it's true – you get out what you put in
  - This is doubly true for JET, since as an outsider new experiences won't seek you out – you have to chase them, often with a lot of persistence, before you integrate – but don't get discouraged
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## 1) Get involved in the local Japanese community

### At Your School

- Schools in Japan have a highly-developed sense of community
- Students will generally stay late after school to participate in club activities and sports; you can often join in
- Many schools will have an English Club; consider signing on as an advisor
- Get to know your fellow teachers; enkai parties are a great opportunity

### In the Greater Community

- Most Japanese cities and towns have a specific regional product or specialty that they take great pride in
  - Many cities and towns have local community centers with Japanese classes
  - Discuss your interests with your coworkers; they'll often know about ways to get involved
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## 2) Get involved in the JET community

- While you're getting to know Japan, don't overlook your fellow expat community; they're the ones who understand what you're going through and can help you digest it
  - AJET is a great way to meet people within your prefecture, and maybe even beyond
  - The most underrated job perk of JET is the global network it allows you to build
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## 3) Get involved after you return

- JET's cultural exchange mandate doesn't end when you leave Japan – in fact, it's just beginning
- It might seem far off now, but re-entry can be tough; you don't have to do it alone
- JETAA chapters around the world have great volunteering opportunities and ties to local Japanese events and organizations