

# CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN

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February 15, 2011

Dear Ms. Sarah Netter:

I would like to refer to your request for comments by phone on February 14 regarding the issuance of Japanese passport in connection of your news story on the international child custody.

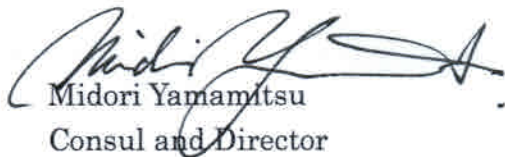
We are not aware of the facts mentioned in the particular interview brought up in your query. However, we would like you to know our general practice regarding this issue as follows:

1. When we issue passports to Japanese minors, we will explain to applicants that a passport will be issued when an application is submitted with consent of both parents, and that it is against the United States law for a parent to take a child out of the country without consent of the other parent who has the custody of the child. We thus take strict measures in checking on the consent of both parents on the application before issuing passports.
2. We post "Notice: Passport Application for Japanese Minors" (please see the attachment) on the websites of the Ministry of Foreign affairs and of the overseas missions including this Consulate to make sure that this practice is known to the concerned parties.  
(<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/info/passport.html>).
3. Parents of American nationality with Japanese minors are advised to contact the Japanese Embassy or Consulate General offices when they are aware of an application for passport for their minors being made without their consent. As a principle, we do not issue passports to these minors without consent from an American custodial parent.

The basic position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasizes the welfare of children where difficulties arise in relation to international marriages and cross-border movement of minors. We will continue to make sincere efforts to deal with the issue from this standpoint.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share with you our position and practice. Please feel free to contact me for further inquiry.

Sincerely,



Midori Yamamitsu

Consul and Director

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