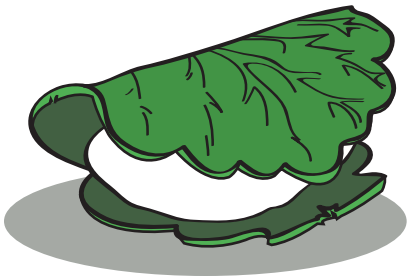




Kodomo no Hi



Kodomo no Hi (Children's Day) is one of Japan's most popular holidays celebrating young boys and girls. It also pays tribute to hardworking mothers across Japan. This holiday is held every year on May 5th. It originally began as *Tango no Sekku*, (Boys' Day) but after World War II ended, the holiday was expanded to include girls as well. Therefore, a lot of the traditions for *Kodomo no Hi* originate from *Tango no Sekku*. On this holiday families want to bring good fortune to their children, so carp banners, called *koinobori* are flown outside the home. Each child will have their own different colored carp. Carp are considered to be strong, hardworking animals, since they swim upstream against the current. The carp banners are made to flutter and twist in the wind, which makes them appear to be swimming. The largest carp banner will be hung at the top of the pole, symbolizing the oldest child.



A popular snack for the holiday is *kashiwa-mochi*, a rice cake filled with red bean paste wrapped in an oak leaf. Oak trees symbolize strength and sturdiness, so the children who eat these snacks will grow up to be strong!

If you made a carp banner, what would it look like?

