

## <Japanese Words and Phrases>

### —*Kodomo no hi* (Children's Day)—

May 5 is Children's Day. This is one of Japan's national holidays, set aside to honor the unique personalities of children and wish for their happiness.

In the past, this celebration was called *Tango no sekku* (Boy's Festival); on a baby boy's first *Tango no sekku* (and now on *Kodomo no hi*), the boy's family displays outside their home a *koi nobori* (carp-shaped streamer), given to them by the mother's family. Under the *satsuki bare no sora* (clear skies of May), the carp streamers fill with wind and seem to "swim," like a healthy and active child, representing wishes for the child's happy and healthy development.

## <日本のことば> こどもの日

5月5日は「こどもの日」。日本における国民の祝日の一つで、子供の人格を重んじ、子供の幸福をはかる趣旨で制定されました。

昔は「端午の節句」と言われ、男の子が生まれた家では、初節句に母親の実家からお祝いに贈られた「鯉のぼり」を立てる習わしがあります。「五月晴れ」の空の下、風をいっぱいにはらんで泳ぐ鯉は、元気のよい子供のように、子供達が幸せにのびのびと育てほしいと願わずにはいられません。