



Prayer and Action for Children



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Initiated in 2008 by Arigatou International, the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children connects religious leaders, faith communities and civil society organizations in a common endeavor to protect the dignity of the child and end all violence against children.

World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

Celebrates the child each year on November 20 to coincide with the United Nations Universal Children's Day

Promotes the rights and protection of children through prayer and action

Highlights our shared values and responsibility for the world's children

The Vision: If all the world's religions devoted one day each year to prayers and concrete, visible actions to promote the rights and protection of children in all their places of worship, it would not only improve the lives of children, but would also send a powerful signal to the whole world that religions can be a unifying force for human solidarity in the effort to end violence against children.

The World Day is a year-round advocacy and action platform that encourages broad partnerships to work towards a world where all children can learn, grow and flourish in a safe environment, free from all forms of violence.

At the GNRC 5th Forum in Panama in 2017, religious leaders and other participants affirmed that "transformed religious and spiritual communities can offer moral teachings and model practices to prevent, heal, reduce and ultimately end violence against children." The participants committed to strive to build a brighter future for all children through their beliefs and actions.



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World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

Bringing Together Diverse Religious and Civil Society Organizations to Work for Children's Rights and To End Violence Against Children





Prayer and Action for Children

Ending violence against children is an urgent moral imperative and global challenge. It is estimated that up to 1 billion children aged 2–17 years have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence or neglect,¹ which calls for a change of attitudes and behavior in order to prevent these abuses and exploitation. All forms of violence violate children's rights and affect their well-being and development, but they are preventable. By working together, religious leaders, faith communities, faith-based organizations, governments, UN agencies, and civil society organizations can help to protect children from violence.

Prayer and Action for Children was launched in 2008 by Arigatou International to bring together diverse faith leaders and religious communities and organizations working for children to take action to prevent all forms of violence against children and strengthen child protection. Prayer and Action seeks to engage all sectors of society to accelerate and advance global efforts to end violence against children. It also provides opportunities for interfaith dialogue and cooperation for children.

Prayer and Action for Children calls on people of faith and goodwill to:

Organize an Event

Include your own faith community, members of other religious traditions and organizations committed to children's welfare. Invite them to come together for prayer, meditation or other forms of worship and to partner for concrete action to help children and families in your community. If you include children, ensure that child protection standards are in place, and make use of our participation and media consent forms to ensure children and parents/guardian consent for participation and photo/video image of children.



Why Prayer and Action?

Eighty-four percent of the world's population is affiliated with a religious tradition or belief.² Faith communities and religious leaders have enormous potential to affect change. Through prayer and action they can work in solidarity to end violence against children and help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals adopted at the United Nations in 2015 with a target year of 2030.

We invite you on the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children (20 November each year) to collaborate with others in your community to organize a service of prayer or reflection, accompanied by collaborative actions to stop violence against children and improve children's lives locally. Our action and advocacy are inspired by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and guided by the United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children (2006).³

1. World Health Organization (2016). INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children. Available at: <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/207717/9789241565356-eng.pdf;jsessionid=97D2ABCAECA0A57DA802F1B9B364E301?sequence=1>

2. Pew Research Center (2012). The Global Religious Landscape. Available at: <http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2014/01/global-religion-full.pdf>

3. <http://www.unviolencestudy.org/>

Recognize the gifts that children bring;

Reflect on ways to ensure the dignity of children in your community;

Explore effective ways to protect and nurture children, including their spirituality;

Strengthen ways to listen to and work in partnership with children;

Promote inter-faith dialogue and collaboration for children's well-being.

Connect with Other People

Find a child-focused event in your local area. Connect with other Prayer and Action supporters in your community. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.



Ending Violence Against Children

Too many children around the world suffer violence at home, in school, in their communities or in other settings where they need to feel nurtured and safe. Violence against children happens in every country and society, and even across all social groups. Information and communication technologies are increasingly being used to perpetrate online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. The diverse forms of violence include physical and psychological, and the short and long-term repercussions for children are often grave and damaging.

Building upon the Panama Declaration that resulted from the 2017 5th GNRC Forum on *Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action*, Prayer and Action for Children gives high priority to addressing violence against children, particularly through the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals: 16.2 on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children; 5.2 and 5.3 on ending violence against women and girls; and 8.7 on ending economic exploitation of children. Further efforts are focused on protecting child dignity online; mobilizing interfaith actions for safeguarding the rights of children on the move; promoting positive parenting; and advocating to end child marriage. In 2019, Prayer and Action will engage in activities to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Promote the World Day

Raise awareness of the rights and dignity of each and every child, and share with your community about the personal and social consequences of violence against children. Post events on your own website and social media pages, and use the hashtag #PrayerandAction #Dayofthechild to connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and our Prayer and Action website. Invite partners, friends and members of your house of worship to join you.

Observe the World Day

Visit our website for information on events and inspiration: prayerandactionforchildren.org