

# INTERFAITH TOOLKIT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Human Trafficking Awareness Month**

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**January 2016**

*Resources for Worship and Action*

**Compiled by  
The Washington Inter-Religious Staff Community  
Working Group on Human Trafficking**

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# ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

The Washington Inter-Religious Staff Community (WISC) is an informal convening of the Washington, D.C.-area offices of national-level religious denominations and faith-based groups. Organizations participating in WISC work on a range of public policy issues, and seek to contribute a moral and faith-informed perspective to the discourse and advocacy around these topics.

WISC has several working groups that focus on issues of particular concern to the faith-based community. The WISC Working Group on Human Trafficking was formed in 2015 in recognition of a growing awareness among people of all faiths regarding the oppression and injustice of human trafficking and a burgeoning movement within the faith-based community to end all forms of modern-day slavery. The Working Group is intended to serve as a resource and a catalyst for the faith community as it seeks to engage more deeply with the issue and work shoulder-to-shoulder with governments and civil society to help end trafficking.

This toolkit is a project of Working Group. It was compiled by representatives of the United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society, the Office of Public Affairs of the Bahá'ís of the United States, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, the Jewish Federations of North America, and the Jewish Council on Public Affairs, with content provided by several faith-based organizations that participate in WISC. While the toolkit is not exhaustive in the information it presents, it is intended to be a starting point for faith communities around the country as they seek to educate themselves and take action during Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January of 2016.

The toolkit contains basic information about trafficking, as well as specific information regarding its impact on children. Children were chosen as a focus of this year's efforts because all faith traditions value and encourage the protection of the vulnerable, particularly children, and because, due to their vulnerability, children are at heightened risk of trafficking. During Human Trafficking Awareness month in January 2016, communities are encouraged to focus on the impact of trafficking on children. The toolkit also contains faith-based resources for several faith traditions, including prayers, scriptures, statements, fact sheets and resolutions. Finally, the toolkit contains ideas for local faith communities to take action against human trafficking, as well as links to additional print and multimedia resources.

It is hoped that this toolkit will help local faith communities across the country raise awareness, promote dialogue, and take moral action against the scourge of modern-day slavery.

# THE BASICS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## Slavery Isn't Dead.

Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons, is the illegal trade of people for exploitation or commercial gain. It is a form of modern-day slavery. Human trafficking enslaves at least 20 to 30 million men, women, and children each year.

**The two primary forms of trafficking are labor trafficking and sex trafficking. Examples of Trafficking include:**

- Forced and bonded labor
- Child labor
- Debt bondage among migrant laborers
- Involuntary domestic servitude
- Forced sex and sex trade
- Child prostitution
- Child soldiers

**“From the girl forced into prostitution at a truck stop, to the man discovered in a restaurant kitchen, stripped of his passport and held against his will. All trafficking victims share one essential experience: the loss of freedom.” – Polaris**

**Factors that facilitate trafficking include:**

- Poverty
- Labor shortages or surpluses
- Corruption
- War and violent conflict
- Organized crime
- Racism
- Abuse and social violence
- Climate change and natural disasters
- Sexual and gender-based discrimination and violence
- Media images and cultural norms that promote internalized oppression

**“Modern slaves are rarely held by chains, but instead slaveholders use violent force, fraud, and/or psychological coercion.” – The Free Project**

**Trafficking in persons has been outlawed:**

- Globally by three UN conventions known as the Palermo Protocols
- In the US by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and other legislation

### **ACT** (one or more)

- Recruitment
- Transport
- Transfer
- Harboring
- Receipt of Persons

+

### **MEANS** (one or more)

- Threats or use of force
- Coercion
- Abduction
- Fraud
- Deception
- Abuse of power
- Payments or benefits

+

### **PURPOSE** (one or more)

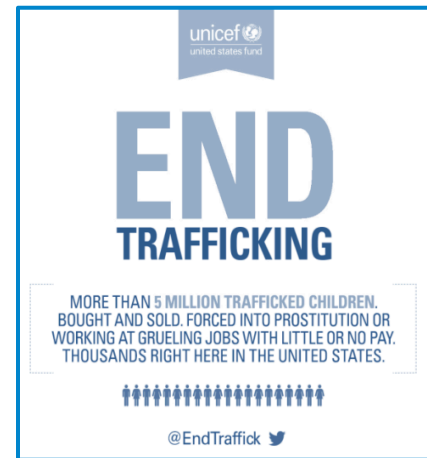
- Slavery or similar practices
- Force labor
- Removal of organs
- Sexual exploitation
- Other exploitation

**= TRAFFICKING**

# THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

**Of the more than 20 million victims of human trafficking globally:**

- **at least 5 million are children**
  - 17,000 of those children are from the United States (46 children every day).
  - Even very small children are forced into labor and are taken away from their families and forced to perform unspeakable acts.
  - Child trafficking victims could be anyone, including relatives, neighbors, or friends.



**Protecting children requires:**

- Timely victim identification.
- Placing children in a safe environment.
- Providing children with social services, health care, psychosocial support.
- Reintegration of children with family and community, if it is in their best interest.
- Training professionals working with children, including social workers, health workers, police and border officials to help stop trafficking and rehabilitate survivors.
- Strengthening laws and policies to prevent future trafficking, including:
  - Establishing minimum labor standards to protect against child labor.
  - Supporting access to education for children.

## **Homeless Youth in the United States**

- Approximately 1.68 million U.S. youth experience homelessness each year.
- Unsheltered youth are more likely to fall victim to sexual exploitation.
  - 28% of youth living on the street trade sex for basic needs, such as food or shelter, a practice known as “survival sex.”
- 21 – 42% of runaway and homeless youth were sexually abused before leaving home.
- As many as 75% of runaway youth drop out of school, limiting employment opportunities and wage earnings.
- Street Outreach Programs help 25,000 youth find shelter each year.
  - Yet, since 2008, over 45,000 youth were turned away from Basic Center and Transitional Living programs due to lack of resources and space.

## **The Convention on the Rights of the Child**

- The convention is a global treaty that sets international standards for protecting children from abuse, violence, and exploitation.
- The US is now the only country in the world that hasn't yet ratified the Convention.

## FAITH-BASED RESOURCES



## LISTED BY FAITH OR DENOMINATION IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

## Excerpts on Slavery and Trafficking from the Bahá'í Sacred Writings

It is forbidden you to trade in slaves, be they men or women. It is not for him who is himself a servant to buy another of God's servants, and this hath been prohibited in His Holy Tablet. Thus, by His mercy, hath the commandment been recorded by the Pen of justice. Let no man exalt himself above another; all are but bondslaves before the Lord, and all exemplify the truth that there is none other God but Him. He, verily, is the All-Wise, Whose wisdom encompasseth all things.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

We have been informed that thou hast forbidden the trading in slaves, both men and women. This, verily, is what God hath enjoined in this wondrous Revelation. God hath, truly, destined a reward for thee, because of this. He, verily, will pay the doer of good his due recompense, wert thou to follow what hath been sent unto thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

~ Bahá'u'lláh (in a tablet addressed to Queen Victoria)

You must show forth that which will be conducive to the welfare and tranquility of the helpless ones of the world. Gird up the loins of effort; perchance the slaves may be emancipated from bondage and find freedom. In this day, the cry of justice is raised and the lamentation of equity is heard.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou choosest for thyself.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

Blessed is the ruler who succoureth the captive, and the rich one who careth for the poor, and the just one who secureth from the wrong doer the rights of the downtrodden, and happy the trustee who observeth that which the Ordainer, the Ancient of Days hath prescribed unto him.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

The entire human race are servants of the Lord of might and glory, as He hath brought the whole creation under the purview of His gracious utterance, and hath enjoined upon us to show forth love and affection, wisdom and compassion, faithfulness and unity towards all, without any discrimination.

~ `Abdu'l-Bahá

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer to the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy. O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind. O God! Establish the Most Great Peace. Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together. O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

### **Excerpts on Children from the Bahá'í Sacred Writings**

Every child is potentially the light of the world – and at the same time its darkness; wherefore must the question of education be accounted as of primary importance. From his infancy, the child must be nursed at the breast of God's love, and nurtured in the embrace of His knowledge, that he may radiate light, grow in spirituality, be filled with wisdom and learning, and take on the characteristics of the angelic host.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Every child must be instructed in sciences as much as is necessary. If the parents are able to provide the expenses of this education, it is well; otherwise the community must provide the means for the teaching of that child.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O Thou kind Lord! These lovely children are the handiwork of the fingers of Thy might and the wondrous signs of Thy greatness. O God! Protect these children, graciously assist them to be educated and enable them to render service to the world of humanity. O God! These children are pearls, cause them to be nurtured within the shell of Thy loving-kindness.

Thou art the Bountiful, the All-Loving.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Children are the most precious treasure a community can possess, for in them are the promise and guarantee of the future.

~ The Universal House of Justice

### **Statement from the Bahá'í International Community**

#### **[Rights of the Child](#)**



# CATHOLIC

## Educational Resources

[US Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking](#) (USCSAHT) is a collaborative, faith-based network that offers educational programs and materials, supports access to survivor services, and engages in legislative advocacy to eradicate modern-day slavery. USCSAHT is now offering monthly bulletin inserts: short announcements to help inform the Catholic community about the sin of human trafficking. The inserts offer facts about trafficking and a link to the website, which is rich in educational and faith resources, along with current news about human trafficking in the U.S. The most recent bulletin insert (in English and Spanish) is [December 2015 – March 2016](#).

[US Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking Educational Modules](#) are brief, concise educational resources which help to break down a single aspect of human trafficking.

- [Root Causes of Human Trafficking](#)
- [Reducing the Demand for Human Trafficking](#)
- [Poverty & Human Trafficking](#)
- [Human Trafficking and Children](#)
- [Human Trafficking and Environmental Refugees](#)

[Sisters of the Good Shepherd Position Paper on Trafficking](#)

## Prayer Resources

[The Beatitudes—A Contemporary Version](#)

Composed by the International Sisters of Mercy Global Action – Opposing Human Trafficking Working Group during a Theological Reflection led by Elizabeth Dowling, RSM, on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2015. We are grateful to Sisters Jeanne Christensen, RSM and Karen Donahue, RSM for sharing their work with us.

[Human Trafficking Awareness Month Prayer Service for an End to Human Trafficking](#)

Author: Maria Elena Perales from the Southern CA Partners for Global Justice. Stories adapted from Change.Org/ Polaris Project/ CAST/ Stop Trafficking Newsletter/ Kamala D. Harris CA Attorney General

[A Prayer for the End of Human Trafficking](#)

Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, N.J.

# JEWISH

## Jewish Values

### Children

“By the breath of children God sustains the world.” (Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 119b). Jewish tradition places great value on the sanctity and welfare of children. Children, like all human beings, are created in the image of God. Read more [here](#).

### Human Trafficking

Maimonides, one of the greatest rabbinic voices of our tradition, spoke on the utter importance of helping and freeing those enslaved in a lifestyle that is beyond their control. Read more [here](#).

## D’var Torah

- [Slavery and Human Trafficking: Shemot, Exodus 1:1-6:1 by Rabbi Jarah GreenField](#)
- [Three Plagues: Bo, Exodus 10:1-13:16 by Rabbi Pam Fry](#)

## Resolutions on Combating Human Trafficking

- [Resolution on Combating Human Trafficking in the United States, adopted by the 2014 JCPA Plenum](#)
- [Resolution on Human Trafficking, adopted by the 2006 JCPA Plenum](#)

## Take Action!

It is estimated that **approximately 1.68 million youth experience homelessness each year in the U.S.** For over 40 years the Federal government has provided funding for programs that provide street outreach, temporary shelter and services, and transitional living to this population.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act (RHYTPA) looks to improve the programs by: expanding funding for research, data collection and collaboration, creating a National Runaway Youth Hotline, and adding nondiscrimination protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth. It is estimated that nearly 40% of the runaway and homeless youth population identifies as LGBT, the enhancements in this bill would help providers give more appropriate services to this population.

Write to your Senator and tell them you want to see this important legislation passed as is! Fill out the letter below and mail to the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, ATTN: Krissy Roth, to be delivered directly to your Senator’s office in Washington, DC:

1775 K St NW, Suite 320  
Washington, DC 20006

Don’t forget to include:

- Your Senator’s last name, If you are not sure you can find out [here](#)
- Print your name at the bottom
- Note what city where you live
- Mail letter by the end of Human Trafficking Awareness Month (January)

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_

January is Human Trafficking Awareness month and as a member of the Jewish community I believe we have a moral and ethical responsibility to combat modern day slavery in the U.S. and around the world. I am writing to urge you and your colleagues to adopt the Runaway and Homeless Youth Trafficking and Prevention Act (RHYTPA) (S. 262).

It is estimated that approximately 1.68 million youth experience homelessness each year in the U.S. For over 40 years the Federal Government has funded programs through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that give temporary shelter to homeless youth, aid in family reunification, fund grants to private and nonprofit agencies on the ground to get youth off the street, and provide transitional living through longer term housing.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act would expand funding for research, data collection and collaboration, create a National Runaway Youth Hotline, and require RHYA grantees to have a plan for working with outreach programs to attract runaway or homeless youth who are victims of trafficking. Importantly, the bill also would add a nondiscrimination provision requiring all programs that receive RHYA funding to provide services equally, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT).

The Torah teaches us that we are holy when we help others: when we take care of the stranger and the marginalized (see Exodus 20-26; Leviticus 19:9-10, 14; Deuteronomy 24:14-22). I'm asking you to put politics aside and work to reauthorize RHYA in 2016.

Sincerely,

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Name

City

**MUSLIM**

# PROTESTANT

*Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

Proverbs 31: 8-9

Human Trafficking is a crime against humanity and ultimately a sin. Human trafficking denies the values of human life, exposes victims to serious health risks, endangers the mental well-being of victims and impedes the ability of victims to reach their full God-given potential. As Christians, we believe that "all human beings are made in the image of God, that every person is of intrinsic worth before God and that every individual has a right to the fullest possible opportunities for the development of life abundant and eternal" (*NCC Human Rights Policy Statement, 1995*). It is our responsibility to use the resources at our disposal to end human trafficking and to advocate for global policies and practices that would bring the activity we now know as human trafficking to a conclusive and absolute end. (NCC Resolution on Human Trafficking)

Protestant denominations and affiliated organizations are active in addressing human trafficking in all its manifestations. This work includes spiritual formation, education and advocacy. Many denominations have work or offices that call for strengthening local, state, national, and international policy. Below is a list of websites and resources that reflects such commitments.

## **Worship Resources: [Protestant worship resource packet](#)**

### **Denominational resources/links (not exhaustive):**

American Baptist International Ministries [Resolution Against Slavery](#)

Disciples Home Missions [Webpage on Human Trafficking](#)

Episcopal Church [Human Trafficking Website](#)

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [Human Trafficking Website](#)

Global Ministries (Christian Church/Disciples of Christ & United Church of Christ) [Human Trafficking webpage](#)

National Council of Churches' [Resolution on Human Trafficking](#)

Presbyterian Mission Agency [Human Trafficking Website](#) and [toolkit](#)

Southern Baptist Convention [Resolution Condemning Trafficking](#)

United Church of Christ [Human Trafficking Website](#) and [synod resolution](#)

United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society [Human Trafficking Website](#)

United Methodist Women [Human Trafficking: Preventing, Protecting, Prosecuting](#)

[World Council of Churches Consultation on Human Trafficking](#)

# TAKING ACTION

- **Pray individually and with others.**
  - Convene prayer gatherings with those in your faith community, with local interfaith organizations, and with the wider community for justice and healing for all those who have been affected by human trafficking.
- **Raise awareness.**
  - Share news stories, videos, blog posts, and other forms of media that highlight the issue of human trafficking with your family, friends, and contacts.
- **Hold workshops and informational meetings.**
  - Educate and mobilize your faith community to around the issue of trafficking.
- **Involve children and youth.**
  - Create spaces for young people to dialogue about trafficking. Empower them to inform and protect themselves and others, and to help end this injustice.
- **Support legislative action.**
  - Organize groups to write, call, or meet with your elected representatives.
  - Examples of pending anti-trafficking legislation include:
    - End Modern Slavery Initiative Act (S.553), which proposes creating a global fund to receive money to combat trafficking around the world.
    - Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act of 2015 (S.1968 & H.R.3226), which would require companies to disclose the measures they're taking to address forced labor and human trafficking within their supply chains and empower everyday consumers to make informed decisions about the companies they choose to support.
    - Runaway and Homeless Youth Trafficking Prevention Act (S.262 & H.R.1779), which would ensure that all homeless youth have access to services and that agencies have training to help prevent youth trafficking.
- **Contact the National Human Trafficking Resources Hotline.**
  - Call 888-373-7888 if you suspect that someone is being trafficked.
  - Share this number with others and encourage them to use it if necessary.
- **Encourage companies to promote fair labor practices.**
  - Helpful websites include: <http://chainstorereaction.com>
- **Help law enforcement map and investigate where trafficking is happening.**
  - Contribute to websites such as <http://slaverymap.org>
- **Consume wisely and ethically.**
  - Educate yourself and your community about ethically made products, such as fair trade coffee and chocolate, and supporting these products whenever possible.
  - Look for organizations that support victims or sell gifts made by survivors. Examples include: <http://www.madebysurvivors.com>
- **Fight sex tourism.**
  - Ask travel agencies, hotels, and tour operators to sign the Code of Conduct for the Protections of Children in Travel and Tourism: <http://www.thecode.org/>.

# FURTHER RESOURCES

## Background Information and Facts

- [Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking \(ATEST\)](#)
- [United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons](#)
- [U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons](#)

## Stories & Testimonies

- BBC: [Human Trafficking: The Lives Bought and Sold](#)
- *Huffington Post*: [Human Trafficking Survivors Open Up About Horrors](#)
- NPR: [Beyond Brothels: Farms and Fisheries are Frontier of Human Trafficking](#)
- *New York Times*: [The 21st Century Slave Trade](#)
- CNN: [Sex Trafficking: The New American Slavery](#)

## Videos

- [Not My Life](#)
- [Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking film list](#)
- [A Heart for Justice film list](#)
- [Free the Slaves Video Library](#)
- [Polaris Video Library](#)
- [Child Labor Coalition Video Library](#)
- [CBS Documentary on Religious Response to Human Trafficking](#)

## Campaigns, Toolkits & Other Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - [Child Victims of Trafficking](#)
  - [Homeless and Runaway Youth Programs](#)
  - [Rescue & Restore Campaign](#)
  - [Services Available to Victims of Human Trafficking: A Resource Guide](#)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
  - [Blue Campaign](#)
- U.S. Fund for UNICEF:
  - [Child Trafficking: End Trafficking Campaign](#)
- International Justice Mission
  - [The Freedom Commons](#)
  - [Youth Leaders: 24-Hour Justice Experience](#)





# NOT MY LIFE

## STORIES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Filmed on five continents, in a dozen countries, *Not My Life* takes viewers into a world where millions of children are exploited, every day, through an astonishing array of practices including forced labor, domestic servitude, begging, sex tourism, sexual violence, and child soldiering.

Challenging though it may be, *Not My Life's* message is ultimately one of hope. Victims of slavery can be set free and go on to live happy and productive lives.

**SPECIAL OFFER:** Free digital access to *Not My Life* for faith groups. Register to receive the link to the film with the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church at [www.umc-gbcs.org/not-my-life](http://www.umc-gbcs.org/not-my-life)

### The Film

Including *Not My Life* feature (64 min) and abridged (30 min) versions;; Spanish subtitled versions and more.

### Education Center

Resources include anti-trafficking training opportunities, educational curriculum, as well as industry-specific materials on identifying and responding to human trafficking.

### Toolkits & Guides

Find Interfaith Resources in the *Interfaith Toolkit on Human Trafficking* at [www.umc-gbcs.org/HT-Toolkit](http://www.umc-gbcs.org/HT-Toolkit)

Find *Not My Life* Screening Toolkits; Discussion Guide; and, Guides to Hosting *Not My Life* Screening Event and House Party at [www.notmylifeactioncenter.com](http://www.notmylifeactioncenter.com)



