

**PRAY**

**FOR JAPAN**

*Eliminate child trafficking in Japan:  
A prayer warrior's guide*

**ZOE**  
JAPAN



# INTRODUCTION

**Dear Prayer Warrior**

We are so excited that you feel the Holy Spirit tugging at your heart to pray for Japan!

**We strongly believe that God has a special place for Japan in His heart, and your prayers can help us break down the barriers that are still holding back the harvest. Decades of missionaries have sown the Word in this beautiful country, and we stand on His promise:**

*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it*

*- Isaiah 55:11 (KJV)*

Most reports indicate that overall Japan has less than 1% Christians, but we are hearing wonderful testimonies from missionaries and churches, and stand in awe at the creative ideas that our brothers and sisters in Christ are coming up with to share the Gospel in new and exciting ways.

It is therefore with hope in our hearts that we share these prayer topics that relate directly or indirectly to the exploitation of vulnerable children and youth. And although we cannot meet you in person, we feel truly humbled at this opportunity to meet you in spirit at the feet of Jesus.

We would love to hear from you, so please do not hesitate to reach out to us at [info@goZOE.jp](mailto:info@goZOE.jp)

With gratitude,  
ZOE Japan  
[www.goZOE.jp](http://www.goZOE.jp)  
[www.thegoodnews.jp](http://www.thegoodnews.jp)



# Prayer topic # 1 :

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIALS (CHILD PORNOGRAPHY)

### DESCRIPTION

Pictures (photos or drawn), videos or sound recordings of children who are wearing less clothing than usual, wearing no clothing, or having sex.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Possession of child sexual abuse imagery was declared illegal in Japan in 2014, but continues to be widely available. The law excludes virtual child sexual abuse images/pornography in manga or anime. These materials often depict violent sexual acts against very young children, and perpetrators use them as examples to desensitize children by creating the impression that it is normal for adults and children to have sex. There is a strong resistance from the manga/anime community against regulation, citing freedom of expression through the arts. With the development of generative AI technology, it has become difficult to distinguish whether child sexual abuse images are real or virtual. We must raise our voices that using virtual depictions that subject children to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse is dangerous in itself.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- Protection of children against sexual exploitation through pornography.
- Wide availability of materials that sexualize children puts many children at risk for abuse. Pray for Japan to align with other developed nations and declare virtual child sexual abuse materials (manga, anime, AI, etc.) illegal.
- For the Holy Spirit to convict perpetrators of their sin and opportunities for them to be saved and delivered!

*Learn to do right; seek justice.*

*Defend the oppressed.*

*Take up the cause of the fatherless;  
plead the case of the widow.*

*Isaiah 1:17 NIV*



# Prayer topic # 2:

## SEXTORTION

### DESCRIPTION

Sextortion is a form of extortion in which someone threatens to share sexually explicit private images or videos of the victim online unless the victim meets their demands such as sending more compromising material or money.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Currently, anyone can easily connect with strangers on social media. Girls may follow the demands of a perpetrator they meet online or send him/her sexual photos due to their longing to be liked and accepted by someone. Boys may be seduced by the perpetrator they meet online and perform sexual acts in front of a camera. They are then threatened by perpetrators who will expose the photos or recorded images to their family, relatives, friends and school/work associates, and they are so distressed that they even consider self-harm. Children without a father-figure or strong male role model are especially vulnerable.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- That sex education in homes and schools will become more prevalent and that students will become aware that sex is directly related to their dignity and value as a person.
- Children who are victims of sextortion often blame themselves and cannot talk to their parents or teachers. Pray that victims will have the courage to reach out and talk to a trusted adult.

*So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them. God blessed them.  
Genesis 1:27-28 NIV*





# Prayer topic # 3 :

## COMPENSATED DATING

### DESCRIPTION

Japan is infamous for its sexual obsession with school girls. Compensated dating, known locally as enjo kosai or papakatsu (loosely translated as sugar daddy) is where an adult (normally male) pays for a date with a school girl. Some girls advertise themselves through social media, and many others are controlled by traffickers and are forced to provide sexual services to perpetrators. Some of these children are employed by theme cafes (often referred to as JK businesses, JK standing for Joshi kōsei or high school girl) as waitresses or staff, but then required to provide off-menu sexual services.

### CURRENT SITUATION

It is illegal for JK businesses to employ children under 18, but many establishments still advertise their sexual services by using younger looking adult models dressed in school uniform, thereby encouraging the sexual objectification and exploitation of children.

Children that advertise themselves often have a history of sexual abuse and lack a stable home environment.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- The National Police Agency, who have a daunting task to crack down on underground operations.
- For schools to open their doors to organizations such as ZOE to provide much needed awareness and education to children and teachers.
- Wisdom for authorities and NPOs with rescue efforts.



# *Prayer topic # 4 :*

## **CHILD POP IDOLS**

### **DESCRIPTION**

A Japanese pop idol is a young entertainer marketed for image, attractiveness, and personality in Japanese pop culture. Idols are primarily singers, but they are also trained in a wide range of roles, such as acting, modeling, and appearing in variety shows.

Many female teenage pop idol groups have a fan base of mostly men in their 30's and 40's. Some of these fans display an unhealthy obsession with their favorite child idol, spending thousands of yen per month to speak to their favorite performer for a few seconds or take a photo after a performance.

Poor regulation makes it easy for agents with nefarious intentions to strictly control every aspect of the idol's life, isolating them from family and friends. Many idols are believed to be in debt bondage, forced to pay off their debts through excessive working hours or sexual favors, and even stalked and harassed by fans.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

There are believed to be more than 10,000 teenage girls who are actively performing idols in Japan. Most activities are centred around Akihabara district in Tokyo.

### **SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS**

- Pray for those fans that have an unhealthy attraction to the girls. May the Holy Spirit touch these men (and women), set them free and enable them to engage in healthy, age-appropriate relationships in line with His will.
- Stricter regulation in the industry to combat exploitation of children.
- Doors to open for ZOE Japan and other NPOs so that we can directly reach the boys and girls that are being exploited.
- Opportunities and wisdom to educate parents and their children that aspire to become idols about the dangers.

# Prayer topic # 5 :

## LABOR TRAFFICKING

### DESCRIPTION

Japan's low unemployment rate and rapidly declining population is providing job opportunities for migrant workers to live and work in Japan.

The TITP (Technical Intern Trainee Program) is a government initiative that provides the opportunity for companies to bring in foreign workers as part of a structured internship. The main intention of the initiative is to contribute to developing countries by upskilling the trainees through on-the-job training, but in reality, many companies are abusing the program to acquire a cheap source of labor.

Trainees that enter Japan through the program often experience slave-like conditions such as low wages and physical abuse, with lack of access to legal/support resources. There have been ongoing reports by female trainees of forced abortions, abandonment of their infants, and forced return to their countries by employers as pregnancy is considered a breach of contract.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Voices of Technical Intern Trainees

(1) I lost my savings and borrowed 1 million yen in order to come to Japan. (2) I fear that consulting with my company would result in having to resign or return to my home country, and I would not be able to repay my debt. (3) I was subject to very dangerous work and terribly long working hours. (4) I didn't learn anything that would be useful in my home country. etc.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- Wisdom and resources for the various NPOs that are providing support to these vulnerable trainees.
- Strengthening of the protocols by authorities to identify and take swift action against employers and agencies that exploit workers.
- Praise for improvements already implemented by the government.



# Prayer topic # 6 :

## BULLYING

### DESCRIPTION

Japan has a strong group culture, which in times of natural disasters has proven to be a wonderful strength as people stand together to support each other. Unfortunately, this also leads to the famous proverb: “the nail that stands out, must be hammered”.

Children that do not blend in (foreign, mixed race, broken families or simply different physical features or academic abilities than the norm), are often exposed to extreme forms of bullying – which contributes to the high suicide rate among children. This has intensified with cyber bullying, often in the form of revenge pornography.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Although the government is making efforts to eliminate bullying in schools and it is gradually being discussed more freely in society, there are still many children who suffer alone with the problem of bullying.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- Open doors for the Body of Christ to reach out to children. A child that hurts, will hurt other children – we need to reach perpetrators and victims with the Good News to see a true change.
- An increase and strengthening of Christian teachers in schools.
- Wisdom for parents and teachers on how to identify and treat bullying cases.

*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths,  
but only what is helpful for building others up according to  
their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

*Ephesians 4:29 NIV*





# Prayer topic # 7 :

## CHILD SUICIDES

### DESCRIPTION

Suicide is the leading cause of death among children in Japan aged 10-19yrs. Reasons for suicide are often linked to bullying in schools by other children, teachers or sports coaches, or children's inability to live up to academic expectations of their families.

Research by the Japan Support Center for Suicide Countermeasures show a significant increase in suicides from Aug 31st – Sept 2nd every year, just before children are supposed to return to school after the summer vacation.

### CURRENT SITUATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen an even higher rate of suicides among youth.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- The Body of Christ to reach out and provide support to vulnerable children.
- That children will learn who they are in Christ!
- God's wisdom and favor on various efforts by the government and NPOs to combat child suicides.

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*

*Isaiah 41:10 NIV*



# Prayer topic # 8 :

## RUNAWAYS

### DESCRIPTION

Children under 18 are running away from home often due to abuse in their home. They will flee and either post on social media that they are homeless and asking for someone to take them in or going to popular hubs where other runaway kids are known to gather. They are seeking community, a sense of freedom, and ways to escape their difficult lives in often harmful and dangerous ways.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Children who post on social media are easy targets for traffickers or pedophiles seeking to groom and abuse the child. Children who flee to hubs of other runaways are encouraged to sell their bodies to make money to survive, coupled with heavy drug and alcohol abuse and high rates of self-harm and even suicide. Traffickers or “hosts” are often involved in these groups seeking to groom and use them for their own self-serving desires.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- For families, especially parents in Japan to love their children and not abuse them.
- Wisdom for organizations seeking to support and help both runaways and their families.
- For runaway children, that God would protect them and guide them to safe environments with safe people seeking to help and not harm them.



# Prayer topic # 9:

## HIKIKOMORI

### DESCRIPTION

The term “HIKIKOMORI” (shut-in) describes a person who is completely isolated from society, shut up in a room for months to years without going to work or school. The term “HIKIKOMORI” refers to both the condition and the individual. It can be caused by bullying or harassment in their home environment, school, or workplace; or by depression or anxiety.

### CURRENT SITUATION

According to a survey by the Cabinet Office, it is estimated that about 1,460,000 people will be in a withdrawn state in FY2022, one in every 50 people in Japan. In a self-perception awareness survey of people aged 15-39, more than 70% of respondents said they “want to change their current selves” and “have a desire to work.” However, many of them have been traumatized by hurtful experiences, with half of the respondents citing bullying, power harassment, verbal abuse, violence, reprimands, and blame.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- That the local churches will be given knowledge, wisdom, and courage so that they can collectively build and implement support systems and programs for healing and recovery.
- For testimonies of mature Christians who have found freedom and experienced full restoration in fellowship with Jesus. ZOE Japan presents these testimonies as part of the body of Christ on thegoodnews.jp website!

*I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.*

*John 12:46 NIV*



# Prayer topic #10:

## WORKING CULTURE

### DESCRIPTION

Japan is notorious for extremely long working hours. Employees typically work at one company their entire lives, and are often required to give up personal or family time to meet workplace expectations. Adding to the excessive working hours are long commutes between their home and office – easily up to 4hrs per day for people working in city centers. Marriage and father-child relationships are heavily affected, with children often only seeing their fathers over weekends.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Extreme overwork is so common in Japan that it has its own term, “KAROSHI,” which means to work yourself to death (literally). In recent years, media attention turned to adult suicides due to excessive work pressure and has forced organizations to review their policies. In 2018, Japan enacted the Workstyle Reform Act, requiring employers to implement specific measures to limit employees’ working hours and improve work environments. The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed positively to workplace reforms.

### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- Wisdom and new opportunities for companies to continue with workplace reforms.
- That Christians in the workplace would be encouraged by God and their churches to pursue a healthy work-life balance, and that churches would be a place of rest and encouragement to Japanese believers.
- For men, especially Christian men, to prioritize their marriages and families over work; and for restoration of relationships between fathers and children.

*Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.*

*Proverbs 23:4-5 NIV*





# Prayer topic #11 :

## J.O.Y. Club

### Jesus Others and You



#### DESCRIPTION

ZOE Japan is proud to support J.O.Y. Club, a ministry under Evergreen Chapel. Together, we are able to reach out to the families in our neighborhood and share the love of Christ.

J.O.Y. Club's mission is to use English classes as a hook to reach children and their parents with the Good News of Jesus Christ, as well as provide a tool for the Japanese church to reach others in their community.

Since its launch in 1996 by missionary Joy Tani, the Lord has used J.O.Y. Club to lead numerous children, parents and even grandparents to Christ!

#### CURRENT SITUATION

Every year we see many children in J.O.Y. Club receiving Jesus. The next challenge is discipleship and helping them to grow so that they can be salt and light in their families and schools.

#### SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- More children be led to J.O.Y. Club and hear the Gospel.
- Salvation of parents and siblings.
- Creative ideas for our Bible time teachers to present the Word in an engaging way that speaks to the hearts of the children.
- That new believers will find a good church family with a strong Sunday school program to help them grow in their faith.

*Start children off on the way they should go,  
and even when they are old they will not turn from it.  
Proverbs 22:6 NIV*



# Prayer topic #12:



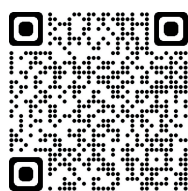
## DESCRIPTION

In Japan, Christianity is often perceived as a foreign religion, not suitable or relevant to Japanese people. It is therefore crucial to share the testimonies of Japanese Christians, especially stories of mature believers.

ZOE Japan is busy expanding thegoodnews.jp into an online journey for new seekers! It will help them discover who God is, His love for them and ultimately get them connected with a church. Part of the journey is to integrate a chat feature to assist seekers with deeper questions about God or life. Producing all the new content for the journey is a huge task and your prayers are the foundation of it all!

## SUGGESTED PRAYER POINTS

- New staff, creativity, and wisdom in producing new content.
- Collaboration to build a trusted network of churches and ministries to support seekers throughout their online journey.
- Ongoing relationships and financial support to complete the project.



*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.  
Romans 10:17 NKJV*



# My Notes



A grid of 12 columns and 20 rows of small dots, intended for writing notes.



***Reach every person. Rescue every child.***