



NEIGHBORS IN ACTION  
VECINOS EN ACCIÓN



NEIGHBORS IN ACTION  
**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023**



# God's Unfolding Impact



## Dear NIA friends,

When I first met Maria a few years ago, she always seemed bitter, complaining about everyone and everything. I could tell something was wrong, but she would not share about her life with anyone. She had first come to Neighbors in Action when one of our other NIA women brought her to our weekly Moms Bible study and prayer group, but she was mostly a passive – and cranky – participant. One day, I received a phone call – Maria was in the hospital. She had found out that her husband was cheating on her with another man, and when she confronted him, he became very violent. She ended up having to have a leg amputation due to the injuries

he inflicted on her. As if that wasn't enough, he then left her, and she was a single mom with no regular income and a child who suffered from a chronic heart defect. As NIA staff and families visited her, Maria started feeling much more loved and cared for. NIA helped her with some of the cost of a prosthetic leg, but most importantly we prayed and cried together. Maria had a sudden moment of revelation during one of our prayers:

**“In the midst of this, I have encountered God’s light and love, and recognized His presence in the midst of all my suffering, and His tender love for me through all the people who have cared for me.”**

Since then, Maria has barely missed a Thursday morning at our Moms Bible study and prayer group. Many who have known her for many years can't believe the transformation she has undergone. She enrolled her son in our middle school program. She is loving and kind, brings food for the whole group, volunteers with our youth program, and praises God for all the blessings in her life, because through His love she feels empowered to live life a beloved daughter of the King himself. **“My gratitude toward God is immense. I have no other way of expressing myself than to say, ‘Thank you, God!’”**



I want to echo Maria's immense gratitude and celebrate God's faithfulness to Neighbors in Action since 1995. Looking back at 2023, I am beyond grateful to be in the middle of the life-transforming work God is doing every day. The numbers and stories presented in this report are just a small glimpse of the unfolding miracles God performed last year. I am especially proud of our community involvement that has developed, from people being participants to our parents and youth becoming volunteers and leaders - many of our volunteers in 2023 came from within the Port Houston community. They also organized several fundraisers, including our annual tamale sale, as well as garage sales and Christmas markets to benefit NIA.

And speaking of fundraisers – Neighbors in Action hosted its first ever Annual Prayer Luncheon in October! We were honored to have Jim “Mattress Mack” McIngvale as our guest speaker at the event at the Junior League of Houston. Stay tuned for more information on this year's luncheon!



I am honored to partner with you in this work! Thank you for sharing in the adventure of investing in the dreams of Port Houston families as we proclaim and live the Gospel. As we move forward, we say with joy and confidence, **“thank you, God!”**

*K. Meier*  
**Kathrin Meier**  
Executive Director



## We partner with families in Port Houston & surrounding communities to transform lives through **spiritual growth**, education, & meeting basic needs.

Our goal is to support the families of Port Houston and surrounding communities in their growing relationship with God. In 2023, we offered Bible studies for children every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evening during the school year. The programs also included meals, game time, arts and crafts, and a monthly service project, such as baking cookies for fire fighters, or writing notes of appreciation to Port Houston Elementary School teachers. In addition, more than 40 children participated in our Vacation Bible School. One of our goals for 2023 was to include more dads in the spiritual lives of their children. We started off by inviting the dads on a father-kid outing to a bowling alley. The dads and kids loved the opportunity to spend more time together and bond.

Our middle and high schoolers met for our weekly Bible study, fellowship time, and dinner on Thursdays and Fridays. Our teenage girls enjoyed a Sunday afternoon girls Bible study together every week. We also added a new special program once a month called “Praying and Cooking for the Nations,” where students learned about a new country, prayed over its needs and explored its beauty through cooking a typical meal together. Our youth group participated in many service projects in the neighborhood and surrounding communities, such as cleaning our community center, picking up trash in the neighborhood, and volunteering at Target Hunger. Fifteen of our youth also joined in a weeklong in-town mission trip, staying at NIA at night and working on projects in the community during the day.

Our women’s group of over 60 women called “Women with a Purpose” met every Thursday for 3 hours to enjoy fellowship and participate in Bible studies. The group also met every Wednesday morning to pray for our neighborhood, staff, and their own intentions. The women went on a weekend retreat to Camp Allen in February, and on a silent retreat during Advent at Ruah Spirituality Center.

One of our goals in 2023 was to include husbands and fathers more. We hosted a monthly Christian couples’ workshop with 11 couples, as well as a weekend family retreat at Neighbors in Action. In addition, Neighbors in Action partnered with Universidad Cristiana El Shaddai to offer college level theology classes. Once a month, over 40 adults came together for a whole day for classes, and used the center during the week to form study groups and do homework together.

We also continued to focus on developing spiritual leadership skills. In 2023, we trained a teenage volunteer to be a leader at our programs for children from Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Seven women were part of the NIA community leadership team, and got together monthly to receive leadership training, spiritual training, and to discuss ideas, programs, and fundraising events with our staff. Two of the women also served on the NIA Board of Directors.

Our goal is to support the families of Port Houston and surrounding communities in their growing relationship with God. We had more than 40 children who participated in our Vacation Bible School this past year.



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“

I have been coming to NIA for about four years and have built up beautiful relationships with the mothers of our women’s group. I also have four children who have been attending Bible study programs and summer camps. I love what they learn about God and the Bible, how happy they come from NIA, the surprises and treats the staff gives them, all the love that we feel here at NIA. Also, thanks to all the marriage workshops, I can see a big difference in my relationship to my husband. He began to change the way he treated our marriage, treated our children, and we began having a much better relationship.

I believe that God has a purpose for each person and that He brought me to NIA to get filled by Him, get educated, and then to be able to give back a little of what I have received. I am very happy to be a volunteer here at NIA. I like giving back a little of how much God has given me. The ability to serve others helps me personally to grow more as a person and to be more compassionate. There are so many people suffering in our community, and NIA receives them with much love. Many people don’t have family in this country, and so NIA has become their family. The way everyone is treated here is something very special and big.”

- Maria



## We partner with families in Port Houston & surrounding communities to transform lives through spiritual growth, education, & meeting basic needs.

Neighbors in Action offered many educational opportunities for children, youth and adults in 2023. Our children were able to attend a weekly healthy nutrition and cooking club at Port Houston Elementary. During the summer months, we offered six weeks of camps for children that included arts, crafts, cooking, weaving, “Camp Hero” (a tutoring camp) and music offered by KREA Academy. NIA partnered with Young Audiences of Houston to offer additional summer classes for both children and youth, such as drumming, yoga, journaling, arts, and music. We also partnered with Young Audiences of Houston to offer additional summer classes for both children and youth, such as mindfulness, yoga, and conflict resolution. Thanks to our partnership with the Dynamo Foundation, many children and their families were able to attend Dynamo and Dash games for free. NIA was also able to offer a free field trip to the Children’s Museum of Houston, being an Open Door Partner. Additionally, we are very proud of our Neighbors in Action Girl Scouts Troop that met twice a month last year.

Our youth were offered weekly tutoring, as well as a college readiness camp for our middle and high school students that included different overnight trips for college campus visits, and hosting speakers from different colleges. In addition, NIA provided scholarships to 2 students planning to attend college. Our youth group attended many museums and cultural events in 2023, as well as fun outings to coffee shops, Go-Kart, and museums.

Over 40 women attended at least one of our workshops on healthy nutrition, financial literacy, and teenage drug use awareness. In addition, 30 women participated in a monthly arts-and-crafts course.



## EDUCATION

“ I started attending NIA the summer before I started high school. I was 14 years old. NIA was taking a couple of middle school kids to a weekend summer retreat at Stoney Creek. My younger brother was raving about the upcoming trip and kept trying to convince me to go. Naturally, I was very opposed to doing anything my younger brother suggested, but in the end, he convinced me. Although it was my first time participating in any NIA event, I felt so welcomed from the very beginning. After that trip, I started attending NIA events regularly and joined their youth program.

Through NIA I also started attending First Methodist Houston and eventually started working there as a Bible schoolteacher. I worked in different areas in the church all throughout high school and college. I attended the University of Houston and I graduated in May with a bachelor’s degree in Health Communication and minors in Biology and Latin. I am currently working in the ER at Memorial Hermann, but am planning to go back to school to pursue a higher degree in medicine.

People tend to ask me why I want to go into the healthcare field. The answer always seems to be: because I want to help people. And that’s true, but I don’t think it fully encompasses my why. I want there to be healthcare providers that look like me. I want to walk into a patient’s room and see their sigh of relief when they realize I speak Spanish too. I want to reassure patients that where they come from, how much money they have, or what language they speak will not dictate whether or not they receive help. I want to be able to make a difference and provide comfort to people on their worst days.

NIA provided me with a sense of belonging and a supportive community, I found people who supported my dreams and ambitions. Not once was I made to feel like where I came from dictated where I was going. NIA exposed me to opportunities and experiences I might never have encountered otherwise-like speaking in front of Mattress Mack! Through NIA I have gained a different perspective on life and a deeper appreciation for the world around me.

Most importantly, NIA instilled in me a desire to give back to my community. They have created an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued, regardless of their background or circumstances.

- Cassandra



## We partner with families in Port Houston & surrounding communities to transform lives through spiritual growth, education, & meeting basic needs.

Thanks to the Second Century Vision grant from United Way of Greater Houston, Neighbors in Action was able to support 65 Port Houston families – a total of 243 people, including 126 children – struggling to meet their basic needs. We provided rent and mortgage assistance, utility assistance, as well as food with the United Way funding. The grant will be renewed for one more year. Thanks to the partnership with United Way, we were also able to refer people interested in becoming financially independent to the Integrated Client Journey (ICJ) offered by United Way partners which provides navigation assistance to connect people directly to resources from the network nonprofit partners, across a range of services.



Our children and youth received school supplies in August. We also gave STAAR snack bags to all Port Houston Elementary students. Our Thanksgiving Feast provided meals for 400 people, as well as hundreds of gift cards, grocery bags, and gifts. We hosted a community-wide Easter Egg Hunt for over 200 children, providing meals, and gifts, as well as Christmas parties for 200 children and families with gifts and dinner. All moms from our Women's Group received a gift card and Bibles for Christmas. In addition, we distributed food packages throughout the year donated by different churches as well as the Port Authority of Houston. Thanks to our partnership with Councilmember Karla Cisneros, NIA offered pet vaccination clinics free of charge last spring.



In August, we entered a partnership with Fuller Life Therapy, a Christian nonprofit that trains, equips, and empowers developing therapists, who provide professional therapy to families and individuals at affordable rates. Thanks to our collaboration, we were able to provide free counseling to interested Port Houston families and individuals twice a week at our location.

We provided rent & mortgage assistance, utility assistance, as well as food with the United Way funding.

# MEETING BASIC NEEDS



I am so grateful for Neighbors in Action. I had to leave my abusive husband and spend some time at a shelter with my children. NIA helped me with the deposit for an apartment that I was able to get with a housing voucher. They also provided beds, mattresses, and dishes for us, as well as a food gift card. Staff connected me to food pantries, and some of the NIA volunteers adopted us for Christmas and provided gifts for my children as well as a gift card. Most importantly, everyone is always so incredibly kind to us, and nobody has ever made me feel bad about having to ask for support. I am so happy in our apartment now and to have a safe space for my children.”

- Carmen





# The Year In Numbers

**75** Children participated in our weekly programs

**35** Youth came to our weekly Bible Studies & Dinners

**65** Women participated in our weekly Women's Bible Study & prayer groups

**15** Youth joined in a missions trip

**17** Students visited different colleges

**99** Children & Youth participated in different summer camps

**400** Meals were served at our Thanksgiving Feast

**250** People volunteered throughout the year

**170** Children & Family Members attended our Christmas Party

**10** Families were saved from eviction

**\$59,074** Emergency Assistance provided to 65 families

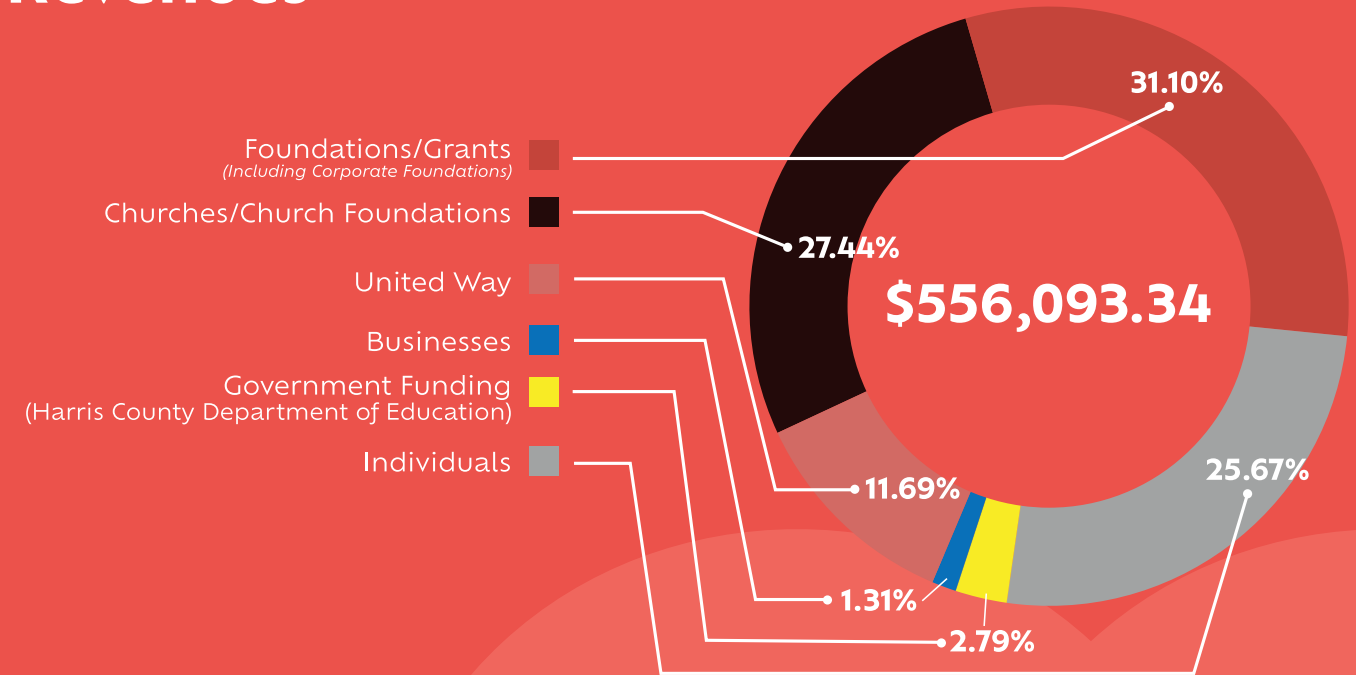
**70** Families received school supplies

**300** STAAR test bags for Port Houston Elementary students

# Financial Statement

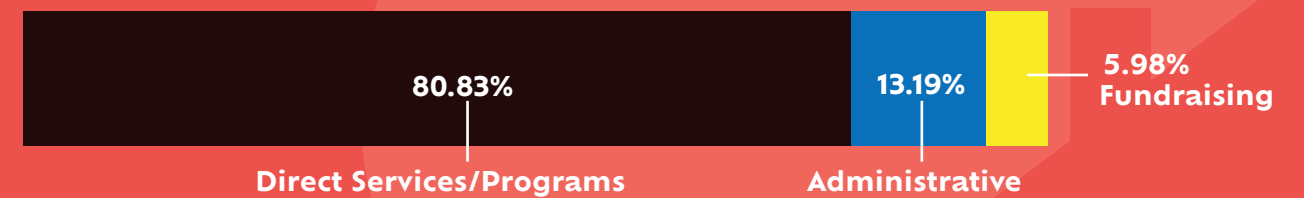
## General Operating Budget

### Revenues



### Expenses

\$530,827



### Assets

**Cash in Bank Account** (December 31, 2023): \$647,389.57

- Unrestricted Funds: \$586,111.15
- Restricted Accounts: \$ 61,278.42

#### Building Fund

As of December 31, 2023, Neighbors in Action spent \$1,427,053.62 on the new community center. There was a remainder of \$11,278.42 for capital expenses.

#### Mental Health Fund

There was \$50,000.00 in the mental health fund on December 31, 2023, granted by the Elkins Foundation. The mental health fund pays for co-pays for counseling services offered by our ministry partner Fuller Life Therapy, who offers therapy at our location.

**Property Value: \$1,255,965.52**



# Donors and Supporters

Neighbors In Action | January - December 2023

## Restricted Funds Donors

### Mental Health Support

#### \$50,000 and more

The Elkins Foundation

### Building Fund

#### \$5,000 and more

Laura Wayne

#### \$2,500 - \$4,999

Michael Davis

#### Up to \$2,500

Cynthia Compton

Albert Nieto

## Annual Fund Donors

### \$80,000 and more

Moody Methodist Church  
*The Permanent Endowment Fund*

The Gugenheim Family Foundation

### \$50,000 - \$79,999

First Methodist Houston  
United Way of Greater Houston

### \$25,000 - \$49,999

Helm Foundation  
Phillips 66

### \$10,000 - \$24,999

Anheuser-Busch Foundation  
Harris County Department of Education  
Larry and Kay Medford  
Rex and Marillyn Lee King Family Foundation  
Stoller Foundation  
The Hildebrand Foundation

### \$5,000 - \$9,999

Kristy Azadi  
David & Tina Blockhus  
John & Minerva Esquivel  
Glenda Flores  
Houston Texans Foundation  
Ben & Jen McClure  
Kurt & Marlene Nondorf

### \$2,500 - \$4,999

Caring Forever Foundation  
Christ The Servant Lutheran Church  
Michael & Luisa Kenny  
Long-Term Builders  
Don & Mary Julia Macune  
St. Paul's Methodist Foundation  
Laura Wayne  
Wright Abshire Attorneys PC

### \$1,000 - \$2,499

Caring Forever Foundation  
Daniel & Teresa Abrego  
William Aiguier  
Debbie Bartelsmeyer  
Clayton Boldt  
Richard Brown  
Gainsborough Waste / Texas Outhouse  
Carolyn Gray  
Paul Grossbard  
Kevin Gruyer  
Rachel & Roshan Gummattira  
Jim & Lynne Hackedorn  
Brian Hall  
Susan Helm  
Stanley & Diane Kneipp  
Memorial Drive United Methodist Church

Joel & Teresa Montgomery  
Steven Morgan  
Albert Nieto  
Artie Onayemi  
Alan & Evelyn Radwanski  
Shell Oil Company Foundation  
Sledge & Wen  
John Stevens  
Sandra Stevens  
Tank Service Inc  
Eric Viehman & Nancy Jenkins  
Andrew Vrana  
VYUHA Inc.  
W M Dewey & Son-Inc  
Byrom Wehner  
Steve & Karin Wende  
Charles Werlla

### Up to \$999

Caring Forever Foundation  
Diana Abrego / Quintanilla  
Rental Properties  
Jerry & Molly Abshire  
Adelphi SS Class  
Lisa Airhart  
Catherine Airola  
Margaret Allen  
Alpha & Omega SS Class  
Donald Ast  
Jack Aulick  
Irene Benavidez  
Eric Blackwell  
Patricia Bonner  
Judy Bowers  
Nena & Charles Brackett  
Kermit & Linda Brence  
Kathleen Brickley  
Kristen Campbell

Veronica Cappadonna  
DD Carpenter  
Juan Cervantes  
CHC: Creating Healthier Communities  
Cynthia Compton  
Jerritt Coward  
Ryan Daouza  
Michael Davis  
Rhys & Rachel Davis  
Marie-France Dupres  
Haley Eichelberger  
Bernie Embrey  
Scott & Maryann Fanty  
Fidelis Sunday School Class  
Focolare Movement Mariapolis  
FUMC Open Door SS Class  
Ray Garcia  
Denver Gartner  
Victor & Bea Garza  
Chris George  
Jeannie Gomillion  
Jesus Gonzalez  
Larry & Marilyn Harman  
Linda Hazelip  
Rachel Hooper  
Jim & Susie Horr  
Ike Hovind  
Dawn Hurst  
Jan Imig  
Nicholas & Michelle Inberg  
Aaron Lee & Bonnie Jones  
Abdul Kargbo & Kathrin Meier  
Karen Kent  
Albert & Elizabeth Kidd  
Ladona Kincade  
Stephen & Jennifer Kirk  
Houston & Brenda Knox

Kerry Kolb  
Lakewood Methodist Church  
Margaret Lam  
Lynn Larson  
Kenneth & Iona Lawson  
Lisa Lee  
Logos SS Class  
Lone Star Grease and Lubricants, LLC  
Jason Long  
Shannon Mailloux  
Monique Manning  
Bill Marshall  
Vivek & Leslie Massy  
Beverly Masters  
Alexis McCarty  
Benjamin McCullough  
James McGrew  
Courtney Meadows  
Michael Metzdorf & Christina Maley  
Nancy Moore  
Linda Morgan  
One In The Lord SS Class  
Peter & Jo Linda Papadakis  
Robert & Janice Reynolds  
Ellen Rodriguez  
Criselda Romo  
Dee Rubin  
Donna Salter  
Jose Sanchez  
Darleen Schauer  
Ruby Schell  
Ward & Iris Ann Schmidt  
Reed Schmidt  
Brent & Angela Shaw  
Rebecca Skelly  
Ronald Sledge  
Ann Spears  
June Spencer-Malm

St. Peter's UMC  
Stacy Stepler  
Janis Stevenson  
William Stewart  
Theresa Strong  
Monique & Bill Studak  
Linda Suen  
The Coombs Family Fund  
Thomas Vance  
Andi Wallis  
Hope Webber  
Jan Whitehead  
Louis and Denise Wilson  
James & Lela Windham  
Joyce Zotz  
James Zucconi

## In-Kind Donors

AA Diesel  
Danny Abrego  
Molly Abshire  
Laura Boldt  
Cavemen Cookers  
Dynamo Foundation  
Fisk Family  
First Methodist Houston  
Gainsborough Waste / Texas Outhouse  
Carolyn Harris  
Christie Harrison  
Shirley Hartmann  
Harvest Methodist  
Rep. Ana Hernandez  
Susie Horr  
Jean Irving  
Shoba Kewalramani  
Lakewood Methodist Church  
Lakewood Methodist MOPS Group  
Mary Julia & Don Macune

Memorial Drive United Methodist  
NIA Women's Group  
Marlene Nondorf  
Jane O'Brien  
Harry Okabayashi  
Port Houston Authority  
Sandra & Joe Roberson  
Angela Shaw  
Ami Shorter  
St. Peter's United Methodist Church  
Street Grace  
Theresa Strong  
The Get Together  
Paula Thomas  
Jan Whitehead  
Woodworkers of Houston  
Splinter Group  
Young Audiences of Houston



# Volunteers & Community Partners



**We could not do what we do without our amazing and committed volunteers! In 2023, volunteers worked a total of 2,221.50 hours, worth an estimated \$68,866.50. Thank you to all who come faithfully every week to build up relationships with our children, teenagers, and parents! Many of our current volunteers come from Port Houston and surrounding communities, wanting to invest in their own neighborhood.**

## Volunteer Groups 2023

Cavemen Cookers  
First Methodist Houston  
Harvest Methodist  
Lakewood Methodist  
Memorial Drive United Methodist Single Adults  
Senior Girl Scout Fulshear Troop 152001  
Girl Scout Troop NIA #135039  
NIA Women's Ministry

## Community Partners 2023

AA Diesel  
Abrego Properties  
Chick-Fil-A on Uvalde & Market  
Communities in School  
Connor's Gas and Diesel  
Councilwoman Karla Cisneros (District H)

County Commissioner Adrian Garcia (Precinct 2)  
Constable Silvia Trevino (Precinct 6)  
El Puerto Restaurant  
Fuller Life Therapy  
State Representative Ana Hernandez (District 143)  
Gainsborough Waste / Texas Outhouse  
Harris County  
Houston Dynamo Charities  
Houston Food Bank  
Memorial Drive United Methodist  
Pedro Morales  
Palletized Trucking  
Port Houston Elementary School  
Port Houston Authority  
Starbucks  
Supermercado SuKsa // El Rey  
W.M. Dewey and Son  
Young Audiences of Houston



## Board Of Directors 2024

**Ben McClure**  
mclubr@sbcglobal.net

**Maria Cardona**

**Lynne Hackedorn**

**Mike King**

**Claudia Lopez**

**Jennifer Martinez**

**Teresa Montgomery**

**Artie Onayemi**

**Ron Sledge**

**Laura Wayne**

**Taylor Woodruff**

## NIA Executive Director

**Kathrin Meier**  
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[www.neighborsinaction.com](http://www.neighborsinaction.com)

