Spiritual State of the World's Children

Colombia

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A Qualitative Study

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OneHope

OneHope is a non-profit organization with a mission to *affect destiny by providing God's eternal Word to all the children and youth of the world.* With programs in over 125 nations OneHope has reached over 500 million children and young people with a special presentation of the life of Jesus. Committed to presenting God's Word in a format that is relevant and dynamic, research is a critical step in the development of country and age specific products and programs.

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Section I: Project Overview

Convened Groups

The following groups have been used in Discovery research; each region is unique. These research strata were reexamined for a Colombian context; and groups were convened to maximize the value of information gathered.

- Government Leadership
- NGO
- Pastors
- Youth Leaders
- Teachers
- Students

Regions for Focus Groups

- Bogotá
- Medellín
- Armenia
- Villavicencio
- Cumaral (Meta)

Leadership and Facilitators

OneHope contracted The Metadigm Group for this project. The Metadigm Group's Executive Director, Allen Reesor, and the Director of Latin American Research, Farid Moreno, led and co-facilitated the project with assistance from Gloria Esperanza García (FUSBEC) and Richard Luna (OneHope). Training was conducted by Dr. Allen Reesor, Farid Moreno, Catalina Zamora (Latin America Research Coordinator).

Focus Group Composition

Each focus group was comprised of a single demographic and limited to no more than eight participants of similar social parity. Some of the demographic strata were represented by several groups, which met separately. The findings of each group represented a single demographic and were consolidated into a single report for that group. Information included in the final report does not contain identifiers that might determine name, identity, or opinion of any group member.

Format

The focus group sessions were 90 minutes or less in length. The facilitators encouraged group members to describe their living experience as they informally assess the needs and activities from their perspectives. Common themes were evaluated for inclusion in the final report.

Schedule for Data Collection

- The topics for focus groups were identified and finalized in meetings with ministry leadership representing various denominations and disciplines. These meetings occurred before the training and immediately prior to the focus group research.

- Focus groups were conducted from April 28 – May 1, 2008 by Wilson Gómez, Willington Ortiz, Jackeline Zapata, Diego Berrio, Viviana Sánchez, Fredy Prieto, Francis Pineda, Jhon Jairo Contreras, Laura Calderón, Ruth Cano, Pablo Arciniegas, Leila Guzman, Nidia Pencue, Jenny Guzman, Farid Moreno, Catalina Zamora, Richard Luna, and Jovanna Aldas. The draft report was completed on May 2, 2008.

This report was circulated for validation by key personnel familiar with children and youth in Colombia – Wilson Gomez, Gloria Esperanza Garcia, and Angela Narvaez. Following their review any additional comments, observations, and corrections were included in the final report.

Data Analysis and Reporting

The comments and findings of each focus group were transcribed by Farid Moreno, Catalina Zamora, and Jovanna Aldas into data files. The general discussion, main points, conclusions, and recommendations were written and read to the group at the end of the session. This information was compiled and translated by Catalina Zamora, Jovanna Aldas, and Farid Moreno. The draft report was analyzed and written by Allen Reesor, Farid Moreno, Catalina Zamora, and Jovanna Aldas.

The questions and issues identified as essential for decision-making, planning, and outcome design and recommended by design and ministry personnel were then finalized by leaders at the Strategic Planning in Medellin on April 24, 2008 and are answered in this report.

The report was reviewed by leadership in Colombia and was made available to designated focus group leaders for review prior to publication. The final report is the sole property of the Metadigm Group and OneHope, and may only be reproduced with permission by its authorized agents.

Focus Group Research Questions

1. Common social, material, and felt needs among children and youth in Colombia

2. Felt needs of displaced and at risk children and youth

3. What is the Christian faith message that will be communicated to children and youth that would link eternal perspectives as the answer to daily challenges?

4. Particular issues that would allow access to the lives of non Christian children and youth

5. Current state of children and youth ministries

6. Barriers to reaching children and youth (regionally and nationally)

7. Best practices of media appeal to children and youth in Colombia

8. Optimal quality of material for pricing and appeal

9. Levels of collaboration and willingness to collaborate among ministries

10. Need for new print and electronic media materials that appeal to and reach children and youth by region, gender or population density

11. The degree to which youth affiliation of gaming, television, and Internet impacts the need for innovative ministry design

12. Possibility of targeting specific sub-populations of youth (e.g. those with leadership potential)

13. Evaluate whether there has been a shift from rational to experiential validation of truth

14. Evaluate changing family dynamics in Colombia (i.e. the role and influence of parents, attitudes of parents in protecting minors, divorce, and single parent families)

15. Evaluate the impact of government policies and curriculum, and its impact on parents and youth

16. Potential for children and youth reaching peers

17. Priority set on evangelism and discipleship of children and youth in churches.

18. Church programs and materials needed by region, gender, and population density

19. What programs or type of communications would influence parents to spend more time with their children, preparing them for moral and material success?

20. What are the learning styles youth consider credible?

21. Are teachers willing to be involved in the personal development (of students), and what materials do they need?

22. Are there any methods that would influence youth to accept moral, justice, and measurements of success?

23. Is the church ready for public policy to interact with accepted biblical answers?

Focus Group Themes

Government
- Comment on the wellness of children and youth in Colombia.
- Comment on the influence of media in the Colombian culture.
- Discuss education and training for youth with community leadership potential.
- Discuss policies and curriculum.
- Comment on government projects for families.

NGO
- Moral and Justice: Comment on human rights.
- Beliefs and Learning: Discuss state programs.
- Family Development: Discuss domestic violence.
- Educational Evaluation: Evaluate the effectiveness of government policies and the education curriculum.
- State Effectiveness: Comment on social programs.

Teachers
- What are the needs of children and youth?
- What informational materials do children and youth prefer?
- Do institutions (government, family, church, education) collaborate on comprehensive formation programs for children and youth?
- Are there laws that promote effective education?
- What teaching methods provide best results for the children and youth?

Pastors
- What is the role of the youth in society and the family?
- What technology is available to pastors of youth and children?
- How would a ministry develop new programs so it would be effective, relevant, and dynamic in its impact on children and youth?

Youth Leaders
- What is God's purpose for the youth of Colombia?
- How do youth spend their free time?
- How do youth relate to their peers regarding the present and future?
- In scripture engagement and biblical teaching, what has most impact on youth?
- What talents do youth have that the church can help develop?
- What are the priorities in your congregation regarding youth ministry?

Youth (13 - 15 years)
- If you found one hundred dollars, what would you do with it?
- How would you describe the ideal family?
- When making decisions, what media influences you most?
- If you had the opportunity to choose any person to share one day with you, who would you choose and where would you go?
- If someone gave you an opportunity to teach someone about your favorite topic, how would you approach the task?

Youth (16 - 18)

- What do you do in your free time?
- Who do you look to when you have problems?
- Who would you rather spend most of your free time with?
- What are daily activities of youth in your community?
- What do you do for fun and how do these activities affect you?

Section II: Executive Summary

General Information

Since the onset of colonization, there were rebel movements under the Spanish rule. Most of them were either crushed or remained too weak to change the overall situation. The last one, which sought outright independence for Colombia, emerged in 1810 following the independence of St. Domingue in 1804 (present day Haiti). The Haitians subsequently provided a negligible degree of support for Simón Bolívar and Francisco de Paula Santander, the eventual leaders of this rebellion. Simón Bolívar had become the first president of Colombia and Francisco de Paula Santander was Vice President; when Simón Bolívar stepped down, Santander became the second president of Colombia. The rebellion finally succeeded in 1819 when the territory of the Viceroyalty of New Granada became the Republic of Greater Colombia organized as a Confederation including Ecuador and Venezuela (Panama was part of Colombia at the time).

Internal political and territorial factions and fighting led to the secession of Venezuela and Quito (today Ecuador) in 1830. After a two year civil war in 1863, the "United States of Colombia" was created, lasting until 1886, when the country finally became known as the Republic of Colombia. Internal divisions remained between the bipartisan political forces, occasionally igniting very bloody civil wars, the most significant being the Thousand Days civil war (1899-1902). The outcome was the separation of the Department of Panama in 1903 as a independent nation, due in part to the United States of America's intention to gain influence and control over the canal project. Colombia was then engulfed in a year long war with Peru over a territorial dispute involving the Amazonas Department and its capital Leticia. Soon after, Colombia achieved a relative degree of political stability, again interrupted by a bloody conflict that took place between the late 1940s and the early 1950s, a period known as *La Violencia* ("The Violence"). The cause was mainly due to mounting tension between the two leading political parties, breaking into full-fledged war after the assassination of the Liberal Presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán on April 9, 1948. This assassination caused riots in Bogotá and became known as El Bogotazo, the violence of these riots spread throughout the country and claimed the lives of at least 180,000 Colombians. From 1953 to 1964 the violence between the two political parties declined after Gustavo Rojas deposed the President of Colombia in a coup d'etat. He subsequently initiated negotiations with the guerrillas, which continued under the military junta of General Gabriel París Gordillo.

After Rojas' deposition, the two political parties: the Colombian Conservative Party and Colombian Liberal Party agreed to create a "National Front" in which the Liberal and Conservative parties would govern jointly. The presidency was to be determined by alternating conservative and liberal president every 4 years for 16 years; the two parties would have parity in all other elective offices. The National Front ended "La Violencia" and attempted to institute far-reaching social and economic reforms in cooperation with the Alliance for Progress. In the end, the contradictions of successive Liberal and Conservative administrations made for mixed results. Despite the progress in certain sectors, many social and political injustices continued and guerrilla groups such as the FARC, ELN and M-19, espousing socialist doctrines, were formed to fight the government and political apparatus.

In the late 1970s, powerful and violent drug cartels were formed and grew during the 1980s and 1990s. The Medellín Cartel under Pablo Escobar and the Cali Cartel, in particular, exerted political, economic and social influence in Colombia during this period. These cartels financed and controlled various illegal armed groups across the political spectrum. Enemies of these groups allied with the guerrillas and in turn spawned paramilitary groups.

The new Colombian Constitution of 1991 was ratified after being drafted by the Constituent Assembly of Colombia. The constitution included key provisions on political, ethnic, human and gender rights. The new constitution which initially prohibited the extradition of Colombian nationals faced accusations of lobbying by drug cartels to include this prohibition since they had previously sponsored a violent campaign against extradition, which included terrorist attacks and mafia style executions.

In recent years, the country has continued to be plagued by drug trade, guerrilla insurgencies and paramilitary groups resulting in continued bloody internal armed conflict. President Andrés Pastrana and the FARC

attempted to negotiate a solution to the conflict between 1998 and 2002 but failed to do so. President Andrés Pastrana also began to implement an initiative, with the dual goals of ending the armed conflict and promoting a strong anti-narcotic strategy.

During the presidency of Álvaro Uribe some security indicators have improved, showing a decrease in reported kidnappings, a 48% decrease in homicides and a reduction of the terrorist guerrila forces by 50%. It is argued that these improvements have favored economic growth and tourism.

The 2006–2007 Colombian para-politics scandal emerged upon revelations of judiciary links with paramilitary groups and government officials and politicians, most of whom are allied to the governing administration. By the end of 2008 more than 32,000 former paramilitaries had demobilized although, some renegades continue to engage in criminal activities. The Colombian Government has stepped up efforts to reassert government control throughout the country with the result that neighboring countries worry about the violence spilling over their borders.

Focus Groups and Meetings

Over the dates April 28 – May 1, 2008, thirty-five focus groups were scheduled and organized by FUSBEC and the Metadigm Group. A research team of forty members assisted in conducting focus group sessions, as well as gathering and collating data throughout Colombia.

Focus groups included government representatives, ecclesial leaders, representatives of NGOs, youth leaders, teachers, and students between the ages of 13 and 18.

Key Issues

Strengths & Opportunities
- Family is highly valued, and youth desire to have meaningful family relationships.
- Teachers are motivated to address youth issues.
- There is an opportunity to use relational and experience-based programs to influence youth.
- There is interest in using technology and media, which youth find appealing and relevant, as ministry tools.

Weaknesses & Threats
- Family is highly valued, and youth desire to have meaningful family relationships.
- Teachers are motivated to address youth issues.
- There is an opportunity to use relational and experience-based programs to influence youth.
- There is interest in using technology and media, which youth find appealing and relevant, as ministry tools.

Responses to Research Questions/Areas

1. Common social, material, and felt needs among children and youth in Colombia.

The youth in Colombia face insecurity on many levels; this is most commonly expressed as a fear of thinking about the future and insecurity in their relationships at home, which may include physical and psychological abuse. This can also be expressed as internal emotional conflict, and a theme of loneliness is a common expression of insecurity.

Family life is characterized by a lack of interaction between children and parents, often due to parents' attempts to provide financial security at the expense of providing the time necessary for children to develop emotional and social security.

2. Felt needs of displaced and at risk children and youth

The most common need expressed by displaced children and youth and/or those in conflict areas is the lack of programs and options to facilitate a return to normal life. The programs available, either NGO or governmental, have insufficient financial resources and are too few to provide an adequate opportunity for them to develop economic and social stability. The lack of options, role models, and unstable family structures (due to parental absence) often means that these children and youth reenter conflict zones as guerrillas or engage in criminal activities.

3. What is the Christian faith message that should be communicated to children and youth that would link eternal perspectives as the answer to daily challenges?

Youth feel the message they receive from the church is one that does not connect God and Christian faith to their daily lives. There is a desire to understand Christian faith as a means to address the concrete realities of daily life and an opportunity to engage in meaningful relationships and activities based on trust. This could be accomplished by offering biblical examples of people in relationship with God, those who actively address needs in their own lives and the needs of others as a personal expression of faith. Young people are interested in using their skills and talents on behalf of a relevant faith, but want a role in the formation of these programs; they are looking for opportunities to develop effective leadership skills.

4. Particular issues that would allow access to the lives of non-Christian children and youth.

Youth are looking for activities that do not appear to be routine, that give them opportunities to engage in active experiences. These can be varied and include activities of all types of activities. Among those mentioned are camps, the arts, music, and group events. Media, particularly technology, is very appealing and gives an opportunity for creative expression, experiences that produce learning, and personal development. The church could offer creative activities and media events that permit self expression to attract youth.

As youth are uncertain and insecure, they seek role models to give guidance. When they do not find these in parents or adults, they then turn to their peers, whose influence determines what they do. They are aware that peer influence can be bad, but have few alternative influences in their lives. Offering youth well equipped older youth or adults as role models and mentors would address a felt need and provide entry to their lives.

5. Current state of children and youth ministries by region, gender, and population density.

Ministry to children and youth is not generally perceived as an important aspect of church programming. This does not vary significantly by region or population density, except in the case of conflict regions where since the focus of the church is on survival in a dangerous environment even less attention is given to children. Pastors express a priority for maintenance and conservation of their current programs, while youth leaders recognize the need to develop and create attractive and relevant programs. The low priority placed on youth ministry means that youth leaders are pessimistic about new opportunities. They feel that the church sees children/youth ministries' function as one of entertainment, keeping the kids from interrupting other church activities.

Unchurched youth perceive the church as an institution, like school, that offers only an imposition of information, values, and ideas they do not see as relevant. They perceive the church as an organization that is not open to interactive dialogue about their issues, and one that does not offer activities that are interesting and relevant.

6. Barriers to reaching children and youth (regionally and nationally).

The greatest barrier to ministries for youth is a gap between generations, characterized by a mutual lack of trust and the incapacity to effectively communicate. This gap is unbridged in the church because leaders do not give younger people an opportunity to develop and influence programs and ministry. Youth sense that they are critically evaluated at every turn, and that adults are more concerned with controlling them than understanding them.

Youth workers acknowledge that the limited priority in youth ministries is a barrier, while pastors identify their own inexperience with newer technologies as either an obstacle or a challenge to effective ministry.

The only regional difference would be that the existing programs are even less readily available to children and youth in conflict zones.

7. Best practices of media appeal to children and youth in Colombia.

Music, television, and performing artists are influences and role models that are particularly popular with youth. Teachers report that students seek to emulate what they see on TV.

Technology, particularly the computer, the internet, and cell phone communication, is a high personal consumer and pastime priority for youth. Christian youth are somewhat aware of the dangers involved with media, but acknowledge that their secular peers are exceptionally engaged in this area.

Pastors and teachers identify media and the communication of the values projected as a negative influence and a challenge to their own programs and goals for young people. Although some youth leaders felt that media could be harnessed for good, there is a general perception that the lack of regulation means that overall it is more harmful than good.

8. Optimal quality of material for pricing and appeal.

Generally print media is an out-of-date approach and is declining in effectiveness. It is important that effective ministries begin to consider how they can use technology to communicate with youth. However, while print holds appeal, it should be used but with more graphics and less text heavy products.

9. Levels of collaboration and willingness to collaborate among ministries with education programs.

Collaboration is rarely evident among congregations and denominations. Interdenominational relationships are more generally characterized by mistrust and competition.

The education system has a completely different philosophical and moral approach to values than the church. The new education curriculum is based on a secular humanist model and actively undermines traditional Christian values.

Teachers, pastors, and NGOs report that parents have very little involvement in educational or religious programs. Parents generally do not hold the church or education system as solutions to effectively meet the needs in their own lives or those of their families.

It seems unlikely that unless there is a significant shift by the church to facilitate intentional partnerships, that collaboration with either educational institutions or families in general is possible.

10. Need for new print and electronic media materials to appeal to and reach children and youth by region, gender, or population density.

It is imperative that effective media be developed to reach children and youth. While the appeal of print media is fading, it is possible to engage youth with print that has graphics and topics that they find relevant. Their disinterest in reading means that text should be pointed and stimulate a response. Youth do not find information appealing unless it stimulates a response and experience.

Visual and electronic media are appealing and occupy an important part of the lives of young people and children.

11. The degree to which youth affiliation of gaming, television, and internet impacts the need for innovative ministry design.

It appears that due to their confirmed affiliation for media that addressing this issue in product development is essential if ministry programs hope to offer relevant information and increase their influence on Colombian youth.

Focus groups across all strata indicate that youth are fascinated with technological media. Apart from personal experience and the influence of relational mentors, technology is the most likely source of information and influence.

Despite the increased influence of this sector, ministry personnel express both fear and opposition to its use. For programs of ministry to effectively engage through this media, there will need to be a significant shift in this regard. This may require familiarization workshops for pastors and church leaders on the benefit and application of web-based ministry, short film, interactive media, and even more common applications such as PowerPoint.

12. Possibility of targeting specific sub-populations of youth (e.g. those with leadership potential).

Ministry should identify youth, specifically young women, who are characterized by flexibility, creativity, affinity for investigation, communication, and the capacity to teach. These young workers should be trained and equipped with leadership skills and, backed by their mentors and the church, empowered to acquire the level of influence necessary to implement sweeping change in children's and youth ministries.

They should be prepared so that their interaction with youth is characterized by its concise, dynamic, simple, and relevant communication. These youth leaders can then be used to evangelize and disciple peers, and possibly to plant churches in conflict areas. The resources of the established church will be necessary to facilitate their success.

13. Evaluate whether there has been a shift from rational to experiential validation of truth.

In particular, teachers and youth indicate that a preferred learning method is through personal experience and the experience of others, related through stories.

Cognitive learning is less intuitive for the youth population and requires greater patience. Dynamic and interactive teaching is more effective and seems to indicate that youth are transitioning to a more relativistic and personal definition of truth. Youth leaders mention that programs which are not dynamic and creative are not well accepted or readily engaged by youth.

14. Evaluate changing family dynamics in Colombia (i.e. the role and influence of parents, attitudes of parents in protecting minors, divorce, and single parent families).

The issue of family stability was addressed in focus groups of every stratum. In the case of children's groups, it is especially poignant and clear that they want to spend time with their parents but find that it is not possible. Although children indicated that they have questions they would like to ask parents or opinions they would like to voice, there is little opportunity for this to occur. It is unclear whether the lack of effective family time is a result of parents' efforts to meet the material needs of the family or a result of self-centered parenting; other various opinions were also mentioned.

Although the family is still a highly valued concept, the absence of parents who are working or otherwise unavailable, leaves children unprotected. A common expression of this need is the loneliness experienced and often mentioned by children and youth. Another consequence of this lack of protection is sibling abuse, particularly cited in cases where half-siblings are involved in the family composition. Much of the discussion around abuse focused on psychological abuse evidenced by children left alone; this isolation results in distorted socialization, particularly in cases where there is a lack of a male role model.

The dysfunction of the family has negatively influenced the development of moral values and increasingly children are found in situations where drugs, alcohol, sex, and violence are more commonly their experience than would be the case if the family where stronger and closer.

Divorce also plays a role in the pessimism expressed by children about the standards parents expect of them, but fail to model. These symptoms are only more pronounced in the case of displaced children who often have little or no contact with one or both parents.

15. Evaluate the impact of government policies and curriculum, and its impact on parents and youth.

The youth feel that the current curriculum and education process is not dynamic and to some degree irrelevant or boring. They also indicate that there is increasing conflict between students and teachers. Teachers see themselves as isolated and under-resourced to face the challenges in the classroom. They indicate that parents are not often supportive. The state does not support the promotion of values, but rather promotes priorities that are contrary to moral formation and the result is promiscuity, homosexuality, and lack of respect.

Government and NGO focus groups were equally outspoken, and noted that the reforms had a negative impact on the quality of youth education. The overarching humanistic worldview underlying the education programs results in information without development.

Clergy also voiced concerns that teaching of tolerance and liberty was not balanced by an emphasis on responsibility and morality.

16. Potential for children and youth reaching peers.

As mentioned above, youth who are characterized by flexibility, creativity, affinity for investigation, communication, and the capacity to teach will be able to reach their peers. However, unless there is a concerted effort to equip and support these young ministers, they will struggle to be truly effective.

17. Priority set on evangelism and discipleship of children and youth in churches.

Church leaders accept that this is an important function of church ministry. However, it is generally agreed that little to no emphasis is placed on youth ministry most of the time. It is important that this absence of active program development be addressed in order to retain the youth in the church and reach the unchurched.

18. Church programs and materials needed by region, gender and population density.

While some pastors indicate a lack of resources, others respond that resources (while available) are underutilized due to the emphasis on traditional programs and the lack of capacity to integrate these resources into their youth programs. It is also possible that the lack of priority for youth programs drives any underutilization.

New programs or products that would be developed for deployment in churches should be accompanied by training and capacity building. It is likely that collaborative development of new materials with local churches will increase the likelihood of their acceptance and utilization.

19. What programs or type of communications would influence parents to spend more time with their children preparing them for moral and material success?

There were no clear indicators that a simple solution would alter the trends in family relationships. These trends seem to be endemic in the socioeconomic realities facing Colombia, and require holistic solutions which include material, social, cognitive, and spiritual interventions.

20. What are the learning styles that youth consider credible?

See comments in Questions 11 and 13.

21. Are teachers willing to be involved in the formal development, and what materials do they need?

While teachers recognize the need for moral development, they are also frustrated by the curriculum that further undermines moral values. There is a possibility that a collaborative effort with the Department of Education might produce the necessary resources for teachers to respond to this need in a formal program.

Teachers, however, also point to the fact that effective moral development requires the active participation of parents which at this time is lacking.

22. Are there any methods that would influence youth to accept moral, justice and measurements of success?

Currently, youth understand justice as a relative term defined by the situation. Furthermore, their view is increasingly egocentric which means they understand justice in terms of their own receipt of what they feel they merit or deserve. It will require a significant shift in perspective to substitute the concept of justice as a measure of success in the lives of contemporary Colombian youth.

23. Is the church ready for public policy to interact with accepted biblical answers?

The church is unwilling to work with public policy, unless it benefits and supports their traditional interests and programs. Church interests are not appealing to youth.

These obstacles are further complicated by the contradictory philosophy of the education system to both Evangelical and Catholic churches.

Section III: Synopsis of Data and Findings

Synopsis of Government Leaders Focus Group

It is generally considered that the situation of children and youth in Colombia is in a condition of decay, mainly due to family issues characterized most frequently as the lack of time parents spend with their children. This results in the emergence of negative attitudes among young people.

The influence of the media is generally negative; the models presented are not those most appropriate and this in turn negatively affects the behavior of the youth. The leaders in this focus group think the government is responsible because they do not exercise control over the content of various media.

Although the state develops some good community projects, they are not promoted, so people are not aware of them or not interested in participating. They indicate that the government creates projects that benefit the personal interests of officials but do not target the entire population, and are not equitably available throughout the country.

Education reforms are perceived as having a negative impact on youth. They consider these reforms to negatively affect the motivation of students and teachers. They do not motivate young people to better themselves since they will progress in school even though they are failing to learn. Another problem is that many youth are without access to education.

They commented on the issue of values training and the promotion of equality and rights in educational institutions. They also indicated that the new curriculum in its efforts to reduce prejudice actually has the effect of promoting homosexuality and promiscuity.

Synopsis of NGO & Christian Ministry Leadership Focus Groups & NGO Interviews

In regards to values, they feel that there is a great shortage of formation and youth do not have clear values. This begins with the family, due in part to the reality that parents do not communicate with their children, whether through indifference or lack of time. This causes them to develop their own system of values, which is provided by a reference group, usually friends or media. As a result we see violence, lack of identity, and the parents fear of losing their authority. Children operate with double standards. Children grow up in an environment of loneliness, resulting in more violent behaviors; this is why it is necessary to consider working with the entire family and not just with the youth. They stress the need to provide greater attention to children and youth, so they can identify their needs.

The government promotes social and moral values from a humanistic point of view, promoting promiscuity and homosexuality, thus creating a conflict in understanding human rights from biblical principles. The government proposal is to prevent teenage pregnancy and diseases, but every time a campaign launches pregnancies soar.

There has been a change in values, abandoning ethics, morality, and freedom to aestheticism, eroticism, and hedonism. The current reality is that there is a self-defensive violent society, which involves even the youngest children. Rights are constantly violated, even in schools; this was mainly blamed on the socio-economic situation. The government programs tend to be political, and only benefit a few people. It is not reaching those most in need; they serve personal interests or ask for something in return for the benefits provided.

In regards to education, information is provided but not knowledge; there is even less development for the young people. On the contrary, new laws encourage irresponsibility of students and hence the lack of motivation of teachers.

The NGO participants believe that the church needs to realize this, and get involved in public action. They need to learn how to work from the inside out.

Synopsis of Pastors' Focus Groups

It is believed that the nuclear family is very important, but the family has lost its role of protecting young people. Lack of realization and preparation in homes is one of its causes. The absence of parents influences

the lack of moral and ethical models for youth. Youth live in households where there is a lack of principles and values, and are too often members of dysfunctional families. Youth are influenced by society and absorb the changes that are occurring, resulting in constant changes in their characters and behaviors. A symptom of this can be found in rebellion of youth who are also facing problems with drugs, alcoholism, sexual promiscuity, armed conflict, and lack of identity. The groups identify media as a source of negative influence on youth, and the parents have responsibility to some degree for the lack of a good education and attention to the needs of their children.

It was indicated that effective ministry for young people must include a ministry addressing relationships in which the youth can find identity. The report mentions that projects must include a joint cooperation between parents and church ministries. The mission of the church should be built on the discipleship and training of youth. They express willingness to work with the restoration of moral authority through such models. The church must abandon its present organizational model and means of communicating scriptures to adopt effective, relevant, and dynamic models. The pastoral ministry has the means to reach children or young people using technology (internet, video, computers); however, these means are not used due to lack of knowledge of the technology, lack of training by the church on their use, lack of resources to obtain them, and fear of the apparent threats entailed in implementing new methods. There is disagreement regarding the use of technology; some see it as an obstacle and others as an opportunity.

Youth have an interest in politics; there are positive indications regarding education, but young people perceive the government negatively because of corruption. Parents indicate that young people feel confused and uncertain about politics due to the lack of openness exhibited by government on its projects that support the interests of youth.

Synopsis of Teachers' Focus Groups

There are a lot of disappointed teachers; they report feeling tired, unmotivated, and threatened, but mostly responsible for educating children, while parents are not. In addition, schools have limited resources and this makes their job difficult. Personalized education provides the best results, but is not really possible.

Children grow up alone because their parents are always working and do not spend time with them. This results in broken relationships; meanwhile children are being educated by the media. Parents do not treat their children as individuals; unfortunately, there is a lot of indifference and selfishness in the adults.

Youth prefer multi-sensory media, which may be relevant to their specific needs and for their age. The print media has been relegated to a less favored position and it is not a preferred media. They look for materials that stimulate their logical thinking, reflection, and competition particularly where they can also present their points of view. Education must be clear, specific, and timely. Modeling is also a very useful tool.

Institutions like church, state, family, and education make efforts, but they work independent of each other and there is no evidence that they are joining in efforts to help youth.

They commented that the state promotes anti-values, such as sexual promiscuity and disrespect in general. Also, they consider the laws to aggravate the situation by promoting lack of responsibility by students in the educational context. Although the laws may be good, they are unrealistic and unfortunately produce negative results. On the other hand, teachers need continuous training, especially to stay current on technology used by the youth.

Synopsis of Students' Focus Groups

Most young people want to use their economic resources for their personal benefit and needs by buying technology items like digital cameras, laptops, iPods, and clothing. Some of them want to help pay the debts of their parents or relatives, and another small percentage of youth thinks about traveling or saving. Similarly a minority would help others in need if they have the resources. Unexpectedly, non-Christian youth are more likely than Christian peers to demonstrate a higher degree of honesty and generosity when dealing with economic resources.

Young people indicate that there are problems in the relationships within their families. Both Christians and non-Christian youth would like to see their families love each other more, to be treated better, and for their parents to be more understanding and less angry. The vast majority of young people attribute the problems of

their families to the lack of economic stability. There is a smaller number that think that money and material possession do not replace the emotional needs such as love, good communication, trust, and particularly the presence of fathers in the home.

Media (especially music) is a strong influence on the youth and influences their decisions and lifestyles. This is most pronounced in non-Christians, since there is evidence that Christians take into account the information they receive by the media and give it less weight in their lives given that they question the content and message of much of the media. At critical moments, youth remember the advice of their parents before acting under the influence of the media. The internet presents a unique situation because young people can access content of their interest without any restrictions.

In general youth find relationships important, and showed a desire to spend time with their families, parents, friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, and siblings. They want the opportunity to do simple things because to them the important thing is to actually spend time together. Non-Christians particularly wish to spend time with their parents since this is a more significant gap in their lives. Christian youth are slightly more inclined to want to spend time with music stars or recognized people in the media.

Regarding education of youth and their learning styles, it is important that teaching is done in a dynamic and interesting way. They express a preference for activities: games, field trips, camps, lectures, field trips, and outdoor activities. They also prefer instruction done with patience, love, and clarity. Christian youth have a preference for interpersonal communication: sharing experiences. They express the desire to do away with the repetitiveness of youth camps, and to interact with different people without feeling they are watched or being manipulated. Non-Christian youth have a strong tendency to distrust people and to be constantly defensive. These attitudes contribute to their perception that education is something imposed on them. As a result youth feel they are being taught things in which they are not interested. Non-Christian youth also indicate that they not interested in religion.

The vast majority of young people spend their time watching television, listening to music, talking on the phone, chatting, blogging, Facebook, Hi5, surfing the internet, and studying or doing homework. A lesser but still significant proportion prefer sports and sleeping. Older youth agree that there are few interesting options that contribute to the development of personnel character; therefore they spend their time studying and working. Similarly, they express it is hard for them to think about the future.

The non-Christian youth prefer to spend leisure time in relational activities: friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, family, fellow students, or social activities like playing pool or going to parties. Some said they are not interested in their families or church, however when facing problems others indicate they prefer to be alone or think about God.

Christian youth prefer to spend time with their moms, God, the Holy Spirit, and their friends. Also, participating in groups of recreational activities, concerts and Bible study group, praying, reading God's Word, and listening to Christian music.

Youth generally expressed confidence, acceptance, and "ability to listen" are qualities they value when seeking someone to help when they are dealing with problems. Both non-Christians and Christians agree that mistrust prevents them from seeking help, and causes them to try to resolve problems on their own. Non-Christians usually go to their best friends for help; in extreme situations they seek help from their fathers, God in some cases, and their mothers less frequently. Christians go directly to God, their pastors, trusted friends, and their mothers.

All youth indicate that the biggest problem in their environment is fighting or brawls between gangs or soccer fans. Non-Christian youth more readily identify social problems in their regions, such as drug addiction, alcoholism, poverty, and destitution for all ages. Other issues they deal with are robbery, prostitution even at an early age in schools, unexpected pregnancies and abortions, dishonesty, failing to have confidence in other youth, and lack of opportunities to succeed.

Christian youth also identify similar problems, but with less awareness and specificity. For them, a big problem is the lack of time and opportunities to interact with their families. Some Christian youth also highlighted problems related to the armed conflict and its impact on their congregations.

Section IV: Raw Data from Focus Groups and Interviews

Government Leaders

Challenges causing difficulties while working with young people
- We do not know very much about the activities going on or what is being done; also, we fear to get involved.
- Youth lack information about activities. In some cases the schools do not inform youth.
- There are a lot of obstacles to implement interesting activities.
- Doing work for the youth is a great challenge. It is an area where we need to invest more effort, and present activities that are attractive and satisfying, where youth feel happy and desire to participate actively in the community, without having to go to other cities looking for a more favorable environment.

Identify trends in youth culture occurring over the last 10 years
- Youth are less relatable.
- They prefer to be in small groups or do things on their own.
- Today youth are active more in the home than outside. It is not usual for them to go outdoors (forest, camps...); they prefer to play games on the computer or videogames.
- They do not have the correct information about sex, drugs, alcohol, etc.
- Youth drink and go to parties more than before.
- Youth live at home as if it were a hotel; they are there to eat, sleep, and shower.

Discuss the wellness of youth and children in Colombia.
- The current status of youth and children in Colombia is bad. (3). Today we see in the youth what we have never seen, is a total breakdown and apparently tends to get worse rather than better with time.
- The youth are in a condition of decadence and are out of control.
- The youth are living in a vicious circle, without laws, without rules, without routine, without values.
- Vices (lifestyles)
- Addictions (alcohol, drugs). Dealing and consumption of drugs in schools.
- Aggressive behavior. Proliferation of gangs in schools.
- Weak family relationships due to their financial situation; parents must work most of the time leaving children in the care of other people or, worse, alone.
- Neglect, irresponsibility and absence of parents.
- Another situation they see is the growth of subsultures; "emo" groups are an example of something that has not been seen before in our community.
- Youth have young mental development; a child of 12 years is the same of one of 15 some years ago.
- The vast majority thinks the wellness of youth is uncertain.
- The different lifestyles of the youth do not show a common denominator.
- They think the wellness of the youth depends heavily on education, but in Colombia there are thousands who do not have access to it.
- There is a common fear for the loss of values and principles in young people.

Discuss on the influence of the media in Colombian culture
- There are few cultural and educational programs; every media program should agree to improve their content.
- Young people spend most of their time on the Internet and misuse the false fact that "most youth use it to look at pornographic sites."

- Youth are very influenced by the media, they emit all sorts of programs with harmful content to young people; they want to imitate everything they see and this is affecting their behavior.
- There is not any kind of control by the government.
- Also, they attribute situations such as prostitution to the misuse of cell phones because parents are unaware of the calls that their children receive. Bear in mind that prostitution for girls no longer has to be in a specific location to wait for their customers; on the contrary they are only a phone call away.
- The vast majority of young people use television, radio and the Internet.
- The media influences fashion, physical appearance and other things.

Talk about education and training available for young people with potential as community leaders.
- There are education programs and they are very good, but young people are not taking advantage, and few are interested. People do not participate because nobody else does it.
- The government only provides spaces, but nobody knows what to do with them. As for the leadership, there is no kind of training or advice from the government; learning from experience, the state has made many promises, but has not complied.
- In our country, we can say that neither the state nor the institutions, schools or churches, invest in education and training of young people. That is why not many leaders are being developed in the communities; because of the lack of motivation or support, they cannot do things or emerge.
- Most think that training and education is scarce.
- They think that it should be necessary to find these young leaders and work hard with them, so that we could have better trained leaders to tackle the different problems in their communities.

Discuss legislation on education
- In schools, because of the freedom of expression and personality development, youth with homosexual and lesbian tendencies are accepted, as are drug addicts, etc.
- The institutions have to improve educational standards and policies but without going to extremes, keeping the balance without forgetting respect and values of integrity.
- It is not effective.
- The reforms have removed the authority of teachers.
- The change in curriculum on education has led young people to neglect their obligations. This generates irresponsible youth, without values, as they can move onto the next grade, even if they flunk. Also the teachers, when seeing the kids disinterested, they have simply taken a position of indifference. The teachers have no influence over them, therefore, have lost the motivation to teach.
- We need more follow-up enforcement on legislation.
- Many issues of importance and relevance in the curriculum are left aside.
- There is too much ignorance about these issues.

Discuss on government projects for the family.
- The government has made many promises but does not comply.
- We note that there is not equality and a portion of the population receives support, education, and housing subsidies, while the other doesn't, due to corruption and the failure to comply on social programs aimed at improving the quality of life of the backward classes.
- Community Mothers.
- Mothers head-of-the-household.
- The state does not communicate this information.
- Only benefits those who are directly related and exploits this resource.
- None of them know a government program that involves the family.

- We need parents to be trained adequately, because they are educating their children, but do not know how to do this because the laws, psychologists, the church, all have different points of view and they contradict each other.
- They think there are no outstanding projects for the family.
- They also believe that families are unaware of family projects.
- The crisis Colombia lives shows that there are weaknesses in government programs for family.

NGOs & Missionaries

Moral and Justice - Comment on principles and human rights

- The shortage begins in the family, as the principles are violated. Principles and values should be taught from childhood. Both parents and children must be educated.
- We need to create partnerships to reach everyone.
- The government has targeted the wrong values; for example, they teach healthy sexuality by telling young people to protect, rather than promoting healthy lifestyles. The opposite encourages promiscuity.
- Most work on the principles given by the Word of God, but they also work with principles of professional ethics that cannot tell people on initial contact that their practices are wrong. This would cause unwanted clash from the onset.
- The principles of morality present are basically freedom, eroticism and aestheticism; in this respect human rights are guilty because humanism becomes a reality to justify any immoral action, and even an obstacle to justice.
- Other principles are magical irrealism, in an effort to escape their harsh reality.
- Also hedonism and consumerism are principles that stand out.
- Agreement that Christians demonize all stereotypes but do not analyze the causes.
- A moral position should be ethical and based on knowledge of duties and the respect of rights. Ethics is a reflection of morals, and the principles I have are my options to respect my neighbor and others.
- The problem is not the government, but the human fiber; in other words, 'cause and effect '. The government is corrupt because the government leaders have no clear knowledge of rights and duties.
- In terms of justice we are an unbalanced society. The compensation funds are trying to be balanced and fair, primarily to lower strata.
- In the upper strata, there is loneliness because parents are working too much and have no time for their children; affection and companionship are not available to them. The education system is then responsible to teach ethics and morality, a task that should not fall under its responsibility.
- The family is not complying with its task of teaching values and principles, since parents are ignorant of them and therefore unable to communicate them. (3)
- Values have been changing, the media is part of this change and there is a crisis of values.
- The state does not provide enough to teachers to help them cope with their needs at work.
- They could get to know values and human rights, but the experiencing of them is not necessarily automatic, since the rights are constantly violated. Many rights of children are violated in some schools.
- To make a more equitable society, it is essential that rights not be pushed into the background.
- The ethical position is to evaluate the different stands of religions and know then which one to adopt.
- Most people think that the problem of loss of principles and human rights in Colombia is due to the socio-economic situation of the country and the lack of opportunities; thus it is "ok" to ride roughshod over people or violate their rights to defend their own.
- Children are discovering the right to demand, not allowing discipline; "this is violating my rights," but this is mainly the school children who have more education and knowledge of such things.

Unschooled, poor children have other ideals; for example, if there are armed groups operating, they convert to their ideals of life and social parameters.

- Their group of friends has increasing influence in their lives; their reference group has more impact on their values than what their teachers tell them. They "see the world through those lenses, justice is what justice means to the group."
- A lot of different types of violence in boys and girls. Justice is in their hand. A huge number of children are going to school armed (with weapons that they themselves can make), in one school alone, 60 or 70 per month, to be used as a means of defense against others who are attacking them, or also to put pressure on teachers. "Carrying knives is an expression; but political and public events are another expression, i.e. lesbianism."
- They assimilate or learn more rights and freedoms than duties. Their right to free expression of personality is significant.
- There is a significant emphasis on "what do I get out of it?"
- The term "justice" is understood more as a vindication of rights.
- A society of self-defense.
- The media is a reference in their imagination.
- The socio-cultural contexts are decisive on the issue of justice and right.
- There are schools which have practices of solidarity.
- Some Christian schools are not promoting human rights in a holistic manner; they are not seen as citizens' rights.
- A context of ongoing-armed conflict: There are more than eleven thousand children associated with illegally-armed groups, even by conservative statistics.

Beliefs and Learning - Discuss State programs
- The government endorses anti-values; it supports homosexuality and sexual promiscuity, leaving out the principles of God.
- Federal laws restrict family laws.
- People's mentality does not allow for development; even if they receive help, be it for ignorance or lack of vision, they do not take advantage of it. There is much unawareness and therefore resources are lost.
- There is a lot of corruption.
- It is necessary to instill principles to form values.
- God wants us to be holistic.
- We need to communicate effectively.
- State programs are impersonal, relationships are lost. The programs are limited only to teaching, leaving aside lifestyle as learning. These are programs that no longer provide knowledge, therefore focus only on the information.
- The programs do not depend on themselves, but on the professionals who have the authority, who then establish their own approach. The professionals who design the programs do not look beyond.
- Programs are designed, then questions arise: What approach do I take? What tools do I use?   As far as budget, it is ever-increasing.
- The written policies look very nice, but when it comes to the tools to be used, these are not consistent with reality; there is no clarity about what entities/people will get involved.
- It's good for Christians to know which the course of public action is.
- Belief that the State develops some programs, but are handled politically to benefit the brokers and not to those most in need, thus diverting program objectives.

- School-city-school, for the handling of free time. For forging of values, therapeutic, they are allowed to know their rights.
- The mayors' offices of different towns work in communities and in schools, but parents do not attend. As such, these efforts are not taken advantage of, parents do not have time or are disinterested.
- Development plan from the previous administration, since its approach was dissected based on human rights.
- "Bogota without hunger," and its supplement to foster mothers, mothers head-of-the-household and community mothers. Unfortunately it doesn't always have the resources and continuity.
- There has been progress on issues of restorative justice.
- Some programs are very good, but they abuse their authority by seeking something in return, such as information.
- Education programs but only in large cities, for example year-round school. A business concept created to allow them to integrate into society, yet resulting in crises when it comes to the socio-emotional formation of the person: premature pregnancies, gangs, drug addiction. Some have sought the church to help them manage youth.
- It has enabled programs and organizations that have been recruited to support children associated with armed conflict. But they have drawbacks, like when they turn 18-years-old, there is no continuing education programs and protection, causing many to slide back.
- Last year a new law was passed that penalizes youth for heinous crimes. It criminalizes and sentences youth instead of trying to reintegrate them into society.

Family Development - Discuss domestic violence
- Domestic violence stems from the lack of values. The abuse reproduces itself, as children learn to mistreat others because they see it in their homes. But it is possible to change and not repeat patterns. The shortfalls lead to violence, lack of love, lack of reasons to hope (parents give their children everything).
- We need to have relevant conversations at home.
- Disintegration is the result of the lack of roots, the lack of goals.
- There is a beggar/double-standard mentality; A change in mentality in needed.
- The divine principle of marriage is lost; there is a loss of identity; loss of masculinity in men, and the role of women as mothers. This leads to divorce.
- There is no love in the family. This generates an emotional death, caused by disunity and the lack of understanding.
- The first violated right is the right to a stable family. After this comes abandonment, and domestic violence becomes more common. "Children are now lonely children." This produces aggressiveness in them. There are also a good number of children with an unknown father, and a mother with multiple companions, which can lead to sexual abuse.
- It is necessary to integrate children, listen and pay attention to them, and not silence them as it is customary. Indifference is a type of violence. They have no one to discuss their issues. They seek to be heard, understood, and to have freedom to express themselves. The lack of reasons to believe in the teens generates domestic violence in many cases.
- The church needs to work inwardly, not only outwardly.
- This has lasted because the media helps it grow, and until there is action against it, the problem will not be resolved; campaigns will accomplish nothing. (3)
- Something that characterizes Colombians is the excess of work; so they do not build relationships between parents and children: they do not know how to read each other, which ultimately causes violence.

- The fear of losing authority and the rightful place in the family also takes parents to violence.
- We must work with the family and not just with the youth.
- Other forms of violence are verbal and physical abuse, rape, forced labor, parents who sell their children, prostitution.
- They believe that domestic violence is being reflected in youth behavior, where most are aggressive, disrespectful, undisciplined, causing a proliferation of rebellious groups (heavy metal, skinheads, Emos, etc.).
- There is confusion in the scale of values due to the double standards in families.
- There exists a cycle of physical and sexual abuse of minors by older siblings.
- Women are permissive in order to not lose financial support from their partners. This is believed to occur more often in lower strata, but there is evidence that it occurs in other strata in different forms.
- 4 million people displaced, of which more than 50 percent are women who must assume full care for their children. In this sense there are many broken families. The men are linked to illegally-armed groups, forcing the women to take over the family, resulting in families with emotional shortcomings, desire for revenge. (statistics unauthenticated)
- The suicide of boys and girls as young as 7 or 8 years-old has become more common; and not just children in lower strata, but also in middle and upper classes.
- The causes of violence: financial crisis, lack of values, work practices, absentee parents, breakdown due to aesthetic promises that drives society, high consumption of alcohol, early pregnancy, emotional shortcomings, fears and insecurities that justify violence.

Impact of educational evaluation - Discuss the assessment of compliance with educational legislation
- There is a lot of openness; there is not only educational teaching, but also of rights. However, these rights run counter to Christian principles.
- Children are educated in schools, not by their parents at home. This type of education is impersonal; hence there is a total isolation. They need to be taught at home to enable them to fend for themselves when they are older.
- The legislation on education has failed, beliefs are no longer important in education in Colombia. It only cares to provide information, which is a failure in itself because all it does is misinform: the learners do not know what to do with the education they receive. Knowledge is no longer important, meeting the annual school plan is. With the new system they can flunk more subjects, and move on to the following school grade, resulting in irresponsible and facile kids. Teaching in some regions is basic, but with not values. Students drunk or high on drugs are allowed in classrooms. (4)
- The church is not involved from within, it does not invest time.
- Parents do not want to spend time with their children, they are selfish. There is a great loss of communication within the family; parents and children do not know each other.
- It is necessary to propose to the government, not just wait for changes.
- Education has deteriorated, it falls short in conveying life; there is not a common thread.
- Law 115 is well written, but teachers have no quality of life.
- Education has changed from a vocation, to
- a job option; as such, there is no longer transmission of life in teachers.
- Many school dropouts.
- Promised funding by government is breached.
- The education law has an approach where the rights of boys and girls prevail, and it has improved to include justice, values, civic responsibility. The problem is the implementation of these rights. Unschooled children are left behind.

- Education becomes a mere pedagogical intention that numbs the conscience. It asks teachers to teach theories, even though the practices do not correspond.
- Whenever the state campaigns to prevent teen pregnancy, pregnancies soar. They present the beautiful aspects of pregnancy, not the negative. It promotes contraception, and therefore promiscuity with them.
- They merely teach Colombian law, and poorly taught. They teach the geographical division of the country, information on the State, etc.; but do not include the construction of social models.
- The education law does not allow teaching with Bible principles in public schools.

Effectiveness of the state - Discuss Social Programs
- The programs have been of assistance, and have provided results; but the problem is that there are no common goals. Every elected official works for its term, therefore there is no continuity. The State lacks a policy of social process.
- The state is present but usually only attends and offers superficial solutions.
- It depends on the program. The programs have progressed but very slowly.
- The problems are still functioning, and although there are efforts, there is no effectiveness; it is not getting to the bottom of the problem which is trying to address.
- They do not meet the parameters to the needs, due to the personal interests of the government in charge. There is no transparency in social programs / financial interests.
- Not interested in the welfare of the disadvantaged
- The few programs developed by the State fail to meet the needs of the country. The needs of the population (Indian, black, displaced, homeless, victims of violence and kidnapping, etc.) in Colombia are too many; each community and each group has a different set of problems.

Pastors and Clergy

What is the current state of the youth in social and family areas?
- In urban areas they face problems such as drugs, early sexual relations, alcohol, AIDS among others. (2)
- In rural areas they youth has been influenced by illegally-armed groups, by the desire to earn money, even at minimum wage; girls are willing to sell their bodies for an electronic device; the elements of war are very appealing to them. On the other hand, what the church offers is not attractive to them. (2)
- Crime is a sort of sports for the youth.
- Lack of displays of affection by parents, especially from the father, manifests in lack of affection on their part. Youth and children's parents are absent; therefore they lack moral and ethical models.
- One of the recent occurrences that can be seen in this context is that women just look for men for sex and to have a child, and then to have no relationship or contact with the man.
- Child prostitution reaches the point where there exist houses to produce "child pornography".
- New fads attract young people. For example, "Emo children" have taken it upon themselves to create a subculture in which they can relate identified. They attempt to reflect something different and go against the flow, by expressing the need for freedom. The youth are looking for groups to relate to and to send a message.
- Acceptance of homosexuality, lack of identity.
- The family unit is very important, but the family has lost its role of protecting the kids; the kids feel there is a lack of acceptance within and without their family. They get involved, but the root of the problem remains within the family. The family is not fulfilling its role, and something that the church could do is to teach each member his/her role; listening, paying attention and other things. Kids hold grudges against their parents.

- The church does not work with good biblical concepts. Society accepts this as normal; it accepts "all trends.'
- Society is ruled by what comes and goes; upper strata sets the trends. It is not known why these trends are attractive, and the church does not know how to deal with them.
- Constant changes in their character and behaviors
- Rebellion, as they want to do as they please.
- They believe the church attempts to change their mindset, so they resist it.
- Youth and children need to be listened to.
- The reality is that most come from dysfunctional families; their relationships are not healthy due to wounds, mistreatment and abuse.
- Socially, these people are absorbed by the pressure of their environments that offer freedom. They do not talk about future fulfillment, they only care about living the moment.
- Young people who live in homes where no principles or values are present. There is a crisis on the family, social and financial levels. There is laziness and permissiveness; they are allowed to do what they want.
- Parents are responsible for the current situation of the youth, and the media for the influence it exerts; then along come poorly chosen friendships and the absence of good education and care by their parents and adults.

What technology is available to pastoral staff to work with youth and children?
- The way the gospel is presented to them is not only irrelevant, but also unattractive; they need to come up with something more appealing.
- The media is available to the church. However, they are not used due to lack of knowledge and training by the church in how to use them, as well as a fear to do so.
- There are few professional Christians in the media, in addition to the lack of excellence.
- The Internet is a tool to access the lives of the youth; it is a very useful means.
- The Internet affects the search for and efforts to learning in the youth. The leader needs training based on the Word of God, not out of the Internet; he/she need to search for true communion with God.
- Technology is an obstacle to leadership.
- The youth pastors should know the musical environment of the youth, as its power is immense and influential.
- The church sometimes becomes a place of legalism, and what the youth seeks is acceptance.
- Postmodernism is here and the church cannot fight it. Not need to change the content of the gospel, but rather how to present it.
- The lack of resources prevents pastoral staff from obtaining technology.
- Music, concerts, updating sound systems.
- Objective technology (digital), video, projection equipment, computers (2)

How would an effective, relevant and dynamic ministry that has an impact on children and youth of our environment be developed?
- Have empathy with them. Understand their needs and target them.
- Have a relational ministry. Seek that their approach will not appear "too evangelical"; instead, to be more social. Approach their environment through relationship; no need to say that they are evangelicals. (2)
- Work with parenting schools.
- Secure in God in our integrity and our ministry, with respect to the risk of fame, fortune, pride.
- Through loyalty, even if others aren't impacted.

- Restore moral authority by example; it requires training, mentoring and discipleship to provide credibility to young people and children.
- The mission of the church should be to build, disciple, shape believers and train young people. For example, working with professionals who are role models for young people in the process of becoming professional themselves, showing them the Christian approach of the career, and its application.
- The Scriptures are effective, relevant and dynamic. The responsibility of the pastor is to present it so, not as something boring and pointless. The church must leave their buildings and discuss relevant issues beyond it.
- Movements of evolution
- Festivals for the youth and children.
- Manage a diversity of music that is pleasant both to the youth and to children; concerts (2)
- Have spaces for fun that offer a healthy environment. Areas in which young people can relate (2)
- Renew the models of youth ministry that allows them to motivate youth people.
- Have direct contact with children in feeding programs with the supplement that is distributed in the city.
- Have macro-cells.
- Engage the church in all areas. It requires working with attractive strategies and joint cooperation with parents, ministries and churches. Change methods, maintaining control and monitoring the activities that are taking place.

How does Politics impact the youth and children?
- On the positive side, through education; learning about politics and generating projects.
- On the downside, the politicians do not focus on projects that support the youth. Lack of political openness. No initiatives have emerged that impact emotional, social, job and moral aspects. An example of this is a family program that has failed in sex education.
- Interest in politics, but with disappointment in the process.
- Programs of freedom and promotion of contraceptive methods that are given away in schools and colleges by the state.
- Flexibility in implementation of the violation of the law
- Tolerance
- The government's bad image among the youth creates confusion and uncertainty in them.
- They do not believe in the democratic system due to the corruption.
- Participatory politics supports the youth in their needs; it offers them benefits.
- The lack of opportunities for intellectual and professional training, as well as the lack of employment with a salary that dignifies the character of the youth.
- New laws that seek "free expression of the personality," encourage every day the sin and the moral degradation of the youth in our society.

What is the purpose of God in the lives of the youth?
- To know a real, living God real, and feel the love that He gives His children. So that they can glorify and serve Him with a clean heart. (2)
- To learn to listen to His voice
- To be an ambassador of the Kingdom, and bring the Word of Salvation to their peers or to other young people. Many times God's purpose is affected because the leaders lose their way; they worry about doing many other things that often are not related to the Word of God.

- To instruct the youth or directed them towards God. To accomplish this is necessary to teach the youth to be aware of God's plan, and to have a sense of belonging to that purpose.
- The salvation of their souls. (2)
- To use their talents and gifts to the fullest potential in Christ. (2)
- To influence youth with a real purpose, and to give themselves completely to Christ
- To avoid failure, early unmarried motherhood, diseases
- To forge the character of Christ in each of them (2); that they are people of integrity
- To be examples
- To seek God, to commit to God
- To train young people to develop their stages in the right way. Their parents somehow have not supported and directed the young, so that God's purpose is fulfilled in their lives.
- To enjoy their youth; to enjoy it in God's way through biblical principles.
- There is disagreement among the participants regarding the purpose of God, that they be preached the gospel.

How do your friends spend their spare time?
- Watching TV (2)
- The youth prefer other activities to spending time with the family.
- They want solitude and desire to manage their time as they wish.
- Youth invest a lot of free time on idleness.
- They invest their time in search of a false identity.
- They invest their time in search of financial resources, no matter how it's done.
- They invest their time on the Internet (3)
- Listening to music (2)
- They want to learn new things
- Waste their time in videogames, PlayStation, etc. (2)
- Resting, permanent physical inactivity.
- Playing sports such as soccer (3)
- Spending time with friends, going out.
- Some enjoy the arts (music, dance, drama, etc.).
- Parties, nightclubs (2)
- Ultimately, not taking advantage of time.
- Watching videos, movies. (2)
- Vices, drugs (2)
- Reading. (2)
- Seeking God in prayer and reading the Word

How do your friends talk about the present, and how do they see their future?
- Older teens have a plan for life and often have their future planned out.
- Younger teens do not worry about their future, they are more concerned about living the present; the future comes later.
- Parents have a great responsibility with their children; they are the ones who provide a foundation to the youth, because it is at home where the youth learns what to do with their future.
- Youth people are living in the immediacy; their future is reduced to tomorrow, rather than a plan for an organized life. (3)
- They do not see it through God, but they think they will achieve it through college; they see God as a complement. They do not want to serve God, they want to work for financial stability.

- They do not understand God's purpose for their future
- They know nothing about the future, or it is uncertain to them
- They fear the future, so they'd rather not talk about it
- A youth of means thinks that since their family has money, his future is secure. He visualizes his life studying, spending, and a life of wealth (taking care of the family wealth).
- Youth from middle and lower strata think that unless they study, they won't get to eat.
- They want to spend time catering to their own needs, to live life to its greatest expression (the rush to live).
- They speak of the present and the future according to their own upbringing, and to information from the media or their social environment, education. Young people know that there are difficult times ahead, but believe that the best is yet to come for family life(2), spiritual life, finances and ministry.
- Doing great things for the Lord

What do teens like most in a preaching?
- To be able to put teaching into practice; moving from theory to experience as such. (2)
- To follow a model they see or one that resembles them.
- Innovation. Need of new ways, seeking alternatives that meet their expectations or that appeal to them; that helps them in their personal fulfillment; that makes them feel useful. (2)
- Teachings that touch their lives and that they can relate to; contemporary, current issues without forgetting the spiritual aspect. (2)
- Dynamic (4)
- Experiences with the Holy Spirit
- Creative without spirituality does not satisfy anyone
- Something that shows the human side of God, rather than one impersonal or aloof
- To see the Bible as something that can be touched, done and lived
- Teachings that are funny, objective, clear, concise, and frank and blunt (2)
- Teachings that confront them with a challenging and competitive life (2)
- Teaching that includes visual materials or illustrations that are gladly received
- Skits, arts, music and so on.

What talents do you find in your friends?
- Talents are identified when one sees an inclination to / enjoyment of a specific taste. Serious follow-up helps the youth develop that talent waiting to be exploited for the blessing of God's Kingdom.
- Swiftness and skill in sports. (2)
- Ability for information technology.
- Raw Material / pliable
- Being used by God
- Affinity with research
- Innovation and creativity
- The arts (music, dance, poetry, drama, singing, drawing, writing, etc.) (2)
- Ability to communicate (spontaneous)
- Ability to teach.
- They are quite friendly (cheerful, frank, risk-takers)
- Leadership, authority (2)

What is a priority in your congregation?
- Not a priority the area of youth, perhaps because they see them as church members.
- A priority is the counseling and discipleship group. (2)

- A priority is the church in general, served in a holistic and balanced manner.
- Focused on raising money, resources (2)
- Focused on seeking new members / growing numbers
- Evangelism (2)
- Strengthening the ministry and structure, priority on keeping the people who already attend, before deciding to get more crowded
- Praise (2)
- Teaching the Word of God (2)
- Allowing the Holy Spirit to move

Teachers
What are the needs of children and young people in general?
- A difficulty in teaching in public schools is how little useful and didactic material there is, in order to expedite student learning.
- The excessive number of children and adolescents per classroom, "while five are paying attention, the remaining forty are making noise and more. It is very difficult".
- Great feelings of displeasure by teachers; they are tired of having no real support by other institutions, or the students' families; they feel watched, threatened and held accountable for poor performance. "If the girl is doing well, then it's because she is very clever, but if she doesn't, the fault lies with teachers because they do not pay enough attention."
- Closer parental care. Education has been delegated to others and parents pay little attention to it. (4)
- Self-esteem is very important; they always want to look good, leaving aside the spiritual aspect.
- In smaller towns, the mother is always at home; there is no proper structure of the family.
- The church is said to be pro-family, but acts against it: the adolescents grow up alone because his/her parents go to ministry activities after work; on their days off they remain involved in church. No family properly constituted – a form of endogamy.
- In Christian schools is prohibited to teach methods of contraception, but we cannot prevent the youth from being immersed in this reality. Many children of Christian families have had sex. We believe that by forbidding it, we are protecting them. We raise them in a bubble, and when they get out they go unbridled.
- Non-Christians have no direction, no values, no routine at home.
- The relationship with parents is broken, and they have left them to the media's care.
- Parents let the school do everything, and therefore do not know about their children. The parents themselves, to escape their responsibility, let their children watch TV and play videogames.
- There is no communication. Parents do not indicate to them how far they should go. Young people do what they think is right for them; they create their own values.
- Teens and children have emotional and learning needs. There are also evident needs in their families, specifically a lack of parental affection, and a parental figure that can provide a healthy image.
- There is an evident spiritual need, and the need to work hand in hand with their parents. When focusing on the needs of the family, other needs arise.
- Topics of disagreement: children from public schools lack money, children from private schools lack love and affection.
- Orphan children of living parents.
- Pregnancies at 12 or 13 years of age (very young and immature mothers); therefore, there are mothers with no education.
- Boys and girls do not like their mothers to use low neckline blouses and miniskirts.
- Greatly affected by domestic violence.

- Children are not treated as individuals.
- Most parents are not educated, and their academic training is inferior to what their own children are receiving. Therefore, they seek support in people who are dealing with the same subjects and those that spark their interest.
- Financial and material, lack of proper nutrition and resources. Attention to their physical and school health by their parents.
- Lack of commitment by their parents in the formation of principles and values.
- There is selfishness and indifference to the needs of children.

What informational materials do children and the youth of this generation prefer?
- Audiovisual: images and sounds. The visual is very important, not the slow ones, but those with plenty of movement. Visual materials, information manuals, good films with positive messages or lessons. They can listen to music and to other people at once. Technology is central to the lives of young people. (5)
- The world is very homogeneous. Teens and children assimilate according to the closeness of the experience; the leader must interact with them in their lives, and this gives them authority to teach; young people open up their hearts and lives.
- We can see financial aid towards the children by the government, albeit in a superficial way, without focusing on generating long-term solutions.
- There is also a glimpse of unity in these institutions (church, school, government, etc.), because they try to achieve the holistic formation of the youth, and are in favor of their holistic development. Whoever gets involved in this type of training, will lean towards a holistic training.
- The Curia has worked hand in hand with the teaching process in schools, especially promoting material for its areas of focus.
- Materials by age from preschool, and for specific areas / academic (science / mathematics)
- Teaching spaces between subjects
- Coloring materials
- Materials with logical questions / logical challenges, thoughtful, competitive themes.
- Topics of disagreement: the book of hope must leave a space for teens and children to freely express their personal opinion.
- Written media has been displaced. There is no reading. It is important to rescue the written material.
- Clear, timely, focused teaching.
- Teachings with constructive—not destructive—ideologies that preserve the physical, emotional, social and moral integrity of children.
- Exemplary role models.

How are institutions (government, family, church, education) joining up for a holistic education of children and young people?
- There is not a policy of the State that has reached the family or the church. The church has its own policies, as do the schools and families. (2)
- The church promotes the values of abstinence. The church does not teach what sex is, and it falls short on the State's approach.
- There is no answer in the church to what is not answered in the world.
- Parents do not know how to talk about sex with their children, and have left that responsibility to others.
- The state has no awareness that sexual relations encourage diseases and damaged relationships; the state's efforts do not go beyond giving out contraceptives.

- Secular schools have adopted the view of the State, whereas Christians the church's. There is no chance of unity. The teen takes the easier path.
- Young people live lonely lives.
- We have led them to a hypocritical life, to a religiosity that does not allow them to implement proper concepts in his/her life. Parents feel that because they haven't been with them, they have no authority to correct them.
- Neither the state nor the school wants to teach values. There is no moral authority among the teachers who teach the youth.
- The state allows homosexuality, promiscuity, lesbianism, and the church becomes permeated by it. We adults live in different worlds, yet we believe we have the authority to teach them without knowing them. For example, Emos talk about suicide, and the pastors do not know what to do because they ignore what it is; it is a sub-culture of the youth. There is a gigantic gap between their world and the adults'.
- The laws in our country are outdated, and this can be attributed to the politicos.
- The laws focused on education have not been effective. Since they include different areas, they have been reduced to a mere concept of "law".
- What the law itself says has been bypassed, and those most affected are the youth. Mainly in laws regarding education, and especially in regards to their profession. On the other hand, there has been compliance; yet it contrasts to what has not been fulfilled.
- In conclusion, there is no legislation that favors or benefits the youth.
- They work together, but not adequately. They join in plans and projects, but not in practice.
- Topics of disagreement: The government is divided, trying to save money.
- The institutions are not at all united.
- There is no update in education; the training was left all to the teachers.
- Parents ask why "their girl is falling behind", but do not realize that they also share responsibility.
- If the child learns, he is intelligent; if he doesn't, the teacher is bad.
- Educational entities require fallacies.
- The government has implemented several projects to complement the education received by children and young people, but they feel that these projects work separately and could get better results if they worked in unity.
- On the other hand, they think that the church has not played a decisive role in helping build the education of new generations.
- There is no unity within the institutions of government, family, and church. They all contribute individually but not collectively, for the holistic education of children.
- The contributions to the educational system are of an intellectual nature, and instead of values, morally speaking, provide anti-values. Sexually, it has been a failure, promoting promiscuity, and lack of respect among students, teachers and supervisors.

Are laws to promote education effective?

- There is the perception about governing institutions and laws that have been created of not being very helpful, as they try to see it from and for a teacher's perspective, to be intended to help the students; illogical laws, that only worsen the condition of education in our country.
- "If I had the opportunity to promote educational laws, I would require parents to take an active participation in education; if not, then they could be penalized."
- There are laws that are very good; but they are not real; in our context, they are utopian.
- As far as academics, the laws are very good; but as far as values, there is no holistic development.

- Personalized education gives results. In other words, an educator dedicated to a few students, where his objective is that the student is focused on what he/she wants.
- Also, fun teaching is much more efficient. The focus point with the youth and children is, how can games and recreation be combined with learning?
- Likewise, participatory education that involves exploration in the content that is being handled, is vitally important to learning, attention and interaction with the kid.
- The effective way of reaching children and youth has to be creative, generate spaces for interaction, and activities geared to what is being taught.
- Anyone who ignores the law ignores his/her rights
- It does not work as such
- It is unfairly carried out
- They do not benefit. Too much time to write and not enough to be with the students.
- Tolerance is gone.
- They are not in accordance with the laws of childhood and adolescence.
- Teachers feel overwhelmed, the guidelines are gone.
- The government has contributed to the deteriorating quality of education by changing the rating system that has led to carefree youth and children about their grades, because they all pass. This deterioration has come to the point that some teachers said that in seeing that his/her students do not worry about learning, they too have fallen into the same situation. "If they do not care, why should we."
- The government wants to decentralize education, and that each institution handles its own resources and runs itself. This worries the schools, because they do not know whether the resources allocated to them are sufficient for the adequate functioning of their institutions.
- The laws have not been completely effective; there are still a lot of children without education, while it seeks to introduce ideologies that encourage violence.

What teaching styles are bearing results in the children and youth of this generation?
- Motivating the students to want what is offered to them, convincing the audience that what I am going to tell them is good and it will benefit their lives. There can be many methods but if there is no motivation, it means nothing.
- Teaching them about the person, the human being; leveling with them, because they live under a lot of social pressure, and the adults criticize them. Relating to them; not to be a stranger to their struggles.
- Minding the principle of individuality. Everyone is different, which makes it more difficult in the classroom; they learn in different ways in each of the areas. A discipline that molds their character. Individuality is the God given.
- Teens must feel loved, in spite of the discipline. They must win the teen's trust.
- Do not give out rewards without responsibility, and have a critical mind. Digest everything.
- For the children:
    - Drawing and other materials are good for learning.
    - Well-equipped computer rooms and laboratories
    - A well-stocked library, that will generate interaction with those who use its services.
    - For the youth:
    - Free Internet free for teens, since it is an instrument of entertainment
    - Interactive Places: libraries, parks, etc.
    - Diverse electronic media

- Electronic components that promote progress towards the new, i.e., cell phones with music and Internet.
  - For the educators:
  - Teaching Styles
  - Using all the senses
  - Teaching activities that allow them to explore, develop creativity and talent.
  - Building knowledge, use materials made by them.
  - Constant teacher training
- Technological advances have contributed to children and youth people deepening their knowledge, because they provide some of the richest sources of information.
- The computer is one of the means in which children have shown great interest; thus the progress and growth in this area.

Young People/Students

If you found one million pesos (US$500), what would you do with them?
Christians:

- Buy technology, like a digital camera, a laptop or an iPod. (3)
- Help my parents pay off the debts they have. (3)
- Give it to my mom to help me manage it. (2)
- Travel (2)
- Save it (2)
- If I knew who the owner is, I would return it
- Invest it
- Help poor children
- Help missionaries
- Tithe, then leave the rest for personal aid.
- **"I would not care if it was an old lady who lost it."** The teens just thought about their needs, and by their comments we saw that they did not intend to help their families; they are only concerned with themselves. Honesty is one of the values that children have lost, and the lack of opportunities further accentuates this reality. This translates into "individualism".

Non-Christians:

- Buy necessities, personal things like clothes and food (5)
- Try to find the owner (2)
- Hand it over to someone in need (2).
- Study
- Pay family debts
- Pay the utilities
- Buy food
- Things to help me feel better
- Handed it over to my parents

What would be the ideal Colombian family?
Christians:

- A family where the material stuff was not as important as giving love. (3)
- The father had money (3)
- A family where the parents are close and give importance to their children. (2)
- Change the bad temper of the mother (2)
- Parents would be more understanding (2)
- His mom would not change
- Siblings, that they would be the same age
- Siblings would not fight

- A dad that understands them more
- Have children and train them as well
- Do not think about that.

The family and what it represents had no value for the group of kids who participated in the group study. They have lived separated from their families from a very early age, and believe they can face any situation with the support of their friends, who do not question them, and let them make their own decisions.

Non-Christians:
- Better treatment, with love and without insults or problems (5).
- Better communication
- Less intimidating, as we are afraid to speak up
- A more stable financial situation (not everything is about money, but money is necessary)
- No double standards (in the case of separated parents)
- With more presence in the absence of parents
- With more authority.
- Believe that the family would be better if they reached a good financial position to meet their needs.
- Where they can be understood and can be treated with trust.
- A family that supports its own members

When making decisions, do young people take into account the information broadcasted in the media?
Christians:
- Sometimes (6)
- Yes, they follow the media, as it manipulates them with its images. (2).
- No, since a small fraction does not take into account any media and their decisions are made according to the circumstances (2).
- What the news says must be analyzed. The youth's curiosity is stronger than what others say.
- They remember what their parents said, not what the media says.
- The media realizes that what it promoted was not good for the people, therefore they present the consequences of excess.
- There must be caution
- The decisions depend on the person's character
- The use of the media is for entertainment.
- We listen and we care about the moment; but later it doesn't matter.
- One of the most important media for kids is the Internet… means by which they access information more easily.
- Trends in fashion, music, studies, among other topics that are most often consulted, and that they use as a basis for justifying a decision.
Non-Christians:
- Yes, we adopt fashion from TV, and make it part of our lives; TV, music (5)
- It has little to do (2)
- Mostly on the Internet, because in it they can access all that interests them without any restriction.
- Dancing, the rhythm (reggaeton) is related to sex, and it can be disrespectful when danced. It turns me on, makes me feel strange things.

If you had the opportunity to select any person to share one day with him/her, whom would you choose and where would you go?
Christians:
- Joe Jones (Jonas 'brothers) and would go to a music recording/television studio series because she wants to study cinematography
- With Mom somewhere for fun (4)
- Singers of reggaeton (3) as Yandel, Daddy Yanky, Tito el Bambino.
- Go to see a movie (2)
- With Dad and would go to play video games

- Go to a concert
- With missionaries, to know their workplace
- With family
- With Grandmother, would go to the best restaurant in town
- With my brother and I would take him to church so he could give his life to Christ.
- Go horseback-riding
- With a cook so he can teach me and prepare nice recipes
- Most would spent the day with their best friend (2)
- Attracted to tourist or recreational sites
- The family has lost a huge space in the lives of adolescents, partly due to their parents' occupations, and because their parents are not interested in the activities they like. They feel that parents just want to control them and have them live their lives according to their own experiences.

Non-Christians:
- Share something simple with my family, like a park (5)
- The other three would choose their boy/girlfriend or their best friend, because they have won
- their affection and confidence. (4)
- With their parents, because they say that they do not spend as much time with them (4)
- With Mom, do not know where to take her or where she wants to go (2)
- With little brother, to get to see many places and charitable organizations. (2)
- With Godmother, anywhere.
- With Grandmother, Holy Land.

If you were given an opportunity to teach, how would you do it?
Christians:
- Being a teacher and do so in a way that they understand and retain it. And, above all, with great patience, love and clarity. (6)
- Teach children and adolescents in a dynamic way, as they would like to be taught (2)
- I would teach them with excellence, and with the necessary materials. (2)
- Teach karate classes, and do so with patience and in a way that people are interested.
- Teach math and do it with people their age in a language they can understand, in a friendlier way.
- Teach music in a dynamic way.
- Talks
- Share experiences
- Avoid monotony
- By relating to people
- They all agreed that the activities and teaching methods is what gets them tired. When talking about the church, they agreed that get bored by the sermons and choir music… They prefer camps and activities where they have to interact with different people and where they can participate without feeling like they are being watched or told what to do.

Non-Christians:
- Would prefer more enjoyable subjects (dynamics, games, music, walks) in larger environments and in the countryside (3)
- The best possible way and without being scolded (3)
- Customs such as meals, dancing and talking, so they can become familiar with them.
- How to defend themselves, for example boxing.
- Do not rely on people because many are liars and inconsistent.
- The need to adapt to the environment.
- Where teachers are friendly with their students, and their decisions, ways of thinking and lifestyles respected, without forcing them to receive teachings that do not interest them (Religion). Explaining things several times and in various ways.

What activities do you spend your time in?

Christians:

- Watching TV (4)
- Exercising / going to the gym (4)
- Indian boys, as a result of their indigenous cultural context, grow up in a healthy environment, and spend most of their time working and studying… Among the jobs they do, "picking coca-leaves", fishing and helping their parents farm the land (2)
- Praying, reading the Word of God, working, listening to Christian music. (2)
- They want to have fun with friends eating out, dancing and other activities that allows them to interact with others.
- Internet social groups such as Facebook, MSN, Hi5, etc.
- Idleness, taking a break from academic work, sleeping
- Most of the time devoted to studying and / or working
- Listening to music.
- Taking care of their bodies.
- Some work only if their parents give them a chore; otherwise, they prefer to stay in their communities doing nothing.

Non-Christians

- Watching TV (8)
- Listening to music (5)
- Playing billiards (5)
- Sleeping (4)
- Internet, email, video games (4)
- Exercising: biking or playing soccer (4)
- Studying, doing homework (3)
- Talking on the phone, and chatting (3)
- Going to the soccer stadium to support their team with their other fans (2)
- Hanging out with friends (2)
- Learning things from friends; discussing with friends, focusing on their views: start with a theme and end with another.
- Partying at night
- Working
- Youth Groups
- Teaching others to read/write

To whom would you go when you have problems?

Christians:

- Issues that are too personal, to God (6)
- To my pastor (6)
- Unfortunately, they do not trust adults and prefer to solve their problems individually; "Do not go to anybody for help, it is very difficult to find people that are cool." This is a totally independent generation… no matter what race, creed or place of origin. (3)
- Trusted friends or their best friend (3)
- Go to the mother because she is their friend (3)
- Looking for ways to approach the person you have a problem with and fix it.

Non-Christians:

- Generally resort to their best friends, because they trust them and feel accepted (14)
- Depends on the issue, their trust in the person, and their maturity, as they believe that the ability to help goes hand in hand with "the ability to listen." Mistrust is one of the factors that prevent youth from seeking help (9).
- To dad, but only in extreme circumstances (4).
- We can go to mom when there are problems that we do not want anyone else to know (3).
- To the family about certain subjects, if you trust one of the parents, siblings, uncles and aunts, cousins (2)

- To God in some cases (2).
- One of the biggest needs in youth is the lack of trust, and to feel that they have a group they can relate with and that will accept them as they are.
- Young people try to solve their problems by themselves.
- Young people do not like to be compared to others, because they are aware of what they need to do, and want to feel as if they already are "somebody" in life. Some see their parents as people who are there just to question the decisions they make.
- To my parents.

With whom would you like to spend most of your free time?
Christians:
- With my mom (5)
- With God. (3)
- With the Holy Spirit, in communion with him (2)
- With friends to talk, to play sports like soccer or video games (2)
- With people who are very lonely and spend too much time alone; who are anti-social.
- Christian teens prefer to spend time with their moms, with God, the Holy Spirit and their friends.

Non-Christians:
- With friends, because they understand one another. Although you can spend more time with family, but it would be for specific issues such as asking for advice, or to talk about more complicated issues.
- Young people in this age prefer to share their activities with friends (10).
- Most of the time with the boy/girlfriend (5)
- With my family (3)
- With my friends at college (2)
- Besides, it depends on the time available, because if an activity is interesting, they will devote more time to it; but if it is not, they won't even take it into account.
- Likewise, this is not always the case. There are some who prefer to remain at home and spend time with their families.
- In conclusion, with friends they can share ideas, and they will always be preferred. With them they can touch subjects that cannot be talked about with their parents; they understand them better than their own families. A lot of parents are outdated or generalize about the issues. Parents live in the past, because they use explanations such as "the same thing that happened to this or that person is going to happen to you", or making comparisons.
- Now I don't have a lot to do, and spend a lot of time with my sister.
- With my family, my dad, my mom and my cousin.
- Alone
- In a few occasions, with God.
- Many young people do not think about their family, or have no interest in having contact with a church.
- Non-Christian youth prefer to spend their free time with friends, love interests, family, school friends, sometimes with God, or alone. Some even say that they have no interest in their family or church.

What situations do you face daily in your region?
Christians:
- Fights in parks between boys from opposite soccer teams. (6)
- Public order is one of the biggest problems in their regions, common crime and drug addiction (5).
- They share very little with the family, since during the week they study and on weekends they spend them with friends. A day with the family just does not occur. Family spaces are hardly present, such as eating together at the table. (2)
- Christmas is the only time when family unity is encouraged, and the same during vacations; but it depends on who they live with, because parents work while they are on vacation.
- When teens live in a different city as their family, on vacations they travel to where their family is.
- The schedule is limited. There is time to be with family and time to be with friends.

- They do not like to spend much time at home; they prefer to seek alternative plans before going home.
- Illegal crops.
- Illegally-armed groups.
- Prostitution in the towns.
- Alcoholism.
- Lack of job and study opportunities are the causes that lead them to wrong decisions, or under false promises of change.
- Christians have restrictions to attend their congregations, and say that the atmosphere that surrounds them does not help them strengthen their Christian faith, and that they have questions about their
- Christianity.

Non-Christians
- Alcohol and Drug Addiction (7)
- Drug and alcohol (6)
- Fighting between gangs (6)
- Other problems they see around them are poverty and homelessness. Destitute children, youth and adults (3).
- Robbers (3)
- Prostitution at an early age. They say that a system of student prostitution, called "prepay", has proliferated, where girls take advantage of their youth and beauty to obtain large sums of money (2)
- Teenage pregnancy, but they also say they may no longer see as many pregnant girls as they have chosen to abort.
- Also find other problems such as: dishonesty, envy, gossip and speak ill of others.
- Partying.
- Problems with sub-cultures (punks / rockers).
- Monotony.
- The street is the place that teens like most, and where they feel less pressure than in their own homes.
- Lack of trust at home, because to them trust means to obey when they are given an order.
- Declare that they see no opportunities.
- There are not enough universities to study.
- Problems with teachers.

What activities do you do for fun, and how do these activities help you in your personal growth?
Christians:
- Sports and integration, as they helps me be more sociable and stay in shape. (6)
- Participate in plays and concerts Christians. They keep me busy and entertained. (2)
- Most things they do, do not help personal growth.
- Talking with friends on common themes.
- Sports help their health; and especially those with addictions to alcohol and drugs they help them improve their lifestyle.
- Listening to music on iPods and mp3s is not conducive to socializing.
- The youth group is a place for fun and to grow; for example, a Bible study and recreational activities.
- Most activities are related to work and studies, as they do not have many options for fun.
- There is very little interest in the future and in building something better for themselves.
- Battle with the Bible. It helps me know God better.

Non-Christians:
- Exercising keeps me in shape (7).
- Parties are not the best environments, and even though they are initially fun, they are heavy and do not do a lot for the future. Likewise, drinking does not help the future; it only helps to get out of the routine for a time. Parties, though they do not help me at all. (5)
- Video games and chats help me get things off my mind (4).
- Learning and understanding the different viewpoints of friends, as they can learn new things (2).
- Studying (2).

- Also listening to people, to learn from their mistakes and not repeat them.
- Something key for them is that their solitude is a time for reflecting on their life.
- Having fun with my friends to break the monotony.
- Go to the soccer stadium, even though you see bad things; my mom does not like it but my dad says that this helps me make decisions, to be responsible. It helps me deal with real life. I think it helps me because it gives me freedom.
  Youth groups.
- There are few spaces to grow, and teens find it difficult to think about their own wellbeing.
- The future generates concerns, because they know that the future means having to mature, grow and learn from the present. But this does not represent any activity useful for their future.
- It is fun going out with his friends to drink, dance and to concerts, although they know that these activities do not contribute anything to their personal growth; what interests them is having fun.
- They show no interest in other activities that may help them grow such as sports, theatre, painting or reading; they all seem boring
- Those who are not believers prefer to get involved in business where they get easy money, for power and pleasure.