Spiritual State of the World's Children

United Kingdom

OneHope
GOD'S WORD. EVERY CHILD.

Spiritual State of the World's Children
A Quantitative Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MINISTRY

United Kingdom

September 2011

Prepared by:

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 750 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: Key Issues Analysis

Key Issues

- Family composition
  - 72% indicate living in a two-parent family (includes 13% living in a two-parent household where one is a step-parent)
  - 21% indicate parents are divorced, separated, or remarried
  - 19% indicate living with their mother or stepmother only
  - 8% indicate that their parents were never married
  - 7% indicate that one parent has died

- Perception of Family
  - Definition of family
    - 60% define family as those related by birth, adoption or marriage
    - 33% define family as any person or group whom you love or care about deeply
    - 5% define family as any group of people who live together
    - 2% define family as any group of people who shares the same set of values and goals in the life
  - Function of family
    - Place for children –
      - 92% consider an unmarried man and woman with children a family
      - 88% consider a single woman with children a family
    - Relationship –
      - 52% consider an unmarried man and woman who live together as a family
      - 43% consider homosexual women a family
      - 43% consider homosexual men a family

- Relationship with parents
  - 34% spend less than 15 minutes a week talking with their father about things that really matter
  - 37% spend more than 60 minutes a week talking with their father about things that really matter
  - 10% spend less than 15 minutes a week talking with their mother about things that really matter
  - 67% spend more than 60 minutes a week talking with their mothers about things that really matter

- Safety and Security of home
  - 66% feel their home is a place where they feel safe and loved
  - 14% feel only sometimes loved in their homes
  - 8% feel each person in their family is trying to love another
  - 8% feel comfortable in their home, but would not consider their family close
  - 4% are uncomfortable and would rather be elsewhere

- Marriage
  - 90% feel that they will be happy in their marriage
  - 79% approve of divorce even when children are involved
  - 67% believe God intended marriage to last a life time
  - 66% believe marriage problems have been exaggerated
  - 49% feel the traditional family does not play a significant role in the stability of society
  - 45% report there is too much pressure to get married and would rather live together
  - 23% admire single life
  - 19% indicate that anyone who gets married should anticipate divorce

- Sexuality
  - 30% would like to be a virgin at marriage; 32% would regain their virginity if it were possible
  - 28% have had sexual intercourse (approximately 39% have engaged in sexual fondling)
  - 44% consider sex to be always acceptable and 36% sometimes acceptable
  - Most likely to learn about sex from classmates/friends and parents
  - Least likely to learn about sex from the sex-related magazines/books.

- Satisfaction with life
  - 59% are somewhat and 32% very satisfied with their lives
  - 9% are somewhat or very dissatisfied with their lives
  - Over the past three months –
    - 72% report watching music channels at least once a week
    - 56% indicate they have lied to an adult
    - 51% admit having lied to their peers
    - 35% have drank enough to be considered legally drunk
    - 20% watched a pornographic movie and 10% read a pornographic magazine
    - 17% indicate that they have intentionally tried to emotionally hurt someone
    - 8% have had suicidal thoughts
    - 3% have attempted suicide

- Influences (cited as having *a lot* or *some* influence over thoughts and actions)
  - 77% Parents (29% a lot of influence)
  - 71% Friends (21% a lot of influence)
  - 53% Teachers (9% a lot of influence)
  - 43% Music (10% a lot of influence)
  - 40% Television (7% a lot of influence)
  - 38% Internet Information (7% a lot of influence)

- Moral behaviour
  - 65% feel bending the rules is okay
  - 63% feel lying is sometimes a necessity
  - 51% are pragmatic indicating in several ways that moral behaviour is relative and justified by whether or not it "works"
  - 28% feel that breaking the law is okay if it does not hurt anyone

- Factors providing future satisfaction (cited as having *a lot* of importance)
  - 81% having good physical health
  - 63% having close relationships
  - 59% having a comfortable lifestyle
  - 56% working a high paying job
  - 51% having a clear purpose for living
  - 48% having one marriage partner for life

- Religious Practice
  - 20% religion is somewhat (12%) or very (8%) important to them
  - 13% report weekly or daily prayer
  - 10% participate in weekly or daily religious services
  - 7% participate in weekly or daily youth group
  - 7% report weekly or daily scripture reading, including the Bible, Koran, or other religious scriptures

- Religious Beliefs
  - 74% believe that truth can mean different things to different people and no one can be sure that they know the truth
  - 72% believe that spiritual development is not necessary for leading a satisfying life
  - 61% believe all major religions pray to the same God, but just use different names for their god
  - 51% believe that if a person is generally good, or does enough good things for others during their life, they will earn a place in Heaven
  - 47% do not know what happens to people after they die
  - 40% do not know what they believe about God; 25% believe there is no God; 18% believe that God is the omniscient, omnipotent Creator who rules the world today
  - 34% profess no personal religious faith

- Christian Theology
  - 87% believe that people who do not accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour can still go to heaven
  - 80% have heard about Jesus and the Bible from family or relatives, 69% from Western literature, 61% from Church, and 66% from textbooks
  - 75% believe that Jesus Christ was a real person
  - 67% believe that what is done for others is more important than what is believed about Jesus Christ
  - 45% find Christianity relevant to their life
  - 45% believe that Jesus was born to a virgin
  - 37% believe that God created the universe
  - 26% believe the Bible provides a clear and indisputable description of moral truth (21% believe this truth is the same for all people)
  - 20% believe the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings (31% believe that the miracles in the Bible took place)
  - 18% believe that church membership is important
  - 6% believe that people go to Heaven if they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour

Strengths (provided by OneHope Europe Team)

- High representation for traditional marriage model, despite media representation that would seek to present a lower proportion.
- 93% define a family *either* as those related through birth, adoption or marriage *or* as those whom you love and care about deeply. The sense of family as a close unit, in terms of relationship link and affection, is very strong.
- Respondents generally affirm a functionalist view of family, emphasising the role of children in defining whether a group is a family or not (92%), basing definition of a family on formal relationships (as opposed relationships of casual arrangement) (60%), and only around half (52%, 43%, 43%) consider unmarried or homosexual couples to be a family.
- 67% of respondents have a relationship with their mother that includes matters which are important to them. This means that two thirds of respondents have a relationship with their mother that is maintained by regular communication of significant issues.
- 37%, over one third of respondents, also have a strong enough relationship with their father that includes the communication of matters which are important to them. This figure may appear surprisingly high to some UK readers, who may feel that the absence of the father-figure is the prevailing trend across the UK (through a combination of Christian and wider media portrayal).

- Two thirds (66%) of young people consider their home to be a place of safety and love. Though it would obviously be an aim to raise this figure further, it is encouraging that a majority presently have a sense of security and support at home.
- Those feeling actively uncomfortable and would like to be elsewhere (4%) are mercifully few. Ministry to the 66% and 96% who don't feel uncomfortable in their home, but feel safe and loved, is of a much more positive nature than that which would be to a generation who are not comfortable in their immediate surroundings.
- The optimism of the 90% who believe they will be happy in marriage demonstrates a hope, albeit in human relationships.
- Two thirds, 67%, believe God intended marriage to last a lifetime (it would be very interesting to correlate this with the respondents' answers about faith in God). The model of a life-long marriage is an established concept to these respondents.
- The percentage of respondents who indicate that anyone who gets married should expect divorce is pleasingly low (19%).
- It is interesting to note that 30% would like to be a virgin at marriage, and that 32% would regain their virginity if possible. Roughly a third of respondents still value virginity, even amidst a media onslaught that would portray such an image of sexualised culture. This figure is surprisingly, and pleasingly, high.
- Thankfully only 8% have had suicidal thoughts, and less than half of that (3%) have tried to follow them through. However, it would be of value to consider alongside this statistic the figures of completed youth suicides, and keep in mind that a number of young people will not have confessed to attempting suicide on this survey.
- Only around a third (35%) has considered themselves ever to have been drunk, never mind frequently finding themselves in that state. UK culture frequently caricatures our younger generation as drunken and destructive (an image reinforced by the July 2011 riots) and this is a happily low figure in light of this stereotype.
- 17% of young people have tried to deliberately emotionally hurt someone. Positively, perhaps the 'bitchiness' portrayed often in popular television and films in the UK is not being seen in a favourable light.
- Parents hold sway with young people (77%, cite some influence; 29% specify strong influence, a higher percentage than any other category). A culture with this deference to elders which also held to biblical models of parenthood would be an ideal. Even without a strong moral component, the parental respect is heartening.
- The influence of teachers likewise shows a submissive attitude, if not respect, for authority amongst just over half of young people (53 %). This cannot be undervalued, especially when much of our media claims that British youth are spiralling into rebellion.
- Music continues to be a major factor in the lives of teenagers. It may seem to have a lower influence than parents and teachers, but as it is often absorbed passively or in a place of escapism, it may have a larger influence than this statistic (43%) indicates. Obviously, the content of the music that is listened to depends upon whether this statistic is to be considered good or bad for ministries seeking to work with young people. The statistic on its own is neutral.
- It may seem that there is not much to affirm here. Just over a quarter (28%) are comfortable with breaking laws if it doesn't hurt anyone, which whilst an undeniably negative figure, does however imply a silent majority who respect the law even when they perceive it not to be protecting anybody. This can only be a respect of authority for authority's sake, implying at least a residual culture of respect (contrary again to media presentation).
- Similarly around half of the respondents (49%) do not define morality pragmatically, but seem to indicate a respect for moral authority.

- Respondents have a fairly holistic concept of wellbeing, valuing physical health (81%) alongside relationships (63%), stability of income (56%) and purpose for living (although this is lower, at 51%). A response that considers each of these areas is healthier than one that would have emphasised only one area.
- Close relationships rate highly, at 63%, and as such there may be an interest in good teaching on the values of strong relationships.
- These results are roughly in line with UK figures for church attendance, and decline. The only strength possible to draw from these is an optimistic "It's not as bad as it could be."
- Although this generation is clearly not interested in the institutionally religious, they are clearly engaging in the philosophical questions of religion.
- A surprisingly high 18% hold to an understanding of God that is close to the Classical Theist position.
- 80% have learnt some of the faith (even if it just the beginnings) from family or relatives. This is a large figure and encouragingly suggests that Christians in the UK are still keen to share their faith with their own families.
- Another comparably large figure, 69%, find out about Christianity in Western literature. The effectiveness of traditional Western literature may be disputed, but it seems to be widespread in its reaching of young people.
- Gospel proclamation (or segments of it) from churches reach over half of the young people in this survey.

Opportunities (provided by OneHope Europe Team)

- Opportunity to discuss ideal models of parenting, especially amongst teenagers who are exploring their possible futures.
- The active debate over what constitutes a family gives an opportunity for the Christian view to enter the discussion, bringing with it the Gospel message of Christ.
- The tragic cultural norm of single parent families gives an avenue of approach exploring God as the perfect parent (comprising both male and female aspects in His care for His children).
- The underlying assumption that families are related by birth, adoption, or marriage allows ministries to still speak in terms of family units. This allows for continuity with biblical ideals and precious common ground, which when compared to the direction of cultural movement around the issues of marriage, should not be under-valued.
- Mothers continue to be an authority figure that young people spend significant contact time with. From the perspective of reaching young people, mothers may be a significant figure of influence.
- Presentation of the "heavenly Father" as an interested, masculinely-intimate figure, may have a profoundly positive effect on young people, especially young males lacking connection to a natural role-model.
- The platform of a stable home-life allows for ministry projects and products that are able to be taken into the home. A more volatile situation could work against "take home" products. Instead the majority of support may have a positive impact as family members not only permit but perhaps share in the gospel-based activity.
- The great proportion who perceives themselves not to experience love in the family may be interested in God's message of love for them.
- The established idea of marriage as permanent (at least as God-given) demonstrates an awareness, however clouded, of God as ordaining a fixed "good". Evangelism from the approach of God as an interested party in the lives of young people (as opposed a distant and disinterested figure) is facilitated by this pre-existent understanding.

- The hope in happy marriage that the overwhelming majority indicate, coupled with the significant amount of respondents who don't value the traditional family or would choose to live unmarried present apparently conflicting results. Respondents expect happiness, but don't express a particular preference or expectance for finding it in traditional family models, or in a way associated with marriage per se. The disconnect between marriage, commitment and happiness presents an opportunity to discuss the value of commitment in both marriage and relationship happiness, and God's place in these. An awareness of the whole self, including a sense of soul, in these relationships is potentially absent, and an avenue to explore the reality of God through.
- The most obvious opportunity for reaching young people with Christ's message is to the section that either regrets having had sexual intercourse (32%) or has placed value on it enough to "wait" (30%). This group have a concept of the value of sexuality which would be a valid place to approach the gospel from.
- The 10 - 20% engagement with pornography is another unexpectedly low figure – and yet even if this is not truly representative, it shows at least an awareness of stigma over the issue of pornography. An optimised response would focus on the inherent devaluing of the female body (and the male attitude to relationships) presented in pornography, then prompt young people to think deeper about our value as human beings: e.g. *Why* is pornography taboo?
- The low figure (17%) for attempted vindictive emotional harm shows an awareness of some others-centred morality. Ministering a message of love to young people who already have this social awareness will have the advantage of at least this common ground.
- It would be a mistake to ignore the potential that music has to edify as well as negatively influence young people. There would seem to be a place for good quality, genuinely contemporary Christian music in secular spheres.
- Parents and teachers are a tried and tested route to reach young people with the gospel. Ministries may benefit from investigating ways to more creatively (and sensitively) use these channels as a means for long-term, relational mission.
- The message of Jesus includes a strong element of breaking established laws and traditions, which present an opportunity to engage with disaffected young people who expect only a corrective response from authority. Jesus' challenge to inappropriate authority will appeal to this post-modern generation, with a taste for revolutionary causes and humanitarian concerns. However such a message would also need a reinforcement of objective truth, to avoid the possible perception of revolt for the sake of revolt.
- The respondents' interest in physical health (81%) presents an opportunity for proclamation of a holistic Gospel. Faith that transforms a whole life, and lifts the faithful to a level of health internally and externally, can be presented as an attractive option.
- The fact of 63% of respondents seeking close relationships presents an opportunity for proclamation of a Gospel that transforms and elevates friendships, with God's love, with an increase in integrity. Evangelism to this group would benefit from explanation of the effect of Christ on an individual's whole life.
- A generation who are "unchurched", and have not been brought up on the social norm of church have in effect a "blank canvas" to introduce Christ to. The lack of religion-based baggage for these individuals is an opportunity for grounded, relevant youth ministry.
- Discussion of philosophical questions of God is often met with interest and engagement, as indicated by these figures.
- Though not widely believed, the concept of a God is not alien to respondents, allowing the question of His existence to be raised without groundwork being laid.

- The 67% who believe that an others-centred life is more important than holding a set of facts about Jesus may actually not be 'far from the Kingdom'. A gospel presentation here would do well to make clear the link between belief in Jesus and living out Jesus' principles.
- There seems to be a wide acceptance of Jesus as a real human being (75%). There is room for ministry through apologetic resources that explore Jesus' life and credible explanation of his divinity from a historical starting point.
- 45% find Christianity to be relevant to their lives. This opens the door for a gospel presentation that capitalises on the areas that Christianity directly influences them and builds from there.

Weaknesses (provided by OneHope Europe Team

- Only 59% (72%-13%) live in a two biological-parent family set up. Broken homes and awareness of broken homes are prevalent amongst UK youth. Christian models of marriage are held to more and more infrequently, and portrayed by the media more infrequently again.
- The opposing view of the strength stated above (of the functionalist view of a family) is that Biblical definitions of a family, including a traditional view of marriage, are overwhelmingly secondary to the pragmatic observation of broken relationships. (92% consider *unmarried* parents with a child to be a family).
- The deeply disturbing reality that single parent families are a common feature is demonstrated by an 88% approval of the "label" of a family being applied to single parent situations. A lower figure may have risked alienation of those in this situation, but would have revealed (and emphasised) the accepted cultural "norm" of two parent families.
- The fact that around half of respondents (52%) consider unmarried couples to be a family represents the culture's move away from institutional marriage, and by association, the Church, towards a more "common law" view of relationship and commitment. The authority of the Church over relationships has vastly diminished, as represented by this statistic.
- It is telling that nearly half (43% and 43%) consider homosexual couples (of both genders) to be a family. This is not just a comparatively recent change (mid twentieth century onwards) but one that is being guided actively in UK society by active focus groups. The implicit (and often explicit) challenge to Christian values herein is a live issue in young people's discussion of relationship, and a stumbling block against the acceptance of Christian values (and consequently, Christ).
- Despite higher than potential expectations, the lack of intimacy with respondents' fathers revealed by these results is saddening. (34% spend less than 15 minutes per week in meaningful conversation with their father, and by extension, 63% spend less than 60 minutes per week). The lack of strong, purposeful male role models can only be having a negative effect on the development of young people and thus society in general.
- 8% is a low figure to report for family members trying to love one another. The perception that family members are not trying to love one another can lead to an increased sense of alienation amongst the young people. This is supported by the other 8% figure, who do not consider their family close even in an otherwise comfortable home.
- For 79% of respondents to readily approve of divorce is an unsettlingly high proportion, revealing a weak value for lasting and deep relationships.
- Around half (49%) of respondents do not value the traditional family, indicating the shift from family stability, as a bedrock for social stability, to other foundations (or perhaps none). Similarly, 45% of respondents indicating that they would prefer to live together in an unmarried state demonstrates the shift away from family stability toward a more pragmatic view of relationships, and society at large.

- Around a third admit to having had sexual intercourse (it would be interesting to be able to measure how honest respondents were to these more personal questions, especially if they were completing the survey with their peers present), and 39% to having engaged in sexual fondling. This is a generation that does not just talk about sexuality, but is used to experimenting in practice.
- Further to the above, 80% (44% + 36%) consider sex to be always or sometimes acceptable. The idea of sexual relationships as something precious, to be reserved for marriage, is foreign to four out of five (80%) of respondents.
- The primary source of information about sex is from peers: classmates and friends and parents. This is thus unlikely to be discussion of the moral issues surrounding sexual relationships, but the "facts" as it were, without the "opinions". A lack of interest, or at best a secondary interest, in sexual ethics leaves this generation sexually active without moral guidance.
- 72% of respondents are exposed to music video channels. Given the nature of these channels, they are exposed to passive absorption of heavily suggestive and sexualised content. Music videos have grown steadily more sensual over the last decade.
- The same can be said for television. However, this can be considered less of a neutral medium, as television could be said to cross the line between harmless escapism and overindulgent idleness more easily than music. 40%, whilst not quite half, remains a substantial figure who are aware of television's influence in their lives.
- However, a large number do indicate that dishonesty is morally acceptable to them (65% affirming occasional warranted dishonesty, 63% affirming occasional necessitated. dishonesty). This indicates a culture that is predominantly functionalistic and self-centred, preferring a short term fix to principled upholding of laws.
- 51% of respondents valuing purpose in their life is, taken alone, a low response for those interested in a "purpose" for life. These respondents would, one can deduce, be less attracted to an Alpha Course (UK evangelism course) approach marketed as "an answer to the meaning of life".
- By far the highest response rate was to the physical health area (81%). Whilst this would please those in government who are pursuing a health-drive, it may represent by implication the materialist leanings of UK youth culture.
- Less than half (48%) see the value of having one life partner as a fulfilling/satisfying factor for life. Relationships are thus arguably largely seen as a means to fulfil a desire within oneself, and only useful as long as the desire is present, rather than an end in themselves where both parties are valued over time as a relationship is built up.
- Each of these statistics is discouragingly low, displaying a cultural lack of interest in religion.
- On a more spiritual reflection, the lack of regular engagement with God's word in the Bible is a specifically discouraging figure.
- The strongly relativist youth culture reject the notion of absolute truth (74% propounding a relativist agnosticism). This compounded with a religious relativism (61%) indicate a culture that both reject objective truth claims about God, whilst affirming each individual's right to their truth-claims.
- 72% of respondents do not value spiritual development is a valuable factor of a satisfying life.
- 37% believe that God created the universe – the 63% implicitly declaring their non-belief in God. (Interestingly though, over 40% believe in the virgin birth.)
- Despite roughly a quarter believing in Bible's clear and accurate truth & miraculous content (26% believing in its moral truth; 20% believing in its accuracy) and 18% holding to church membership as important, *only 6% believe that Jesus alone is the way to salvation.*

Threats *(provided by OneHope Europe Team)*

- Danger of offending children from non-two-parent families, especially with perception that they are judged or thought to be inferior. Gospel presentations should be sensitive to these situations.
- The value of a committed relationship, such as a marriage, is steadily decreasing. There is a growing consensus that unmarried, even uncommitted parents are an acceptable norm.
- Firm teaching about the value of marriage and a traditional family may alienate and imply a devaluation of young people from broken homes (as implied by the phrase "broken home").
- The issue over cultural acceptance of homosexual relationships is a live one in the UK Church at the moment (see Church of Scotland 2011, and current discussion in the Anglican Communion and statements from the UK arm of the Roman Catholic Church) and any statements about the superiority or "correct" status of traditional male/female relationships is liable to cause offence to the LGBT community or those sensitive to "politically correct" ways of thinking. The political sensitivity of the issue may present a significant block to an intended conversation about Christ, and should be navigated with care, lest an otherwise peripheral issue become the unintended centre-stage. Amongst young people in particular, the potential issue of "judgement" of people, especially people who perceive themselves to have no choice in their sexual orientation, is a potentially highly damaging one. It should also be noted that this issue is not about the Church interacting with wider culture, but indeed the LGBT community within the Church are also struggling with these issues of judgement and their interaction with the Gospel. The threat to evangelism that such a live topic carries, only reflects the wider threat to life in Christ that the topic carries, for all areas of the Church. The Church must navigate this area with sensitivity to the realities of hurting individuals, whilst presenting the truth in Christ.
- The lack of masculine role-model may adversely cause a distance and distrust between young people (especially males) and a masculine saviour.
- Despite 66% feeling comfortable in their homes, a third of respondents (the remaining 33%) do not feel that they can call their home a safe place. Reaching a generation that is used to having its "defences" up, to withdrawing from honest or vulnerable engagement, presents specific challenges.
- The associated threat to the above point is that the underlying assumptions of the young people do not include this sense of whole self, or soul, but are largely pragmatic and functionalistic, preferring the instant, the gratifying and the material to the profound or the nourishing. The understanding of what "happiness" is will be a necessary precursor to discussions around personal fulfilment. In short, there is a significant amount of groundwork that needs to be laid (and "bought into" by the young people) before the Christian position can be successfully exposited.
- The emerging picture is of a generation that predominantly view sexual relationships as a casual affair, largely without any inclination to place value on it. Engaging these young people with a message of depth and meaning will require more groundwork than approaching a generation that already had a sense of spiritual value to life would.
- Music videos are still a highly significant influence (72%) on young people, and show no signs of changing their heavily sexualized tone. We can expect that, as pop stars' fashions continue to perpetrate a heavily sexualized image, we will see this increasingly emulated by younger and younger teenagers as it gains acceptance in society. The de-sensitised attitude of young people toward sexuality reduces the perceived need for ethical teaching in the area (in fact such teaching can come across interfering rather than useful), weakening an "ethics" approach to Gospel proclamation.
- The high percentage (56%) of young people who lie (and openly admit it) is in apparent contrast to the social-awareness inference offered by the low figure for vindictive attempts at emotional harm (17%), indicating a cognitive dissonance in today's relativistic society.
- The influence of a group of friends (71% indicate some influence, 21% indicate heavier influence) is not to be underestimated in ministry to young people. Even in a situation where a young person is

responding to ministry, peer pressure, especially amongst the young, can undermine and invalidate the work done.

- Lying is perhaps seen as a 'lesser' evil and easy to hold in tension with an otherwise cohesive ethic compass. In some areas at least, pragmatism seems to override traditionally held 'faithfulness in the small things'.

- A lack of perceived "purpose" in life threatens ministry that emphasises finding purpose as a key factor in finding God. It is worth noting that some ministries are moving toward a more functionalist ("Does faith *work* for you?") approach, away from the modernist idea of purpose ("Does it answer your sense of needing purpose?").

- Given that only 48% of respondents seek fulfilment in stable relationships it would be unhelpful to assume that relationship stability is a priority for young people. Any ministry that focuses on promoting healthy romantic relationships as a lure toward the gospel may find it has a lower than hoped for response.

- Evidently, a lack of interest in religion will mean a generation who are primed to dismiss a message that triggers their rejection with a "key word".

- Even though discussion around the issues of the existence or nature of God are of interest to this generation, they are mostly so in an abstract and disconnected sense. (In many ways like the Athenians in Acts 17). Making the leap from the "abstract" to the "potentially impacting" will be a significant factor of successful youth ministry.

- The deepest threat to a successful youth ministry to this culture is facing relativism and being able to engage with it as an *objective truth*.

- 87% believe that people who do not accept Jesus Christ as their saviour can still go to heaven. As has been expounded on in this report, this is the result of many years of erosive relativism that shuns any claim to a 'one true path' in philosophy, ideology or religion. Other statistics show that a much smaller percentage than this believe in God (37%), so a belief in non-Christians going to heaven seems reactionary, rather than coming from a thought-through understanding of heaven.

- An 18% willing church attendance is a decline from earlier decades. This will most likely continue and result in less young people being raised in a continuous, faith-reinforcing / developing environment.

Section II: Project Description

Acknowledgments

This project was made possible in part by funding from the Maclellan Foundation and Global Ministries - OneHope.

The Attitudes & Behaviours of Youth (ABY) instrument administered in this study was made available by Josh McDowell Ministries. This survey was developed for global application. As such, query areas are not specialized for the United Kingdom.

Overview

OneHope seeks to understand what children and youth deal with in their day-to-day realities. We know that children and youth face a variety of social challenges and experience psycho-social needs to which they are often left without effective responses. We do know that the needs of children vary from country to country and even regionally within countries. However, without reliable information we are unable to tailor our products and distribution programs to address needs specific to particular contexts.

As part of OneHope's Spiritual *State of the World's Children* study, the Attitudes and Behaviours of the Youth (ABY) project will capture the following information about children in the United Kingdom:

- Typical family situations, relationships, and parental contact
- Behaviours and moral values guiding relationships with peers of the opposite sex
- Daily occupations and pastimes
- Worldviews, influences, beliefs, future goals, and religious affiliation
- Theological perspectives and commitment

Research Methodology

The Attitudes and Behaviour of Youth project utilizes the ABY survey which is a stratified random survey of secondary school aged children. The survey was stratified by degree of urbanization, geographic region, ethnicity, and gender for the United Kingdom. Additional strata that permit analysis are: family composition and religious affiliation.

The core survey was constructed using the Survey of Juveniles designed by Chris Sleath of Josh McDowell Ministries. The survey was administered online in English. Surveys were administered online through panels and social networking sites segregated by zip-code, ethnicity, population density, and gender all proportional to the national ratio.

Project Overview

The time frame for data collection was May through August 2011. Drs. Rene Paulson and Jacquelyn Pennings jointly served as the local Research Coordinator for the United Kingdom research project. Oversight was provided by Dr. Allen Reesor and Mindy Chandler of Pompano Beach, Florida. The research followed project design instructions (see below under Logistics and Data Collection).

Data was entered online into a web-based database, which is hosted by Philip Issa of Elite Research. The final report includes the Metadigm Group's analysis of the data which has been reviewed by Rene Paulson, PhD. Secondary data is provided where applicable. This report is available for use by partners supporting the utilization of collaborative research in conducting ministry to children and youth.

The final report will be made available to ministry partners who promote ministry to children and youth through collaborative research.

Logistics

Randomization

Reliability of the survey results depends upon consistent randomization of the participants. Strata of randomization that govern participant selection employed in this project were ethnicity, geographic location, gender, and population density distributions.

Population density was interpreted as urban, semi-urban, or rural. Respondents were asked if they live in a rural, suburban, or urban area, and they were asked to enter their postcode. Postcodes were validated for population and distance from major cities based on 2001 Census data. The distance codes take into account the proximity of each postcode to a major urban area.

Validation

Several measures were taken to check the validity of the data. The panellist company was TrueSample™ [1]certified, a technological solution that ensures data quality by verifying that each survey respondent is:

- Who and where they say they are
- Not allowed to enter a survey twice
- Honest and thoughtful in their responses

In addition, the survey included several questions which were used to validate the data[2].

Quality Control

The survey data is kept confidential and is housed by Elite Research.

Implementation & Survey Administration

Data Collection

Data collection for the ABY project in the United Kingdom included the following steps as detailed below:
1) Determination of the demographic breakdown of teenagers (ages 13-18) in the United Kingdom. The demographic variables of interest were gender, age, grade/level, and population density. Additionally, data was collected from each geographic region in the United Kingdom, based on the four census regions (England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland).
2) From the demographic breakdown of each region, the number of participants from each region that were needed to represent each of the demographics was decided upon. Data was stratified based on the following:
   a. Gender (male vs. female)
   b. Age (13-14 vs. 15-16 vs. 17-18)
   c. Population Density (Urban vs. Suburban vs. Rural)
3) Two forms of participant recruitment[3] were used:

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[1] TrueSample brings the same real-time technologies that help prevent credit card fraud and identity theft to the world of online research, enabling researchers to eliminate duplicate, fraudulent, or unengaged respondents from panel databases to ensure that the panel participants are who they represent themselves to be (age, gender, etc).

[2] For example, an item asking participants how many years they had been driving was included in survey, which can then be checked against the age item to identify participants that are likely being untruthful.

[3] Both methods of surveying encouraged snowballing, which allowed participants to invite other eligible teens to complete the survey.

a. The first was to purchase a list of panel participants from a reputable panellist company. Panel participants were between 13 and 18 years of age and had parental permission to participate in online surveys.

b. The second was to recruit participants from social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. For this recruitment, incentives were determined (examples included drawings for gift cards, iPods, etc.) and announcements created that included the survey web-link and incentive information which was posted online.

Participation was voluntary, and a brief online introduction was provided to those participating in the survey.

When data collection was completed, the regional breakdown[4] was as follows (all other breakdowns are included in the data report):

Region	%
England	80.6
Wales	6.5
Scotland	8.1
Northern Ireland	4.8

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[4] Based on the 2006 census, population estimates by the Office for National Statistics were England 83.8%, Wales 4.9%, Scotland 8.4%, and Northern Ireland 2.9%.

Section III: Profiles of Youth in the United Kingdom

Data Qualifications

Due to the sample distribution, results will skew slightly towards male attitudes.

Demographic Profile

The total sample for this analysis was 3,951. Of those included in the analysis, 53% are male and 47% are female; 42% live in urban areas, 30% live in semi-urban areas, and 28% live in rural areas. By age, this sample is comprised of 48% of participants 13-15 years old (subsequently referred to as younger participants) and 52% ages 16-18 (subsequently referred to as older participants).

With 3% of participants not in school and 12% attending college or university, 32% are in Key Stage 2 or Years 7-9, 29% are in Key Stage 3 or Years 10-11, and 24% are in the 6th Form or Years 12-13. Of those in school, 49% of participants indicate they are doing *good* in school, 28% *average,* and 19% *excellent*. Male participants are somewhat more likely than female participants to report *average* performance in school.

Parents' employment (which may be used as a measure of economic status for this group) is as follows: 38% of participants' fathers and 45% of mothers fall into the *other* category for employment, which may indicate that they work from home, are self-employed, or unemployed. For 21% of participants' fathers and 18% of their mothers', employment is professional, and 16% of fathers are industrial workers. For participants' mothers, 16% work in the public sector, and the service industry employs 13% of fathers and 16% of mothers. Older participants are slightly more likely than younger participants to report their fathers as professionals, and semi-urban participants are more likely than urban participants to report that their mothers are employed in the public sector.

Parents' marital status for participants in this sample is reported as 59% married, 21% divorced with 5% remarried, and 12% that one or both parents are deceased. Urban participants are less likely than their rural or semi-urban counterparts to have married parents. Participants are most likely to live with both parents at 59%; 22% live only with one parent, and 13% live with two parents, one of whom is a step-parent.

Family Relationship Profile

Family experience has been positive for 89% of the participants in this study, and 66% consider their homes to be a place where they feel safe and loved. However, 14% say that home is where they only sometimes feel loved, 16% are comfortable although the family is not close or everyone tries to love each other, and 4% would rather live elsewhere. Semi-urban and younger participants are somewhat more likely than their urban and older counterparts to feel safe and loved in their homes, and older participants are more likely than their younger counterparts to live where they feel comfortable but sense that the family is not close.

Generally, participants report that the adults in their families are interested in who they are, set good examples for them, spend time with them, and demonstrate love for each other. Younger participants are more likely than older participants to report that the adults in their families are interested in who they are, spend time with them, demonstrate love for each other, admit when they are wrong or mistaken, do not allow them to do the things they want to do, and are too strict. Urban and older participants are more likely than rural, semi-urban and younger participants to indicate that the adults in their families fight with each other.

Overall, 17% indicate that their father is deceased or that they do not know him (urban participants are somewhat more likely to say this is true for them), and another 16% are not at all or not very close to their father. However, 67% of participants indicate that they are very close to their mothers and 37% with their fathers (30% are fairly close to father and 25% with their mothers). Younger participants are more likely than older participants to be close to their parents, and rural and semi-urban participants are more likely to indicate they are close to fathers than urban participants.

Participants report that they sometimes or frequently feel proud of their parents (89% for mothers and 75% for fathers), that parents show love for them (90% for mothers and 69% for fathers), that they seek advice from parents (84% for mothers and 67% for fathers), and 83% talk with their mothers about personal concerns. They also show love to their parents (82% for mothers and 62% for fathers). Male participants are more likely than female participants to spend one-on-one time with their fathers, while female and younger participants are more likely than male and older participants to be close to mothers than fathers.

In a typical week, 34% of participants spend less than 15 minutes a week in meaningful conversation with their fathers and 10% with their mothers, although 11% spend more than 4 hours a week in meaningful conversation with fathers and 29% with mothers. Urban participants are less likely to spend one-on-one time with parents than rural or semi-urban participants, and younger participants are more likely to spend 4 or more hours a week in meaningful conversation with their fathers than older participants. Female participants spend more time than male participants in conversation with their mothers.

Attitudes toward Marriage and Sexuality Profile

Participants are optimistic about marriage; 90% feel they will be very happy in their own marriage, 81% do not think one should expect marriage to end in divorce, and 66% that marriage problems are generally exaggerated . However, only half want a marriage like their parents and believe the traditional family to be essential to a stable society. One third disagree that God intended marriage to last a lifetime, 79% condone divorce if two people are not in love even when there are children, and 23% admire single life. About one-third of participants would like to be a virgin at marriage, and if the past could be changed, think they would wait to have sex until after marriage. While female participants are more likely to value virginity than male participants, male participants are more likely to admire single life, want a marriage like their parents, and disapprove of divorce than female participants. Younger participants are more optimistic about marriage and, while being more positive about virginity, are also more permissive than older participants. Semi-rural participants are somewhat more conservative in their views of marriage than urban and rural participants.

When asked how family should be defined, 60% define family in legal terms as those related by birth, adoption, or marriage, and 38% consider family in relational terms as those who care for each other or live together. Female, semi-urban, and older participants are more likely than male, urban, and younger participants to describe family in relational terms. For people who could be considered family but where there is no marriage, 92% of participants accept an unwed heterosexual couple with children as family, and 88% believe an unmarried woman with her children is a family. About half of participants would recognize unwed heterosexual couples without children as family and 43% recognize homosexual couples as a family. Female participants are more likely than male participants to consider homosexual couples, heterosexual cohabiting couples without children, and unmarried women with their children as family.

Participants indicate that they are most likely to have learned about sex from their classmates/friends followed by parents. Urban participants are more likely than rural and semi-urban participants to have learned about sex from TV/movies and the internet, but less likely to have learned about it from their parents. Semi-urban participants are less likely than their urban counterparts to have heard about sex from textbooks. Older participants are more likely to have learned about sex from the internet, while younger participants are more likely to have learned about sex from their parents.

When asked about what might influence them to engage in sexual intercourse, about 70% of participants indicated that they were very or quite likely to have sex if they were in love or intended to marry. However, about 80% are either not likely or very unlikely to engage in sex if parents would not find out or did not mind; peer encouragement was the least likely reason. Female participants and older participants are more likely than their male and younger counterparts to have sex for all listed reasons except for intention to marry for females and peer pressure for older participants.

If two people are not married but are in love with each other and not coerced to engage in sexual activity, almost half of participants indicated that fondling of breasts (49%), fondling genitals (46%), and sexual intercourse (44%) as always acceptable. Semi-urban participants are less likely than their rural and urban counterparts to find genital fondling acceptable, and they are less likely than urban participants only to find sex always acceptable. Older participants are far more likely than younger participants to find sexual activities beyond kissing and holding hands to be always acceptable.

When asked which of a series of sexual activities they had already experienced, 28% of participants (45% for 16 to 18 year olds) have had sexual intercourse and slightly more than one-third have engaged in fondling. Older participants are far more likely than younger participants to have engaged in all sexual activities, and while male participants are more likely than female participants to have fondled breasts, there was no statistically significant difference by gender for other activities.

Beliefs and Perspectives on Daily Life Profile

Across all groups, about 32% of participants are very satisfied with life, and 59% are somewhat satisfied with life; 9% are not too or not at all satisfied with life. Over the past three months, 8% of participants have considered suicide and 3% have attempted suicide. When asked what values or conditions would be important for them to achieve in life, nearly all said that good physical health, close friendships, a comfortable lifestyle, working in a high-paying job, and having a clear purpose for living are very or somewhat important. Being active in a church and having a close relationship with God are the least significant indicators of a fulfilled life. For female participants having children is more important than for male participants.

For participants, technology such as MP3, cell phone, laptop computer, and blogging far outweigh other interests in media and cultural expression. During a normal week, they are most likely to use free time to watch TV, listen to music, and spend time on internet chat or text with about 40% spending 8 or more hours in these activities; 72% watch music channels every week. Female participants are more likely than male participants to listen to music and internet chat/text in their free time; urban participants are more likely than rural and semi-urban participants to spend time reading the Bible, although this activity is given the least time of all. Older participants are more likely than younger participants to listen to music, internet chat/text, look online, and nap in their spare time.

Parents are identified as the strongest influence in participants' life, followed by friends; all religions have the least influence. Urban participants are more likely than their rural and semi-urban counterparts to find movies, siblings, religious community leaders, and the Bible of influence in their lives. They are also more likely than only rural participants to deem music as influential, and they are more likely than only semi-urban participants to recognize Internet information as influential. Younger participants are more likely than older participants to find their teachers and textbooks influential in their lives.

Regarding moral values and norms, 74% of participants believe that truth can mean different things to different people and about two thirds believe that rule-bending and lying are sometimes necessary, although only 28% condone law-breaking even if no one is hurt. Only 26% consider the Bible to provide a clear description of moral truth, and only 21% think the Bible provides moral truth that should apply to everyone. Generally, male

participants are more pragmatic than female participants, and younger participants more relativist than older participants.

When asked about their behaviour over the previous three months, 56% of participants have lied to adults and 51% to their peers, 35% have drunk enough alcohol to become intoxicated, 20% have watched pornographic films, and 20% have used tobacco. Male participants are much more likely than female participants to have watched pornographic movies, read pornographic magazines, tried to hurt someone physically, and gambled. Urban participants are more likely than their rural and semi-urban counterparts to have lied to an adult, and they are more likely than semi-urban participants to have used tobacco and watched pornographic movies. As a trend, with increased population density, participants are more likely to have lied to peers and watched music channels. Older participants are far more likely than younger participants to have been drunk and much more likely to have watched pornographic movies, gambled, used tobacco, and read pornographic magazines; they are somewhat more likely to have used illegal drugs and lied.

Religious Beliefs and Practices Profile

In this sample, 34% of participants have no religious affiliation, 24% are Protestant, 14% Roman Catholic, and 15% claim an indigenous faith. Male, rural and older participants are more likely than female, urban, and younger participants to profess no religion. Eighty-percent of participants consider their religion not too or not at all important. Three-quarters of participants do not consider faith important to their lives, cannot recall a time when their religious beliefs affected their behaviour, do not believe that God created human beings, and do not believe that spiritual development is necessary for leading a full and satisfying life; only 18% regard church membership as important. Female and urban participants are slightly more likely to value faith and God than male and rural participants.

When asked where they have heard about the Bible or Jesus, participants indicate it is most likely they heard from family/relatives. Roughly half of the participants find themselves uncertain as to the reality of a spirit world with less than a quarter indicating any certainty. When asked to select a definition of God, 25% say there is no such thing as God. While one-quarter of participants do not believe that there is a God, 40% do not know what they believe about God, 18% feel God is the omniscient, omnipotent Creator who rules the world today, and 15% have some idea of God as a force or influence. Younger participants are slightly more likely to not know what they believe about God, and older participants are slightly more likely to believe that there is no such thing as God.

Roughly half of participants do not know what happens to people after death, one-fifth believe that people cease to exist after death, and one-tenth that people will go to Heaven if they are good. Six percent of participants believe that people who confess their sins and accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour go to Heaven after dying.

About 10% of participants report that they and their families attend religious services on at least a weekly basis, with 76% rarely attending at all. Fifteen percent of participants think that they are somewhat or very likely to regularly attend religious services after leaving high school. When asked if they participate in other religious practices, participants most frequently pray with 13% praying at least weekly; about 10% sometimes participate in other religious activities. Of those who attend a religious study group for youth, it is most likely the group is smaller than 20 members.

When asked about their knowledge of Christian theology, only 38% of participants responded that they were Christian and participated in the question. Of these, 45% indicate that Christianity as having relevance to their lives and 17% feel a personal responsibility to share their faith. While 75% believe Jesus was a real person, 67% believe that what is done for others is more important than what is believed about Jesus Christ, 46% do not believe that Christ returned to life after his death, and 49% believe that Christ committed sins while on the earth

like other people. Regarding salvation, of the group responding, only 33% believe that forgiveness of sins is through faith in Jesus, and 13% believe that those who do not accept Christ as Saviour will go to Hell. Only 20% believe the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings, but 31% believe Biblical miracles happened.

Of religion in general, 61% believe that all religions pray to the same God, 51% believe that being good will earn a place in Heaven, 48% believe that it does not matter what religious faith you associate with because they all believe the same principles and truths, and 41% believe some sins are unforgiveable sins. However, 40% believe that prayer can change what happens in life and that there is a final judgment by God, but 61% believe the devil is only a symbol of evil, and 30% believe that the idea of sin is outdated.

When asked whether or not they had ever made a decision to accept Christ, 38% of participants surveyed responded to the question; of those responding, 23% (9% of the total sample) indicated that they had made a commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their lives today. Of those who have made a commitment, for 32% it was between 9-12 years old, for 26% between 13-15 years old, and 20% between 5-8 years old. Female participants are somewhat more likely than male participants to have made this commitment.

Section IV: United Kingdom Secondary Data

Secondary Research Profile
United Kingdom

DEMOGRAPHICS & POPULATION	
Est. Population (2010)	60,609,153
Population (under 15 yrs.)	17.93%
Life Expectancy	79 yrs.
Birth Rate (per 1,000 people)	11.9
Infant Mortality (1,000 lives births)	4.62
Estimated Urban / Rural Population	54,023,170 / 6,203,330
Largest City / Population	London / 7,744,942
EDUCATION & LITERACY	
Literacy Rate (over 15 yrs.)	49.6%
Primary Enrolment	100%
Literacy Rate – Males	55.4%
Literacy Rate – Females	44.6%
ECONOMICS	
GDP (purchasing power parity) 2010 est.	$2.173 trillion
GDP (official exchange rate) 2010 est.	$2.247 trillion
Poverty Rate (% below poverty line)	14%

SOCIAL			
Human Development Index[5] (out of 177)	26	Suicide Rate 15-24 yrs. (per capita) 100,000 people	6.7
Divorce Rate	3.08 per 1,000 people	Adult prevalence rate 15-49 with HIV AIDS	0.1
Rape victims (per capita) 1,000 people	0.142172	Children Orphaned *due to all causes (0-17yrs) 2009, estimate (thousands)*	490
Murders committed by youths (per capita) 1,000 people	0.9	Total fertility rate (2011 est.)	1.91 children born/woman
Unemployment Rate 2010 est.	7.9%		

ETHNIC GROUPS & RELIGIONS			
English	82%	Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist)	71.6%
Scottish	10%	Muslim	2.7%
Irish	2%	Hindu	1%
Welsh	2%	Other	1.6%

This data is drawn from CountryWatch.com, World Health Organization, and public domain data. Statistics are generally from 2005 but may be earlier if none more recent are available.

[5] Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the level of well-being in 177 nations in the world. It uses factors such as poverty, literacy, life expectancy, education, gross domestic product, and purchasing power parity to assess the average achievements in each nation. It has been used in the UN's Human Development Report since 1993.

Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Asians, Caribbean and Other	4%	Unspecified or non	23.1%

LANGUAGES
English, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic and several other International languages