

Spiritual State of the World's Children

Thailand





Spiritual State of the World's Children A Qualitative Study

Thailand

November 2009

Prepared by:



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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 shared the life of Jesus with over 600 million children and young people.



The Metadigm Group seeks to equip organizations to conduct research and improve their efficacy. Metadigm offers services in research design, data collection, strategic planning, market profiles, and outcomes development; we work with organizations to embed research skills into day-to-day operations and achieve organizational priorities. For more information, visit our website, www.metadigmgroup.com, or email us at info@metadigmgroup.com.

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Section II: Executive Summary

General Information for Thailand Discovery Project

From September 18-23, 2009, 35 focus groups were convened in Thailand. This included groups from Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Udon Thani, and Chon Buri. A total of 16 student groups, 9 groups of youth pastors and youth workers, 5 groups of evangelical leaders and pastors, 2 government leaders groups, and 3 groups of teachers met to provide information for this project.

Key Issues

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES: RELATIVE TO CHURCH & YOUTH MINISTRY

- Thai youth are very creative and enjoy developing their own forms of dance, arts, etc.
- Youth are highly involved in social networking websites which ministries can use to reach youth
- Thai youth are interested in pursuing higher education and believe that such pursuits are valuable
- Young people highly embrace and value their relationships and are predisposed to group activities
- Youth are interested in spiritual instruction that can help them address their life issues
- As youth have embraced foreign pop culture, particularly movies and music from Korea, they may also respond positively to outreach from Korean missions teams
- Churches, NGOs, and governmental leaders recognize the need for partnerships and collaborations
- Church leaders are aware of the need to revitalize their ministry to youth and desire opportunities to be innovative in reaching young people utilizing their interests in sports, music, games, etc.
- As Christian youth have a good understanding of non-Christian youth, they are an untapped resource for conducting youth ministry
- Younger adolescents in Thailand, in their choice of role models, seem receptive to positive character development

WEAKNESSES & THREATS: RELATIVE TO CHURCH & YOUTH MINISTRY

- Thai youth culture seems to embrace poor moral values (e.g. usage of pornography) which is exacerbated by their media preferences
- Youth are predisposed to short-term gratification and do not seem to think in terms of long-term emotional satisfaction
- Materialism is rampant in youth culture; young people make poor moral decisions (e.g. prostitution) to make money
- Youth are experimenting with homosexuality and sexual behaviors at a younger age (e.g. primary school)
- Lacking role models both within and outside the home, youth look to their friends for advice on most matters
- Family relationships, particularly between parents and children, are not close
- Teens are not interested in the current methods utilized by the church to present spiritual matters
- Churches lack resources (particularly media) and trained staff to conduct outreach to young people
- Thai youth have misconceptions about Christianity
- There is a fear among Thai youth that embracing or even learning about Christianity will alienate them from their family and friends
- Perhaps because of cultural shifts, Thai youth are less respectful of their elders

Recommendations

- *Strengthen the relationship between parents and children*
 - Utilize the Department of Education's interest in introducing moral development training into the national education curriculum
 - Churches could conduct family training workshops to open the lines of communication between children and parents
- *Provide training to ministries and churches*
 - Focus on training current staff to effectively evangelize non-Christian youth by building trust relationships with youth in spite of the age barrier
 - Create outreach programs that will provide mentors for Christian youth while also training these youth to evangelize their non-Christian peers
- *Redevelop current ministry outreach*
 - Counseling centers and/or hotlines that will allow youth to receive guidance from people who are not their peers
 - Conduct programs that will concurrently entertain and instruct youth on Christian values
 - Create and provide programs and materials that will address the perception of Christianity in Thailand
- *Further Study*
 - Explore the extent (via quantitative methods) to which the at-risk behaviors identified in this report occur in the Thai youth population
 - To galvanize churches to revitalize their current outreach efforts, conduct research on the effectiveness of media products in reaching youth

Responses to Research Questions/Areas

1. What are the interests, felt needs, hopes, and fears common to Thai Youth?

Across groups, participants agree that Thai youth are very interested in fashion, magazines, games, sports, music, movies, television, vocal contests, and dance contests. Thai youth are also interested in improving their societies. Many young people are interested in volunteering on environmental projects, assisting the poor, doing good things for the King, or participating with non-profit ventures.

Youth are both interested and comfortable in utilizing technology. Thai youth are on the Internet and actively use social networking websites, like Facebook or Hi5. Text messaging is a popular means of communication with teenagers as is blogging and using camera phones. As youth are far more tech-savvy than their parents, adult groups report that youth are able to access destructive materials over the Internet without their parents' knowledge. Teachers, youth pastors & workers, and pastors & church leaders report that young people watch pornography; they are concerned that some youth do not think such actions are wrong.

Across groups, participants report that young people are highly interested in foreign pop culture, particularly that of Korea and Japan. Youth workers report that Korean movies, series, celebrities, and fashion trends are very much a part of Thai youth culture. Young men, particularly university boys, tend to be drawn to Japanese comic books. Girls, on the other hand, are more likely to prefer contemporary novels that have Japanese or Korean covers. Other interests that Thai youth enjoy from other cultures include language instruction, beauty products, music, and clothing styles.

All groups report that gaming is very popular with Thai youth. Younger students report that they can spend hours and even whole weekends gaming. Game shops are oftentimes a focal point of Thai youth life, and many young people can spend a great deal of time in shops, sometimes alone but oftentimes with their peers.

The desire for acceptance and meaningful relationships are very important to Thai youth. Because of a breakdown in the family and a lack of positive role models, youth rely on their friends to fulfill many of the functions of parents and/or adults. Youth are more likely to seek advice or follow the examples set by their friends, and will even conform to foreign trends to remain a part of their social group. The use of drugs can also occur because of peer pressure. Participants report that young people are either led into using drugs by their friends or conversely, introduce their friends to drugs. This suggests that drug use among Thai youth is not an individualistic pursuit but rather a group occurrence. While drug abuse is not rampant in Thai youth culture and the majority of youth drug addiction cases (as reported by the youth pastors & workers focus groups) are restricted to alcohol and cigarettes, some youth pastors and workers are concerned that young people do not believe drug use is wrong. In addition, the rise of immorality among Thai youth is also a concern, as more young people are experimenting with sexual activity at a younger age. Additionally, sex prior to marriage is not considered taboo or uncommon in Thai youth culture.

In spite of the problems facing young people, Thai youth believe in individualism and hope for successful futures and prestigious professions with high earning potential. Students state that money is an essential element in life and feel pressure to succeed financially. In some cases, parental pressure forces children to pursue high-earning positions instead of following their dreams. Children who do not have family support are less optimistic about their future.

While not expressed overtly, youth seem to be afraid of the lack of support they receive from their parents. Many find themselves having to prepare for the future without their parents' insight or conversely their parents will plan their child's future without his/her input. Youth's desire for acceptance also makes them afraid to try or learn about new things, like Christianity, as it can alienate them from their parents or friends.

2. How do youth define success?

Many young people view earning a degree, getting a good job, and having enough money as important components for personal success. These responses indicate a belief that success is defined by one's purchasing power. Many young people in Thailand admire media stars that are rich and famous and even consider such people to be their role models. This can lead students to believe that money is an essential element in life. Many feel pressured to succeed financially so that they can meet their own needs and that of their family. Youth feel that they need the current technological devices, and fashion items such as clothes, shoes, accessories, and cosmetics (i.e. skin-whitening, hairstyles, products for weight control, etc.) to fit in with their friends. Some will even go so far as to strive for high-end expenses, such as cosmetic surgery or orthodontics (inc. teeth straightening), to become more beautiful.

Youth believe that family support is integral to future success and also believe that they can help their families succeed. While many families will provide financial resources for a young person's welfare and lifestyle (as described above) when s/he is young, in some families as youth become successful, s/he is expected to reciprocate and provide for the family.

3. How do youth spend their money and time? What does this say about their priorities?

Youth spend their money having fun through recreational activities or socializing with friends. Oftentimes, Thai youth will spend money to buy things (e.g. clothes, phones, etc.) that will allow them to create the right impression and impress others. Such behavior indicates that primary priorities in Thai youth culture are self-gratification and acceptance from social groups, which can include friends, family, or colleagues.

Youth spend their time on personal pursuits like television, the Internet, texting, online chatting, or reading comic books. Gaming, either at home or in game shops, is very popular with Thai youth as is dating. Young people also spend a lot of their time with their friends engaging in activities like shopping, watching or going to the movies, playing sports, going to clubs, or dancing. While parents may disapprove of activities that their children enjoy, youth find ways to do what they want. Parents are more likely to approve of time spent on school-related activities, like studying, sports competitions, or learning foreign languages (as long as it does not involve travel abroad). In addition, both parents and children indicate that spending time with their family (e.g. cooking, helping younger siblings with their studies, taking family trips) is also considered a valuable use of time.

These activities suggest that relationships are vital to young people's sense of self. Consequently, such activities demand their commitment and attention. In addition, while parents prefer activities that prepare youth for their future, young people's choice of activities suggest that Thai youth culture is consumed with their short-term priorities. While youth behavior may seem to revolve around instant gratification, it is possible that they are instead looking for approval and affirmation.

4. What media appeals to and most often engages youth?

Media outlets that youth prefer include: social networking sites (Facebook or Hi5), the computer/Internet, television, games, movies, radio, text messaging, comic books, contemporary novels (for females) cartoons, and magazines. In addition, young people like to spend time in musical pursuits including live concerts, dance clubs, or creating dance routines to popular songs. Mobile phones are also very popular with both males and females.

a. *What musical message(s) impact youth?*

While young people enjoy listening to Thai music, they also enjoy K-Pop and foreign music of differing styles. It is interesting to note that many popular songs have English lyrics and deal with themes of love, affection, and sex. These songs generally promote a materialistic lifestyle and emphasize foreign cultural values.

b. *What entertainment (music, sports, TV programs, movies) appeal to children?*

Live music, particularly concerts, are a popular form of entertainment with Thai youth. Dance events, clubs, competitions, and singing contests are other popular live events. Young people like sports as they can participate either as a spectator or participant. Sports commonly mentioned as youth favorites include: football, skate-boarding, motorbike racing, and extreme sports.

Television programs that youth prefer are: cartoons (especially those that utilize Japanese graphics), Korean soap operas, and dance competitions. While youth report enjoying movies, they did not detail what types of movies are most appealing; however, some students state a preference for international movies. Game shops serve as a typical meeting point for youth to initiate other activities, like seeking out the opposite sex. Across groups, participants state that video games are very popular with Thai youth and consume a great deal of their time. Many adult groups expressed concern that youth's preoccupation with games can be damaging to young people's moral and social development.

5. What influences are most important in shaping youth's values?

a. *How does Thai home life impact young people's attitudes and openness to other influences (sexual behaviors, religious decisions, future careers and personal values)?*

Generally, groups report that parents do not spend enough time with their children and thus, do not meaningfully impact their children's moral development. It is recognized by community leaders [religion and education] that parents require help in understanding and meeting the needs of their children. Without strengthening the influence of parents, it is unlikely that government and NGOs will be able to adequately shape the lives of Thai youth.

In earlier generations, it was not uncommon for parents to spend a significant amount of time outside the home. However, in these cases, oftentimes, extended family members would provide supervision and shape children's moral formation. Today, however, neither parents nor extended family members provide this function, and children receive little to no moral training or mentoring in the home. Instead, young people obtain their moral values from older siblings or from others (oftentimes peers) with whom they form trust relationships.

In some households, youth are either left unsupervised, sent to live with their grandparents, or receive supervision from servants. As a result, youth engage in unhealthy activities, like sex in their own homes. Perhaps because of this disconnect in the home, youth workers report that parents can sometimes be passive participants in their children's sexual activities. Some parents do not try to stop their children from having sex; instead, they are more concerned that their children not get pregnant.

Even though parents complain about the amounts of money youth request, parents provide financial support for many of the activities and impulses of their children. Although up to 20% of parents are involved regularly in their children's lives (as reported by evangelical leaders & pastors), youth indicate that they usually make their own decisions.

b. *Where do Thai youth go for answers when they have a problem?*

When facing a problem, Thai youth are most likely to approach people with whom they have strong trust relationships. Mostly, this means that young people will share their problems or concerns with friends or siblings. When problems are beyond their ability to solve or when they need resources, children will go to their parents. Sometimes, most usually as a last resort, children will go to their teachers, or pastors for assistance. In such cases, young people will only go to these adults if there is an already existing relationship and the child believes that the adult is interested and has the time for him/her.

c. *What impact does the current political situation have on young people's hope for the future?*

Youth do not see politicians as positive role models nor do they believe that current political processes effectively address societal problems. Youth's attitude towards politics is mostly negative and many teenagers think politics is boring.

Participants in the government leaders' focus groups felt that the lack of credibility of political leaders has created a general attitude of suspicion toward authority figures in Thailand. As youth are reported to believe that all people in authority act out of selfish intentions, this may very well be the case.

d. What gives Thai youth confidence and assurance?

It appears that Thai youth gain a great deal of confidence from friends and group acceptance. Gaining acceptance with the right group of people, which may be family or friends, is very important to youth and could explain behaviors like their desire to be fashionable, follow trends, procure the latest electronic devices, and participate in group activities [even those that are harmful].

Youth believe that they will do better if they have a good education, speak a foreign language, or increase their opportunity to gain a good position in life. In the spiritual realm, youth also report that success can be gained with the assistance of some forms of magic, including fortune tellers or powerful tattoos and charms.

e. What shapes their identity, sexual behaviors, and values?

Young people draw their identity from their social group as well as the activities (see question 1) that consume the majority of their time. These activities, in turn, shape their behaviors and values. Decisions are influenced by group values and priorities. Behaviors that are normal for the group become normal for its individual members.

Peer group acceptance is a priority for many young people. Oftentimes, this necessitates having some degree of purchasing power. As such, youth may engage in high-risk behaviors in order to meet the demands of maintaining their social status. Participants report that some young people are even drawn to working the club scene¹ or prostitution to make money so they can buy the things they desire.

There are some aspects of youth behavior that seem national in scope. These behaviors include: homosexuality, sexual promiscuity, third gender identity, a lack of respect for elders, violence, gaming, and drugs.

f. What encourages youth to engage in partying, drug use, and other harmful behaviors?

Youth are encouraged to party, use drugs, and engage in harmful behaviors by their desire to fit in and be accepted by their peers. This may be more pronounced in young people who feel alienated from their families or live in households that are highly dysfunctional. Violence between parents and abusive fathers are emotionally damaging to young people and can hinder their ability to trust adults. Additionally, this may contribute to young people's desires to form primary emotional relationships outside the home. In addition, youth lack direction and get bored; as a result, they seek out things that they find exciting, such as partying, drug or alcohol use, or sexual experimentation.

The media can exacerbate these behaviors in young people. Sometimes, a child will see immoral lifestyles and behaviors propagated in the media as enviable and desire to do the same themselves. As Thai youth oftentimes engage in new activities in groups, such behavior is oftentimes not an individual activity but rather become peer group activities.

6. What character education appears to be needed?

Thai youth are in need of discipline and a belief in their self-worth. Currently, peer pressure and the desire for acceptance drives many youth to high-risk behaviors, like trying drugs, being part of the club scene, and experimenting with sex. Coupled with a lack of close relationships with parents and positive role models, youth do not have the training they need to make good decisions. Thai youth are driven by their need for immediate, short-term gratification; some youth will even engage in prostitution to earn money and buy the things they want.

Youth need to be taught how to make decisions that will benefit them in the long-run. Youth require training in resisting peer pressure and good decision-making. As friendships are one of the most important relationships that young people have in Thailand, until children are equipped with successful strategies to stand up against negative group decisions, it will be difficult for youth to experience change in their moral development.

¹ That is, youth will go to clubs and allow people to give them money or goods in exchange for their company and/or time.

There is a concern that youth are losing respect for adults and authority figures. Teachers report that some students do not respect them in the classroom. While the behavior of political figures may in part explain youth's loss of respect for authority figures, it is vital that youth learn to trust and regain their confidence in adults. Children and teenagers need people in their lives who will listen and care for them so they can regain confidence in and trust those outside their immediate peer group. Parents also need to have a better understanding of the pressures that children face. Teachers report that students oftentimes will not share their problems with their parents as they are afraid of being blamed for these problems. As such, parents who are able to demonstrate their love for their children, listen to their children's concerns, and provide discipline will be better able to shape their children's moral development. Parents can be a strong influence on their children's lives. To do so, however, parents need to be reminded of the importance of spending quality family time with their children.

In many ways, Thai youth culture promotes irresponsibility. With dating becoming more commonplace in Thailand, the likelihood that young people will engage in socially risky behaviors increases. Teachers report that primary school children are experimenting with sex, bisexuality, and homosexuality and that teenage pregnancy is on the rise. In addition, it is not uncommon for youth to have multiple sexual partners. Many teachers feel that, to combat these behaviors, young people need to learn respect for members of the opposite sex, receive education on sexual identity, and develop a healthy understanding about relationships and setting boundaries.

7. What help do youth expect to receive from religion?

While some students and youth workers report that many teenagers do not think religion makes any difference, across groups, most participants feel that young people do recognize that religion plays a role in a person's moral formation. Christian youth report that they believe God will guide and provide for them. They also look to their faith for character formation and encouragement. Some students do believe that practices, such as meditation, can not only assist in getting peace of mind prior to a test but will improve their overall test performance. Other students report that while God can help a person, God does not or cannot help with everything.

It is clear that there is a misconception among Thai youth as to who God really is and the way faith and religion should impact a person's life. In spite of this, government officials report that religion has the potential to prevent youth from engaging in deviant behaviors. Additionally, children themselves report that there is some value in religion.

8. What is the Thai view of religion and God?

Thai youth seem to feel that religion is a personal choice and not one that should be forced on any individual. Young people report that religion is separate from their career and business life. While some youth consider those who are too religious as "weird", there are many youth that believe in the power of karma, fortune-telling, charms, and/or magic as factors that can influence a person's success in life. This may indicate that youth want the benefits of a religious covering without the commitment, and see religion as a means to an end in achieving their goals and negating their fears.

9. What are the barriers in the minds of Thai youth towards Christianity?

In Thailand, there is a lack of knowledge and misconceptions about Christianity. Many Thai youth perceive Christianity to be a religion that removes fun from one's lives (e.g. no smoking, drinking, or going out). In addition, youth think that Christianity takes too much time and that it sets too high a standard for most people to meet (i.e. too good). Similarly, Christians are considered to be too good and thus unable to understand Thai youth. Some youth even think of churches as religious buildings that they would not dare to enter. Their perception of God is also not in line with the Biblical perspective as some youth report that God only helps with some things and seem to view God and faith as inactive in a person's daily life.

Youth pastors report that some children see Christianity as a religion that cannot offer workable solutions to their problems and perceive Christian workers as selective in who they will assist, favoring those with whom they have existing relationships. Christian workers, on the other hand, report that youth are bored with the presentation of spiritual things currently offered by the church.

Lastly, while Thai youth believe in having a strong sense of personal independence, some youth are hindered in learning about Christianity due to a fear of alienation from their family or friends.

10. What are the priorities of youth ministries and do collaboration possibilities exist?

Teachers, pastors, and church leaders recognize that collaborations among government, NGOs, and churches that address the formation of Thai children and youth are needed. Church leaders believe that churches need to have a kingdom view of ministry as youth are confused at the lack of collaboration in the body of Christ. As such, it is important for denominational leaders to come together, discuss these issues, and formulate workable collaborations. Similarly, government officials believe that there is a need for the moral education of young people to be part of the national school curriculum. In addition, enabling parents to be good role models for their children by providing parent training on family life issues may be a potential collaboration possibility.

There is a consensus that youth programs that are fun, innovative, utilize youth preferred media tools, and seek youth out in their own world will be the most successful; however, youth workers, church leaders, and evangelical leaders report that more programming and resources are needed for youth ministry. While churches desire to do programs that will provide youth with good role models, develop youth's leadership skills, and address the problems that youth are facing, many church leaders are concerned that there is a lack of adequate training for Thai youth workers to evangelize and support youth. Additionally, there is a need for seminaries to provide training that specifically addresses youth ministry.

11. What is the current state of ministry to youth in Thailand? Who is influential in sharing the gospel with them? What activities work in reaching youth?

Currently, church leadership and youth workers recognize that programs and opportunities that relate specifically to youth are important. Of those churches or ministries that have done some youth outreach, programs have included: the use of media centers, youth hotlines, youth websites, camps, concerts, tutorials (including languages), and events around young people's interests (like dancing, game nights, music, sporting competitions, youth websites, etc.). In spite of this, participants agree that more needs to be done.

While some of these youth activities have been successful, the appeal of others is questionable. In fact, youth workers report that some of their outreach methods are not seen as interesting to young people. Some Christian workers do not know how to do youth evangelism and as a result may be selective in whom they approach. Youth workers are concerned that some Christian workers are not aware of the needs of young people or how to reach them. Perhaps because of this lack of understanding, some workers may have a poor attitude towards conducting youth ministry. In addition, the age gap between youth workers and Thai youth may also make it difficult for these two groups to connect. In spite of reports that Christian youth may not be accepted by their non-Christian peers, in some instances, as Christian youth have the best understanding of non-Christian youth, with adequate training, they may be a potential resource for evangelizing non-Christian youth. Additionally, persons with whom young people have built trust relationships will be most influential in reaching them with the gospel.

Section II: Project Overview

Rationale for Project

To design the most effective programs to reach the children and youth of a nation, it is important to capture pertinent information about a population prior to launching new programs or designing products. In the Thailand Discovery project, focus groups² were conducted throughout the nation to gather information on the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of Thai youth as well as the challenges that exist in conducting ministry in Thailand.

Unlike surveys, where respondents are oftentimes limited in their answer choices, focus groups allow for any idea to be introduced through the discussion of topics relevant to study participants. When seeking to understand the nature and needs of a population, this type of research is best employed by including those deemed most informed.

Broadly speaking, this project sought to gather information around the following areas:

- 1) The biggest challenges young people face
- 2) The barriers to evangelism/Christian outreach and opportunities for programs and organizations
- 3) The current environmental realities of young people in Thailand

The information gathered from this project can assist organizations, such as OneHope and other project partners, in planning their outreach strategies and life improvement programs for Thailand's children and youth. In addition, the findings from this project may be valuable in developing products that are relevant and appealing for young people while also addressing their heartfelt needs.

Convened Groups

Focus groups are convened to provide information on the social, economic, and program dynamics of the targeted region. Following a multiple-category design, focus groups were convened for the following demographic profiles:

- Evangelical Leaders & Pastors
- Government Officials
- High School Students
- Junior High School Students
- Youth Pastors & Youth Workers
- Teachers

Regions for Focus Groups

A double-layer approach was used in conducting this research as multiple demographic groups met in the following areas of Thailand:

- Bangkok
- Chiang Mai
- Udon Thani
- Chon Buri

Leadership and Facilitators

OneHope contracted the Metadigm Group to conduct this research project. Dr. Allen Reesor (Executive Director, Metadigm Group) and Reni John (Senior Project Manager, Metadigm Group) facilitated the project in conjugation with Rev. Ty Silva (Regional Director, OneHope Asia Pacific), Pastor Weena Wichitnantana (National Director, OneHope Thailand), and Rev. Jeremy West (Ministry Coordinator, OneHope Thailand).

Allen Reesor and Reni John, with the translation assistance of Rev. Dr. Seree Lorgunpai (Thailand Bible Society) and Rev. Dr. Alan Johnson, conducted the focus group training September 15-17, 2009 at the Bangkok Christian Guest House in Bangkok, Thailand. A total of 46 people were trained to serve as focus group facilitators (herein referred to as facilitators) for this project.

² 5-8 people who have something in common and are called together to speak on how they feel or think about an issue or idea

In Bangkok, the following people served as focus group facilitators: Rev. Dr. Seree Lorgunpai, Pornthip Punpipat (Thailand Bible Society), Supot Kitkati (Campus Crusade), Leela Duangdamrong (Campus Crusade), Uriwan Chanwigkan (Campus Crusade), Anusak Yomklang (Youth For Christ), Sasiprapa Krajangprateep (Youth For Christ), Uten Chantorn (Thailand Assemblies of God), Patcharee Juntaruska (Thailand Assemblies of God), Tanadol Saeying, Kanitta Tongkam, Piyamary Shinoda (Youth With A Mission), and Ellie Zarins (Youth With A Mission). In Chiang Mai, the following persons served as focus group facilitators: Winyou Hanyut (Every Home for Christ), Omjai Khamphon (Every Home for Christ), Nongluk Nortarw (Every Home for Christ), Karoon Kamrapit (Every Home for Christ), Premrudee Klongwanich (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Uraiwan Jantawan (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Pramin Sripongyai (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Thitikan Anusuren (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Veerapa Bunmuen (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Rungnapa Teaja (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Lertviriyakul Chaiya (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Sriprapa Ungern (Light of Chiang Mai Church), Sirilak Chomya, Thanyaporn Sinchai, and David Sirichai. In Chon Buri, Rev. Voranee Pattrakulchai and Kanlayanee Phoonpon from the Sriracha Church assisted in facilitating the groups. In Udon Thani, working with Operation Mobilization, Praty Kurakham and Wutthinun Puritang served as focus group facilitators.

Focus Group Composition and Format

No more than 10 persons were included in the majority of groups convened for this project. Additionally, efforts were made to minimize social and economic disparities among participants. As some participant groups were deemed to be especially information rich, multiple groups were conducted for some demographic profiles (e.g. students).

In this report, findings from multiple groups of a single demographic profile were consolidated to provide a consensus account for that group. Additionally, the names of focus group participants and other identifiers are not included in this report.

Each focus group session took approximately 60-90 minutes. After a brief welcome and overview of the topic areas³, focus group participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences and knowledge of the subject matter. Each focus group had approximately 3-6 topic areas for discussion. Discussion was structured identify commonalities and areas of diverging opinions between participants.

The findings from all focus groups are included in this report.

Schedule for Data Collection

In July and August 2009 meetings were convened in Bangkok and Chiang Mai to identify research questions. At the training, these research questions were reviewed and modified; additional questions were added. Based on these questions, facilitators created the topic guides for each demographic group.

Focus groups were organized under the supervision of Pastor Weena Wichitnantana, Jarun Chetjai (Ministry Coordinator, OneHope Thailand), and Rev. Jeremy West. In Bangkok, the following persons assisted in facilitating groups: Rev. Dr. Seree Lorgunpai, Rev. Yuttasak Sirikul (Campus Crusade), Rev. Pattawit Onkchareon (Youth For Christ), Rev. Anuparp Wichitnantana (Thailand Assemblies of God), Rev. Dennis Harris (missionary to Thailand), and Rev. Sopo Fakaua (Youth with a Mission). In Chiang Mai, the following persons assisted in coordinating groups: Rev. Dr. Buakab Ronghanam (Every Home for Christ), Rev. Chuchart Chaisombat (Light of Chiang Mai Church), and Rev. Mark Durene (missionary to Thailand). Rev. Voranee Pattrakulchai assisted with coordinating focus groups in Chon Buri while missionary Rev. Chuck Cilano (Operation Mobilization) oversaw the groups in Udon Thani.

The organizations that facilitated this project include: Thailand Bible Society, Campus Crusade, Youth for Christ, Thailand Assemblies of God, Youth With A Mission, Every Home for Christ, Light of Chiang Mai Church, Sriracha Church, and Operation Mobilization.

The draft report was completed on October 10, 2009. The draft version was reviewed by key personnel knowledgeable of and/or working with children and youth in Thailand including: Rev. Dr. Seree Lorgunpai, Rev. Yuttasak Sirikul, Rev. Pattawit Onkchareon, Rev. Suragarn Tangsiriatian (Youth For Christ), Rev. Anuparp Wichitnantana, Pastor Weena Wichitnantana, Rev. Sopo Fakaua, Rev. Dr. Buakab Ronghanam, Rev. Mark

³ See pages 4-5 for topic areas for each demographic group

Durene, Rev. Voranee Pattrakulchai, Rev. Jaruwan Maiwong, and Rev. Yee Ching Wah (Anglican Church in Thailand). Comments and corrections from these experts are incorporated in the final report.

Data Analysis and Reporting

A moderator's assistant recorded information shared in each focus group. Upon completion of a focus group, the facilitation team completed a focus group report form which was then sent to the analysis team for review. The majority of focus groups were conducted in Thai. As such, Thai focus group reports were translated from Thai to English prior to analysis.

The following persons served as focus group report translators: Rev. Jaruwan Maiwong, Chayanut Kongkham, Suwaree Sattayaphan, Ganlaya Pichayapanich, Walika Roongrawiwan, Yaowadee Saetear, Sucheera Jarunyanont, and Deborah Fungladda.

This report addresses the questions and topic areas identified by OneHope and project partners as essential for decision-making, distribution planning and outcome design for youth programs in the region. Common and/or recurring themes from focus groups are identified and compared across demographic profiles. Additionally, when possible, information from secondary sources is included to provide greater clarity for future planning.

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Focus Group Research Questions

1. What are the interests, felt needs, hopes, and fears common to Thai youth?
2. How do youth define success?
3. How do youth spend their money and time? What does this tell us about their priorities?
4. What media appeals to and most often engages youth?
 - a. What musical message(s) impact youth?
 - b. What entertainment (music, sports, TV programs, movies) appeal to children?
5. What influences are most important in shaping youth values?
 - a. How does Thai home life impact young people's attitudes and openness to other influences (sexual behaviors, religious decisions, future careers and personal values)?
 - b. Where do Thai youth go for answers when they have a problem?
 - c. What impact does the current political situation have on young people's hope for the future?
 - d. What gives Thai youth confidence and assurance?
 - e. What shapes their identity, sexual behaviors and values?
 - f. What encourages youth to engage in partying, drug use and other harmful behaviors?
6. What character education appears to be needed?
7. What help do youth expect to receive from religion?
8. What is the Thai view of religion and God?
9. What are the barriers in the minds of Thai youth towards Christianity?
10. What are the priorities of youth ministries and do collaboration possibilities exist?
11. What is the current state of ministry to youth in Thailand? Who is influential in sharing the gospel with them? What activities work in reaching youth?

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Youth Pastors and Youth Workers

- Did you see the World Football Competition?
- Why do you think youth are interested in sports?
- How do you think sports impact youth?
- What other things do youth find interesting?
- How does your organization support youth?
- What problems do youth have?
- Do youth think that your organization has solutions for their problems?
- What are the obstacles & barriers in working with youth?
- What is the most significant thing said today?

Evangelical Leaders & Pastors Focus Groups

- What is your opinion on this generation's youth?
- What about the youth in your church - are they similar or different from other youth?
- Given what youth are like, what do you think is the future of youth in your church?
- How interested are youth in spiritual things?
- Who helps lead youth to Christ? What are the ways this is done?
- Which media helps to lead youth to Christ? How often do you use it?
- How does the family influence the attitudes and beliefs of youth?
- How does the church teach youth good attitudes?
- What are the problems or barriers for youth un becoming Christians? What are the barriers to reaching non-Christians or lukewarm Christians? Why are Christian teenagers not fighting for what they believe in or not holding onto their faith?
- Of everything that was said, what was the most important?

Government Officials

- What are your thoughts on the panda competition?
- How are youth today different than 5 years ago?
- What are children learning in and outside the classroom (and from other places)?
- Who influences youth?
- What is the real condition of the Thai family today?
- How is government supporting the development of youth?
- What are the big problems for youth?
- What do you think is the most important thing said in this conversation?

Teachers

- What do you think about the girls' volleyball team that beat China?
- Do you think too much money is spent on sports in universities?
- Do you think sports takes students attention away from studying?
- What problems do youth have, besides studying, that they speak with you about? If they don't come to you, who do they talk to?
- Do students borrow money from teachers? If they do, what do they want to do with the money?
- What other things do students talk to teachers about?
- What do students want to do in the future?
- What career do students want to have and do their parents support them?
- Thinking of everything we talked about, what is the most significant?

Senior High Students

- What is the popular trend at present?
- Some people say Korean culture is not good, what do you think about it?
- How do you find out about Korean trends and/or fashions?

- What do you do on weekends?
- Do your parents support the activities you do on weekend?
- The inspiration in doing the activity on weekend, is it from you or your parents?
- What do you do with your family/parents?
- How can you achieve your life goals?
- In your opinion, how can religion help you succeed?
- From what we have talked about, what is the most important thing with which you agree?

Junior High Students

- Which games do you prefer?
- How much do you pay to play these games? How long do you play them?
- What do you think about kids your age having boy/girlfriends?
- What are your friends' problems?
- How do your classmates behave?
- When you have a problem, who do you go to for advice?
- Do you think that religion helps you solve problems in life?
- When you grow up, what will you do that is different than what your parents have done?
- What famous persons do you like? Do you like to be like them?
- Who is your hero?
- What points that were made today are the most important?

Section III: Synopsis of Data and Findings

Youth Pastors and Youth Workers

Thai youth show little appreciation for politics; rather, they enjoy sports, fashion, movies, and following the lives of their favorite celebrities and sports stars. Thai youth are very technology-savvy. Unsurprisingly, activities that utilize media, technology and computers are very popular with young people in Thailand. Across genders and age groups, young people spend their leisure time on the Internet in activities ranging from blogging, Hi5⁴, or chatting with friends. Facebook, in particular, is a popular forum for young people. Pastors and youth workers attribute youth's high interest in these media outlets to their preference for fast means of communication. While Internet sites such as Facebook are not seen as particularly destructive, pastors and youth workers are concerned that young people are spending time on the Internet utilizing pornography sites; in some cases, youth do not see such websites as harmful or wrong.

Across groups, participants expressed a concern in young people's interest in computer games. One group reports that it is not uncommon for youth to spend hours playing games. This can lead to youth isolating themselves in their own worlds and increase their inability to communicate personally with others. Of less concern to pastors and youth workers is their usage of their camera phones or youth's enjoyment of competitive activity.

Foreign culture, particularly from Korea, is very popular with Thai youth. Korean movies, television series, celebrities, and other trends are of interest to young people in Thailand. This is concerning to pastors and youth workers as the celebrities that youth idolize are oftentimes bad role models. While young people have an interest in reading, the foreign influence is also prevalent in their choice of reading materials. Young men, particularly university boys, tend to be drawn to comic books, with some even dressing like the characters they read about in Japanese comics. Girls, on the other hand, are more likely to prefer contemporary novels. While these novels are often Thai print materials, the visual images (that is, the cover) are oftentimes Japanese or Korean. In addition, both sexes enjoy magazines. Across groups, pastors and youth workers report youth greatly enjoy music and dancing. Thai youth enjoy creating their own dance routines and it is not uncommon for young people between the ages of 13-20 to teach dance. Unsurprisingly, dating is something that both males and females find interesting. Given their familiarity with the Internet, it is not uncommon for teenage relationships to begin and develop via online chatting. Thai youth also have an interest in activities that will help their society. Teenagers have been known to join campaigns that assist poor people, improve the environment, or combat global warming. In addition, Thai youth are interested in doing things that will benefit their King.

Young people embrace and highly value their friendships. While conflicts are not uncommon between friends, youth pastors and workers report that these relationships are most often central in young people's lives. In many ways, it is the opinions of friends that govern young people's actions and participation in activities. Alternatively, youth that are isolated from their peers and lack acceptance may not take part in sports or other activities.

Activities that involve group interaction are very popular with Thai youth. Yet these friendships can sometimes be detrimental to youth's moral development. Across groups, participants report that young people sometimes feel pressure to keep up with their friends' lifestyles or interests. Some will even find jobs to do so. Due to this, young people tend to waste their money instead of saving it. Like their non-Christian counterparts, Christian teenagers are also interested in making money and may build financial networks with their friends to do so.

Drug use is oftentimes a group behavior. Young people are either led into using drugs by their friends or conversely, introduce their friends to drugs. This suggests that drug use among Thai youth is not an individualistic pursuit but rather a group occurrence. Although drug abuse is not rampant in Thai youth culture and the majority of youth drug addiction cases (as reported by the youth pastors & workers focus groups) is restricted to alcohol and/or cigarettes, young people's attitudes towards drug use is concerning as they do not believe such behavior is wrong.

⁴ An International Facebook equivalent

In part related to their interests, many issues hamper the Christian development of Thai youth. Across groups, participants report that gambling, teen dating, and young people's confusion or complacent attitude towards sex are growing concerns. Some young people live with their boyfriend or girlfriend before marriage. Young people lack love and as such, seek it in all the wrong places. In part, some of these attitudes and behaviors may be attributable to a breakdown in the family and the rise of broken homes. Pastors and youth workers report that parents do not understand their children or spend time with them. In many homes, parents fail to provide adequate discipline leaving youth bereft of needed moral instruction. This is particularly concerning as Thai youth lack good role models. When parents do spend time with their children, the relationship between the parent and child is not one characterized by love. Concerns with schooling and youth's future careers can also serve as a stressor for familial harmony. Some children, particularly those in government schools, are forced to study what their parents dictate and thus, can spend their academic career learning things that are not of interest to them. This may be why some youth pastors report that young people lack an interest in studying.

While multiple youth pastors and workers feel that young people have too much free time, other participants feel that some students over-study or put too much emphasis on tuitions. With the growing number of examinations that many Thai youth encounter in their schools, many participants feel that an inability to effectively manage time is detrimental for many young people. One group reported that, in some cases, youth have committed suicide because of poor academic performances. As some parents cannot or do not help their children with their homework, children's desire to succeed academically coupled with the intense competition that they experience is a concern for their mental well-being.

While youth pastors and workers believe that youth ministry is vital and would like to do more to engage young people, they report that a number of barriers make this difficult. First and foremost, there is the anti-Christian sentiment in Thailand. Additionally, some young non-believers are stymied in learning about Christianity because they fear losing their parents or friends acceptance. Some youth pastors and workers report that some teenagers do not trust or desire assistance from Christians; young people may think that Christianity is not a workable solution for them and that Christian organizations cannot help them with their problems. Participants report that a large problem is the lack of knowledge in Thailand about Christianity, and the misconception many Thai youth have about Christianity. Christianity is perceived as a religion that removes fun (e.g. they cannot drink or go out). Some youth think that Christians are too good and are thus, unable to understand Thai youth. This perception of Christians also makes it difficult for young people to share their problems with Christians. Some non-Christians think of churches as religious buildings and do not dare to enter them. One group reports that students at a university believe that the on-campus Christian organization will assist youth that approach them based solely on the depth of the relationship the individual has with the organization. As such, to have any chance of reaching young people in Thailand, youth pastors and workers feel that ministries must first convince Thai youth to be more open-minded to Christians.

Aware of young people's need for direction, churches and youth organizations hold a variety of youth-friendly events including: homework assistance, language classes or coaching (inc. Korean or English classes), sporting competitions, dance nights, game nights that encourage interaction among young people, youth hotlines, youth websites, open event nights featuring social activities like table tennis, youth tours to popular Thai destinations, and camps. Additionally, Christian events, like evangelism concerts, Friend for Life Camp, Adventure Camp, LTI, or Building Homes for Morgans⁵, are used as evangelism tools. Along with the aforementioned, churches have tried different approaches to engaging young people in Christianity; however, most groups report that more is needed, particularly around evangelism. While Christian organizations have launched websites to connect with non-Christians, oftentimes, these websites are not popular. Participants feel that Christian organizations and churches need to have events that demonstrate to youth that 1) they are supported, 2) empower and encourage youth to work as a team, and 3) encourage friendly public competition. Pastors and youth workers suggest that Christians need to win the hearts of Thai youth by seeking them out and entering their world instead of hoping that they will come to the church. Participants recommend that churches utilize the Internet and other media outlets more effectively. Additionally, many

⁵ Found in the south of Thailand, the Morgan people lived at sea for many generations. Typically, this group of people lives in small huts during the rainy season.

young people are in need of trusted counselors. As such, training programs to equip Christians to provide this service will also be beneficial in evangelizing young people in Thailand.

There is a strong belief among some of the participants that churches and Christian organizations need more workers to minister to youth. Currently, many participants feel that they and their organizations lack the time, training, and/or resources that are needed to truly impact a young person's life. Some participants in one group reported that, at best, they are able to help youth in indirect ways but larger organizations, like the Pavena Foundation⁶, are better equipped to see larger improvements in children's lives. Churches lack media resources and trained staff which makes it impossible for them to conduct media outreach to young people in their communities. While they may desire to do outreach, like sports ministry, a lack of equipment or space can make it impossible for them to sponsor outreach programs.

In some cases, Christians have a poor attitude towards youth evangelism because they are afraid of non-Christian students; this may be due to a lack of adequate training. Youth pastors and workers suspect that Christians may also be selective in who they approach. Christian evangelism is also hampered by a lack of knowledge on the part of churches about those things that are of interest to Thai youth. This is very concerning as Thai youth will only work with Christians with whom they have an existing relationship. Participants agree that Christian youth have the best understanding of the lives of non-Christian youth. As the age gap between non-Christian youth and ministry staff can also be a hindrance in doing youth outreach, it may be valuable to utilize Christian youth in conducting youth evangelism. In spite of this, youth pastors and workers do believe that Christian organizations have the ability to shape the thinking, behavior and attitudes of Thai youth.

Believing that no person can really be good, Thai youth culture is focused on fulfilling immediate desires. Teenagers are used to relying on themselves and do not see others outside their group as important to their well-being. Concurrently, there is a belief that society is getting worse making youth leery of strangers. However, across groups, youth pastors and workers report that in reality children and teenagers desire good role models in their lives who they can trust and turn to for help. As pastors also feel young people are in need of discipline, leadership skills and teamwork, outreach that promotes these values will be of great benefit to both Christian and non-Christian youth.

Participants agree that there is a place for Christianity in Thai youth culture. Christian ministries and churches just need to find a way to engage youth in their own sphere.

⁶ A non-profit organization to provide assistance to women and children (see www.pavena.thai.com)

Evangelical Leaders and Pastors

Pastors and church leaders see Thai youth as a generation that believes they have a strong sense of personal independence. In reality, however, youth lack confidence and their “personal independence” is strongly influenced by the actions, behaviors and thoughts of their peer group. One way in which youth maintain contact is via social networking sites. In some ways, because youth can constantly access each other’s lives through these networks, it is also just another forum in which children and teens are exposed to peer pressure. For Christian students, there is the perennial challenge of having a relationship with a non-believing boyfriend or girlfriend which can influence them away from their faith and the church.

Pastors view this generation as very materialistic; young people desire to have the latest and the best. The situation is so serious that families are going into debt so their children can purchase the things they desire. In addition, some girls are selling their bodies to make enough money to buy the latest fashion accessories or products. While participants also cite drugs as a problem in youth culture, no specifics were provided to indicate how widespread the problem is or the underlying causes. Pastors also recognize homosexuality as a growing concern, particularly in schools.

Students are adept at understanding new technology, like Hi5 or Facebook, and the influence of the Internet is seen as both helpful and harmful (e.g. knowledge v. pornography, emphasis on sex). One of the primary concerns for the Thai family is that some parents allow the television, the Internet, or computer games to take the place of spending quality time with their children. In many cases, parents will allow their children free access to these types of media without monitoring the content their children view.

Church leaders recognize that the Internet and technology can be useful. Some suggest that church utilize youth’s familiarity with technology by having young people train pastors in using the Internet, social networking sites, etc.. Such an activity can be beneficial for not only the church but children as well.

While parents can be a strong influence on children’s attitudes and beliefs, it is estimated that less than 20% of parents are really involved in their children’s lives. This may, in part, be due to the rise of broken homes in Thailand. Children receive less and less attention from their parents, as they grow older. While some parents want to be involved in their children’s lives, they do not know how to relate. As such, the primary focus of parents’ relationships with their children is in the educational arena. Parents want their children to do well on exams as this will enable them to have a better future and improve their family status. Similarly, parents promote materialism in their children by encouraging them to keep up with their friends’ lifestyles. In some cases, parents will give their children money but will not spend meaningful time with their children; other parents, in a desire to gain family income, will encourage their daughters to marry foreigners. Given the shifting dynamics in many Thai families, pastors recommend that churches step into the gap, assisting parents in raising their children and working with children to build relationships with their parents.

Pastors feel that children and teens are bored with the presentation of spiritual things; they are not interested in existing church programs or methods of outreach. However, young people desire spiritual comfort and are drawn to the church by activities that appeal to them (that is, those that incorporate their language and culture). Pastors believe that youth will pay attention to someone (like a spiritual mentor) who takes an interest in them. Young people do not want to be preached at; rather, they desire personal relationships with church leaders who take time to know them. Youth have little regard for religious traditions but are interested in spiritual life and a relationship with Jesus. Many participants believe that the influence of Christian friends and Christian parents are a key factor in young people’s decision to follow Christ. In some cases, children may discontinue their church attendance if there is persecution in the home.

Some pastors feel that youth have an incorrect mental image of Christians. Additionally, political leaders have eroded the respect that teens have for authority figures; this may be a mitigating factor in youth’s suspicions of leaders’ motivations and actions.

While pastors believe that Christian youth are different from non-believers, teenage believers face the same pressures as their non-Christian counterparts. Youth in the church live in the same at-risk communities as their non-believing peers and as a result encounter the same problems and pressures of other Thai youth. While Christian youth will come to church, they are still susceptible to peer-pressure. Teenage Christians, like their non-Christian counterparts, desire acceptance from their peers. Additionally, pastors and evangelical

leaders believe that Christian youth- those that truly attempt to exemplify and live Christ-centered lives- are generally not well accepted by their non-Christian peers. In some cases, the peer pressure can become so bad that youth walk away from the church. Given this, pastors recommend that churches conduct discipleship programs, like camps, that support and encourage Christian youth in their good behavior.

The church must find ways to change and adapt to today's youth. It is important that churches and Christian ministries utilize media and technology in their youth outreach. While some churches have been effective in attracting youth to Christ by using media tools like websites, many churches are hindered in doing so by pastors' lack of knowledge and a lack of financial resources. For churches that lack training or knowledge of media, church leaders suggest that pastors approach young people in the church to 1) train church leaders in using these types of technology and 2) take the initiative in conducting media outreach. Across groups, participants agree that youth are interested in spiritual instruction that will help them deal with their life problems as well as real-life temptation. As such, the use of Biblical heroes and their encounters with God may prove valuable in helping youth understand the relationship they too can have with God.

The church must decide whether it will adjust to the needs of youth, or if it will wait for teens to change and become more like adults. Participants suggest that churches try to reach youth now by creating programs and opportunities that relate specifically to youth (e.g. media centers, camps, concerts, tutorial help, and food/coffee). Young people should be encouraged and allowed to express themselves even if the means of expression are different from what adults prefer (e.g. dance, music, competitions, TV-like reality, gaming events).

While many pastors stated what they feel are the areas in which Thai youth need instruction, very little was said about current methods or programs utilized by the church to teach young people good attitudes. Unsurprisingly, pastors were in agreement that young people need to be sexually pure, love and serve God, and love their neighbors.

It is vital that programs for children attending churches allow youth to express their creativity while improving their abilities. Pastors and evangelical leaders hope that, by encouraging youth to utilize their skills within the church, these children will in turn serve as good role models for their peers.

Churches must collaborate and work together to effectively respond to the challenges of doing youth outreach. Churches need to have a kingdom view of ministry the lack of collaboration within the Body of Christ is confusing to many teens. Personally and collectively, pastors and church leaders acknowledge the need for church leaders to serve as good role models; leaders must take the time to develop meaningful relationships with children and teenagers. It is vital that church leaders stay aware of the evolving youth culture. Additionally, without losing the message of the Gospel, the methods of delivering the message needs to incorporate youth culture and interests. Pastors agree that seminaries need to equip and train church leaders to conduct youth ministry. Additionally, it is important that the church utilize and conduct research on youth to 1) assist them in their work and 2) examine the effectiveness of their current outreach to youth. Lastly, churches should come together to discuss the challenges in conducting in youth ministry.

Teachers

Young people in Thailand have a variety of interests including games, sports, Korean actors, television, and soap operas. Music is a common pastime for Thai youth as is following popular trends.

The majority of youth will only speak to teachers about school life (e.g. bullying), class work, or existing quarrels with fellow classmates. Some students will also talk to their teachers about family issues, romantic relationships, sex, love, and/or other problems they may experience. However, this oftentimes occurs under the guise of sharing information about the behaviors of their peers.

Teachers report that many students desire acceptance and approval from their parents, teachers, and/or peers. While teachers agree that it is important for parents to be part of their children's lives, most teachers only ask parents to get involved in their children's educations when students are experiencing difficulty or a lack of change in their school performance. Many teachers feel that Thai parents work too much and are not present in a significant way in the home. In some homes, children do not receive support from their parents. The rise of broken families (primarily through divorce or parental separation) may be a reason why parents are not at home or leave their children with only a servant or grandparent providing supervision. Youth feel that parents are close-minded and do not pay attention to them. This makes many young people reticent to open up to their parents and instead they turn to their friends. In other cases, children do not share their problems with their parents because they are scared of being blamed for the problem. Others believe that their parents do not listen and are incapable of understanding their lives.

Unsurprisingly, a lack of adult figures who can spend time listening to youth concerns and provide good advice can drive young people to extreme, even deviant, measures to gain peer acceptance. Young people are willing to watch pornography, gossip, skip school, show off, get tattoos, and experiment in sexual activities like homosexuality, to fit in with their friends. While teachers do report that children tend to gravitate towards others like them (e.g. Burmese with Burmese, Chinese with Chinese, Thai with Thai), peer pressure appears to be the same for children regardless of language or cultural divides. Many youth feel pressured to have a boyfriend or girlfriend and be sexually active at a young age. In some instances, students begin wanting to know more about or experimenting with sex in primary school. Teachers also report that interest in homosexuality can begin very early in a child's life. In addition, youth that engage in high-risk behaviors at a young age will do more extreme things as they age. Youth fascination with sex is somewhat unsurprising; yet, teachers also report that more young people are engaging in sexual intimacy in public places (like public bathrooms) or in their homes if parents are absent. While teachers did not indicate that teenage pregnancy is a large concern, they do find that girls tend to quit school when a pregnancy occurs. Boys, on the other hand, tend to complete their education. Pregnancy seems to be the biggest concern of parents regarding their children's sexual activity. While some parents are not sure how to discuss sex with their kids, others will make information available to their children on avoiding pregnancy, indicating to youth that sexual relationships are acceptable as long as there are no physical consequences. Youth desire love and affection from their parents; however, teachers are divided on whether young people aspire to become like their parents when they are adults or the opposite of their parents.

Similarly, drug abuse among young people oftentimes begins due to peer influence; although, in some cases, teen drug abuse occurs as a result of seeing adults using drugs. Typically, one child in a group of friends will try drugs and then invite others in the group to do the same. As teenagers do not like to be left out but prefer to experience things for themselves, teachers believe that this is a common method in which drug use occurs among young people. In cases of addiction, teachers report that once young people become habitual users, they may sell drugs.

While teachers do not find that many students will ask them for financial assistance, in the case of really poor students, one may ask a teacher for a loan to buy food or pay for bus fare. Most young people receive money from their parents. Instead of using this money to meet their basic needs, many will spend the money on their boyfriend or girlfriend, cosmetics, or clothes. As more and more parents are spending time outside the home, teachers are concerned with the lack of parental involvement in how children spend their disposable income. While some youth spend their money on innocent activities, like attending the movies with friends, others use their funds to gamble.

Within the classroom, teachers find that many students do not understand what they are saying; instead, many students focus on a teacher's wardrobe instead of the teaching materials. While there are students that do not take school seriously, others become overwhelmed by the amount of homework they are assigned. The amount of time children spend on games or in game shops (which many young people do so they are considered fashionable) can also hinder a student's performance in school. Teachers find that many young people spend a lot of their free time hanging out at the local game shop and oftentimes, this is a popular meeting point for young people before they engage in other activities, like trying to meet girls.

While it is uncommon for primary school children to think about their future careers, many high school students are interested in preparing for the future. Many teens hope for future where they are leaders and influential. Although a number of young people have not clearly identified their future goals, others would like to be celebrities (movie stars or singers). Teachers indicate that young people are interested in pursuing very different career paths ranging from pilots, missionaries, police officers, or soldiers. While one group reported that some young people want to be teachers, another stated that students do not wish to become educators (although they do not consider teachers to be inferior). While teachers in many of the groups support young people pursuing less academic pursuits like singing, dancing or sports if they show an aptitude for it, parents may not be so open-minded. While some will support their children pursuing a career in sports if s/he has a unquestionable talent for it, most parents, particularly in rich families, plan their children's future even if differs from life that the child envisions for himself. In economically challenged families, teachers have found that parents are oftentimes more concerned with their children starting a job as soon as possible so s/he can help reduce the financial burden on the family. In these cases, parents do not encourage their children to study or pursue further education. Parents' lack of knowledge can also prevent less well-off youth from pursuing their goals. Although the government offers tuition assistance, many parents are unaware of this and so these funds go untapped.

Overall, most teachers do feel that Thai youth have the potential to succeed. While some teachers expressed a concern that sports can draw children away from studying or make children miss school, many are proponents of children's involvement with sports or other activities that support positive peer relationships. Boys in particular can benefit greatly from such an environment. Additionally, some activities that young people spend time in, such as sports, can serve as community-building events. Yet the breakdown in the family and parents lack of care for their children is a concern. These types of family dysfunction, teachers argue, can result in unhealthy peer relationships which can foster truancy, drug use, and unsafe sexual practices among children and teens.

Government Leaders

Over the years, the structure of the Thai family has eroded and modern Thai youth are very different from earlier generations. While youth in the past were inclined to bestow high respect on their elders, today's youth, with their exposure to the ideas of globalization and high technology, are less respectful of their elders. In previous generations, the extended family lived as one unit. Today, such families live separately (e.g. grandparents do not live with the family). As a result, children are left to take care of themselves. Many believe that this is why some children live in their own worlds via iPods, music, mobile phones, texting, etc. This change in young people is also influenced by foreign culture, particularly that from the West and Korea. There is a concern that the media influences Thai youth to engage in immoral activities. Although good moral behavior and character were previously taught in the classroom and demonstrated by teachers/elders (i.e. they served as good role models), government leaders believe that this no longer occurs. Additionally, as youth are gaining more knowledge from technology sources rather than their teachers, this may also explain their divergence from earlier generations. In the past, parents and teachers were able to take disciplinary actions against unruly children; however, present laws state that they cannot touch children. As education is, without a doubt, seen as an important factor for Thai youth development, officials suggest that a partnership between families and schools will greatly improve youth's moral development. While families provide children with basic values, schools should support this training by reinforcing such behaviors in the classroom.

Teenagers are learning a new culture; that is, they will do what they want to do without accepting the consequences for their actions. Many leaders feel that inputting moral teaching into the curriculum would be beneficial. Such a move would be particularly helpful for primary school students; starting such education in secondary schools is already too late. Education leaders report that youth learn both inside and outside the classroom. Along with traditional teaching methods and systems, teachers expose students to life-centered education by creating programs such as recycling projects, growing plants, and other interactive methods. These activities are considered of great value as they enable students to learn about caring for the environment, managing finances, and the basics of accounting, all skills that will prove valuable in adulthood.

A variety of factors influence youth, including gaming cafes, the Internet, online gaming, homosexuality, sexual activity, imitating the lifestyle of their movie idols, and civil disobedience/violence. Although there is a law that prohibits youth from using cyber cafes during school hours, this law is not enforced. As teens are becoming sexually active at a younger age, homosexuality is also on the rise. Youth desire good role models but lacking these, many young people admire famous people and/or celebrities going so far as to imitate their lifestyles and fashions.

While the current political situation causes youth to feel insecure, civil disobedience/violence has modeled a negative example. While drug problems were cited most often by prison officials as a significant cause for youth incarcerations, most agree that drug use and deviancy is, on some level, a fixture in Thai youth culture. Government officials believe that children as young as 10 years old are acquainted with the idea of prohibited drugs and in some cases even work as drug smugglers.

While some officials believe that religion can have a positive impact on Thai youth, most participants argued that parents have the most compelling impact on their children as young people are still inclined to follow their parents' directives. While participants did not report this overwhelmingly, many believe that school is a positive influence and that teachers can also serve as a strong influence in a young person's life. Social influences outside the classroom however can be detrimental to a child's social and moral formation. The media is of particular concern. While in some cases television shows can portray positive behavior, many programs do not promote good values (both Korean and Thai). Yet watching television is a very popular activity for children and teens. Government leaders also believe the television and movie rating system is currently inadequate as many times these ratings do they serve as determinants of what children are allowed to watch. Similarly, youth are able to access inappropriate materials through the Internet and other media outlets. Compounded with this, parents do not take the time to advise their children on what they are watching or watch with them. With parents not spending time with their children, many look to their friends for counsel.

The government, schools, families, and NGOs need to work together to effectively respond to the needs of Thai youth. It is important that a variety of government departments collaborate to formulate a national plan

for the empowerment, equipping, and training of Thailand's next generation. The Ministry of Education should promote good morals in school by reintroducing values education to the curriculum. Similarly, as parents need to be good role models for their children, it is important that parents receive training on life issues, and that communities are trained to support parents and empower youth towards positive behaviors.

Students

Across groups, Thai students report that relationships, particularly with family and friends, are very important to them. As a result, they prefer to spend their free time in activities that involve others. While young people want better relationship with their parents, when they do not get this, they will engage in other activities, like playing video games. In the absence of close parental relationships, students report that some youth will either handle things on their own or turn to their peers or older siblings. Students are aware that bad relationships can have a negative impact on their emotional well being and behaviors; however, youth that do not have strong family support oftentimes may feel like they must be self-reliant or can only turn to friends.

For most teenagers, friends are not only social companions, but serve as the people one talks to about problems. Friends are involved in discussions about life, future careers, fashion, music, and entertainment. While some youth report that they sleep in on the weekends, many are involved with their friends doing a variety of things. They shop, participate in and watch sports activities, go to parks or the streets to watch people, study at coffee shops with friends, and sometimes stay home to cook or watch television with their families. They also spend time talking on their mobile phones, surfing the Internet (Facebook, Hi5), reading comics, or watching cartoons. Younger children enjoy PlayStation, Xbox games and race cars. Across all ages, young people enjoy playing [video and Internet] games, some stating that they spend whole weekends on this activity. Some students will study extracurricular subjects (language, music), help in their parents' businesses, go on family trips, help with their younger siblings' studies or attend church. Since youth want to have money, those who cannot get it from their parents engage in various jobs and activities that will provide disposable income. Some potentially concerning activities that are also popular with youth are going to clubs, partying, drinking, smoking tobacco or using drugs.

Dating is becoming common in Thai youth culture although younger students report that this is something that teenagers do. Some young people feel pressure to have romantic relationships so their peers will think they are cool. Students also report that romantic relationships are important to teens because it makes them happy, helps them combat loneliness, and gives them someone with whom they can talk.

Students report that while they desire to spend more time with their parents, family relationships are not usually close and are often characterized by mistrust and/or parents' criticism of their children's decisions. Younger students state that, unlike their parents, when they are adults with families, they will spend more time with their children, taking care to talk and listen to them. In spite of their unhappiness that parents do not listen to them, students still see parents as their primary source of resources and go to them for advice on their future. Across groups, students recognize that future success is often easier when there is support from parents or extended family. This includes direction and encouragement in career choices and education. Some families are close and children will spend time with their families and learn within the family. Although youth want to be free and independent, family approval and encouragement, not control, is also important to them. Family dysfunction, such as domestic violence, abusive fathers, or fathers with multiple wives, is emotionally damaging to the development of young people.

Money is necessary for many of the activities and trends that are popular with Thai youth, including social time with friends, fashion, orthodontics, health products, and plastic surgery. Often, even when they complain about how children spend money, parents are a primary source of material support for their children. Some young people will manipulate their parents to get what they want. When parents do not provide the material needs or desires of their children, some will resort to selling drugs, taking jobs in clubs, or prostitution. Although most parents discourage such behavior in their children, students report that there are cases in which parents are aware of what their children do to make money. Although Christian students may disapprove of some means of getting money if it is contrary to their beliefs, both Christian and non-Christian youth tend to see money as essential for life and personal satisfaction.

When considering the future, students indicate that good family relationships provide direction and resources. Some children want to follow in their parent's career paths; others indicate that their parents encourage them to take courses that will open doors to future opportunities. Study of foreign languages is seen as a good way to get ahead. While completing an education is important, some youth indicate that their education will not determine their life path. Youth report that hard work, a positive attitude, and a plan are important in getting ahead; however, some students report that they have no plans and prefer to just go with whatever is

happening or find a plan later. While some are motivated to help others, most see a career as a means to financial security, success, or providing for themselves and their family. Those without family support or encouragement are less optimistic about their future.

Christian youth in the focus groups seem to place a higher value on religion and its benefits (God's guidance and provision, prayer, character formation, encouragement) than other students. However, some young people believe that religion and/or God makes no difference or cannot help with everything. Some students observed that people who are too religious are weird. Youth acknowledge that a person's moral formation is oftentimes a result of religious belief. Many believe in karma, fortune telling, charms, tattoos, and magic as factors that can influence a person's chances for life success. Youth argue that religion should be a personal choice and not forced on anyone. As such, it is unsurprising that many young people believe that religion is separate from their career and business life.

There is a strong influence from outside Thailand on youth trends, attitudes and behaviors. Youth are constantly receiving messages that promote cultural values which contradict traditional Thai culture. While there is some resentment about this erosion of Thai culture, many young people appreciate the values and ideals of Korean trends and western culture even if it pressures them to be able to finance such lifestyles. These trends include: fashion, beauty products (skin lighteners, health fads, and nutritional diets), cosmetic surgery, music, movies, TV series, and styles. Television, magazines, the Internet, movies, radio (including music and DJ styles) and concerts are cited as popular mediums that communicate external cultural values. Additionally, these influences are also found in video games, billboards, and teen hangouts like malls. As young people pick up these trends, they exert pressure on their friends to follow them as well.

Youth have role models they follow as part of fan clubs or through social networking sites. Many consider media stars to be their role models. Some, however, particularly younger students, report idealizing people who succeeded because of their intelligence (e.g. Bill Gates, Einstein).

Appearance is very important to Thai youth, a state further exacerbated by the media, particularly Korean popular media. Emphasis on appearance is evident in youth's fascination with fashion, grooming, nutrition, skin whitening, and dental services that straighten teeth. This value is also confirmed in their attitudes towards dating and relationships; one group discussed in detail the physical aspects they found attractive in members of the opposite sex. In many ways, youth's interest in appearance is expensive and requires an outlay of financial resources.

Section IV: Secondary Information⁷

Thailand, in one generation, has changed from primary dependency on agricultural exports to one of the most successful economies in Southeast Asia (Vuttanout, 2006⁸). This success has been marked by a number of social changes, including increased urbanization, westernization, and the moderation of cultural and religious norms (Ibid). Unsurprisingly, these changes have greatly influenced the attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of Thailand's children and youth. To supplement the work done in this project, presented below are findings from additional research conducted on the practices and behaviors of Thai youth.

QUICK FACTS	
<i>General Information</i>	
Area	513,120 square kilometers
Population Density (per square km)	118.1 persons
Infant Mortality Rate	7 per 1,000 live births
Life Expectancy at birth	69 years
Internet Users (per 100 persons)	21
<i>Population Information</i>	
Total Population	60,606, 947
Municipal Population	18,838,673 (31.1%)
Non-Municipal Population	41,768,274 (68.9%)
Male Population	29, 844, 870 (49.2%)
Female Population	30, 762, 077 (50.8%)
% of population that is 14 years old or younger	24.1%
% of population that is 15-59 years old	66.5%
% of population that is 60 years old or older	9.4%
<i>Household Information</i>	
Number of Households	15,660, 667
Average Municipal Household Size (persons)	3.7
Average Non-Municipal Household Size (persons)	4.0
% Female headed households	25.5%
<i>Education</i>	
% of Adults Literacy	98%
% of persons aged 6-24 not attending school	38.9%
<i>Religion Affiliations (of total population)</i>	
Buddhists	94.6%
Muslims	4.6%
Christians	0.7%
Other	0.1%
<i>Information Sources: 2000 National Population and Housing Census of Thailand as reported by the National Statistical Office of Thailand; World Development Indicators Regional Fact Sheet, World Bank; UNICEF</i>	

Sexual Practices

Perhaps one of the most apparent areas in which generational ideology shifts are evidenced is young people's sexual practices. Unlike earlier generations, there is an increasing acceptability for young women to engage in premarital sex (Liu et al., 2006⁹, Gray & Punpuing, 1999¹⁰). In fact, contemporary Thai women are more likely

⁷ As derived from secondary sources & not from the primary information collected from the focus group conducted for this project

⁸ Vattanont U., Greenhalgh T., Griffin M., & Boynton P. (2006). "Smart boys" and "sweet girls"- sex education needs in Thai teenagers: a mixed-method study. *The Lancet*, 368(9552), 2068-2080.

⁹ Liu A., Kilmarx P., Jenkins R., et al. (2006). Sexual Initiation, Substance Use, and Sexual Behavior and Knowledge Among Vocational Students in Northern Thailand. *International Family Planning Perspective*, 32(3), 126-135.

to engage in risky sexual behaviors, such as earlier sexual experimentation, numerous partners, and inconsistent use of contraception (Rasamimari, 2008¹¹) than earlier generations. While premarital sex is not uncommon with Thai males, more young men are engaging in premarital sex with their girlfriends; this differs from earlier generations in which unmarried males would seek out female sex workers for sexual intimacy (Gray & Punpuing, 1999; Piya-anant et al., 1999¹²). Unsurprisingly, while the age of sexual initiation has remained consistent for males, Thai women appear to be having sex at a younger age than earlier generations (Liu et al., 2006). One key difference in the sexual practices of males and females however is that young unmarried men who are sexually active tend to have more casual partners than their female counterparts (Ibid).

A 2001 study of youth risk behaviors conducted with approximately 2,300 Bangkok adolescents¹³ found that 10% of participants had already had sexual intercourse, 1% reported as homosexual, and 6% had sex with more than two partners in the three months preceding survey administration (Ruangkanchanasetr et al., 2005¹⁴). The median age for starting to have sex was 14.5 years old and close to 1% of the surveyed group reported first having sex when they were 11 years old or younger (Ibid). Findings from a study conducted with older youth (aged 15-21) attending vocational school in Chiang Rai¹⁵ also found high rates of risk behavior in young people. Given the increased age range for participants, the number of youth that reported as sexually active was high. Of those queried, 48% of males and 43% of females had engaged in sexual intercourse (Manopaiboon et al., 2003¹⁶). Of these students, 27% of females and 17% of males reported that one or more of their sexual encounters resulted in a pregnancy (Ibid). Close to 45% of males and 22% of females reported first having sex prior to or at the age of 16; additionally, young people that had sex at an early age, drank alcohol, or took drugs were more likely to have a sexual encounter that resulted in pregnancy (Ibid). Given the changes in sexual practices in Thailand over the past few decades, HIV/AIDS is on the rise among Thai youth. A study conducted with students of differing socioeconomic classes in Thailand found that young people of all classes failed to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of how a person contracts HIV/AIDS (Thianthai, 2004¹⁷). In 2005, the Thai Ministry of Public Health reported that the ratio of females aged 15-19 who were infected with HIV was twice that of males in the same age group. Of additional concern is the increase in dating violence in Thailand. More than half of participants (58.8%) in one study reported having friends who perpetrated psychological aggression toward their dating partner while 29% reported having friends who used physical and sexual violence against their dating partners (Pradubmook-Sherer, 2009¹⁸).

In a 1990 national survey of past year sexual behaviors, 3% of males reported having sex with both females and males while .2% described themselves as only having sex with males. Approximately ten years later, in a northern Thailand study conducted with 1,725 young adults aged 15-21, 7.7% of males and 8.2% of females identified themselves as bisexual and/or homosexual (van Griensven et al., 2004¹⁹). Males that identified as homosexual or bisexual (HB) were younger when they had their first sexual encounter and had a higher mean number of total lifetime sexual partners than their heterosexual counterparts (Ibid). In addition, more HB males had been paid for sex and paid others for sex than heterosexual males (Ibid). Sexual practices between

¹⁰ Gray A., & Punpuing S. (1999). *Gender, sexuality and reproductive health in Thailand*. Bangkok, Thailand: Mahidol University, Institute of Population and Social Research, IPSR Publication No. 232

¹¹ Rasamimari A., Dancy B., & Smith J. (2008). HIV risk behaviours and situation as perceived by Thai adolescent daughters and their mothers in Bangkok, Thailand. *AIDS Care*, 20(2), 181-187.

¹² Piya-anant M., Leckyim N. et al. (1999). "Past and current STDs in a Thai adolescent population. *Journal of the Medical Association of Thailand*, 82(5), 444-449

¹³ Participants were drawn from 8 secondary schools, 13 communities in Bangkok, and 2 Juvenile Home Insitutions; the mean age for participants was 15.5.

¹⁴ Ruangkanchanasetr S., Plitponkarnpim A., Hetrakil P., & Kongsakon R. (2005). Youth risk behavior survey:Bangkok, Thailand. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 36(3), 227-235.

¹⁵ Chiang Rai is significantly different from Bangkok, with a largely rural and agricultural population. Approximately 1/3 of the participants in this study either live with a friend or on their own (and not with a family member).

¹⁶ Manopaiboon C., Kilmarx P., et al. (2003). High rates of pregnancy among vocational school students: results of audio computer-assisted self-interview survey in Chiang Rai, Thailand. *Journal of Adolescence*, 26, 517-530.

¹⁷ Thianthai C. (2004) Gender and class differences in young people's sexuality and HIV/AIDS risk-taking behavior in Thailand. *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 6(3), 189-203.

¹⁸ Pradubmook-Sherer P. (2009). Prevalence and Correlates of Adolescent Dating Violence in Bangkok, Thailand. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 36(1), 9-37.

¹⁹ Van Griensven F., Kilmarx P., et al. (2004). The Prevalence of Bisexual and Homosexual Orientation and Homosexual Orientation and Related Health Risks Among Adolescents in Northern Thailand. *Archives of Social Behavior*, 33(2), 137-147.

heterosexual and HB females were comparable regarding their age at first sexual encounter and number of lifetime partners; however, a history of providing sex for money, gifts, or favors was significantly more common among HB females than their heterosexual counterparts (Ibis). More than 30% of HB females and 19% of heterosexual females reported being coerced to have sex (Ibis).

Family characteristics seem to have an impact on young people's sexual practices. A national study of Thai adolescents found that being raised in a two-parent household was associated with later sexual initiation (Podhisita, 2004²⁰). Males whose parents did not live together were more likely to initiate sex earlier than those in intact families (Liu, 2006). Similarly, for females, a lack of a family member confidant and living independently correlated positively with earlier sexual initiation (Ibid).

Drug Use

From 1993 to 2001, there has been a 1000% increase in the use of amphetamines in Thailand, replacing heroin as the most utilized illicit drug in this nation (Reid, 2002²¹). Due in part to this rise, in 2003, the Thai government declared a War on Drugs, adapting a zero tolerance policy that saw 275,000 people into treatment in 3 months and the death of over 2,000 drug dealers (Office of the Narcotics Board, 2003²²; Vonchak, 2005²³). This effort by the national government may be responsible for the reduction in the levels of illicit drug and alcohol use; however, there was a three-fold increase (from .61% to 1.85%) in daily alcohol use and close to double an increase (3.52% to 6.27%) in weekly alcohol use (Daosodai, 2007²⁴). Additional work done with 15-21 year olds in Northern Thailand found that more than 93% of males and 81% of females had used alcohol in the past three months (Liu, 2006).

From 1997 to 2002, the use of drugs among youth more than doubled in Thailand; 12% of students used or associated with drugs in 1999 compared to the 1% that reported using drugs in 1998 (Reid, 2002). Approximately 90% of those dependent on drugs were male (Ibis) while half of those addicted to methamphetamines are in the 14-19 year old age range (Teerat, 2000²⁵). Rates between heterosexual males and HB males revealed that significantly fewer HB males had ever used marijuana; however, significantly more HB females than their heterosexual counterparts had three or more alcoholic drinks at least five times in the past three months, injected drugs, and had ever used methamphetamines, marijuana, and opiates (van Griensven, 2004). Drug use among males and females differ as well with higher proportions of males having used tobacco in the past three months (52% v. 15%) or ever having used marijuana (22% v. 4%) (Liu, 2006).

Media

In a comparison of South Asian countries, Thai youth ranked 3rd in the number of persons and messages posted to an online forum (Cassell, 2005²⁶). Concurrently, the influence of magazines and television on young people's perception of body image also suggests that the media is a strong presence in Thai youth culture. One study of Bangkok adolescents (ages 16-19) found that magazines and television were greater influences on young people's perception of body image than their peer group or families²⁷. Unsurprisingly, the media is also a primary source of information for young people regarding sex. One study found that 59% of young people reported receiving sex education from reading newspapers, watching television, going on the Internet, and/or listening to a radio program (Ruangkanchanasetr, 2005) while only 19% stated that they had received

²⁰ Podhisita C., Xenos P., & Varangrat A. (2004). The risk of premarital sex among Thai youth: individual and family influence. *Journal of Population and Social Studies*, 12(2), 1-31.

²¹ Reid G., & Costigan G. (2002). *Revisiting "the hidden epidemic": A situation assessment of drug use in Asia in the context of HIV/AIDS*. Melbourne: The Burnet Institute.

²² Office of the Narcotics Board (2003). *"War on drugs": Concept and strategy*. Thailand: Ministry of Justice.

²³ Vongchak T., Kawichai S. et al. (2005). The influence of Thailand's 2003 'war on drugs' policy on self-reported drug use among injection drug use in Chiang Mai, Thailand. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 16, 115-121.

²⁴ Daosodsai P., Bellis M., et al. (2007) Thai War on Drugs: Measuring changes in methamphetamine and other substance use by school students through matched cross sectional surveys. *Addictive Behaviors*, 32, 1733-1739.

²⁵ Treerat M., Wannathepsakul N., & Lewis D. (2000). Global Safety on Illegal Drugs: The Case of Bangkok, Thailand. *Research report supported by United Nations Drug Control Program*.

²⁶ Cassell J., Tversky D. (2005). The language of online intercultural community formation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. [serial online]. 10(2) :1-31. Available at: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue2/cassell.html>. Accessed October 26, 2009.

²⁷ Thianthai C. (2006). Influential sources affecting Bangkok adolescent body image perception. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 18(4), 633-641.

education from their parents on this matter. The content that young people are exposed to on the Internet is of concern. Research suggests that, via the Internet, 66% of secondary school students in Bangkok are exposed to sexually explicit content and more than 55% of the students view pornography (Thongpriwan, 2006²⁸). Similarly, 69% of participants reported that their knowledge of substance abuse comes from the media (Ruangkanchanasetr, 2005).

²⁸ Thongpriwan V., McElmurry B. (2006). Coparisons Between Thai Adolescent Voices and Thai Adolescent Health Literature. *The Journal of School Health*, 76(2), 47-51.

Section V: Raw Data from Thailand Discovery Focus Groups

Thailand Focus Group Notes for Youth Pastors and Youth Workers

OPENING: DID YOU SEE THE WORLD FOOTBALL COMPETITION?

- Didn't see (4x)
 - Don't have a sport I like
- Not really interested/like it (4x)
- Some of it (3x) but only the teams I cheer for
- Yes (2x)
- Yes, I have heard about it from friends & people around me (2x)
- Mostly men will watch it; women didn't watch it
- Am learning more about it from the media (2x)
- If we have more time, we will watch it
- Most of the youth will say they watch but the youth in the church will not say much about it. They will pay more attention to their studies (2x)
- If some of them are in high school [Christian boys], they will watch the game sometimes.
- Aside from football, youth are interested in basketball, volleyball, and table tennis
- Generally, youth are interested in sports but the girls pay much attention to studying, tutoring and getting a job.
- Sports like volleyball will be seen in the church
- Some youth will play table tennis & football
- If things are provided, people will play but if not, they will not play.
- Women are interested in studying or working

INTRODUCTION: WHY DO YOU THINK YOUTH ARE INTERESTED IN SPORTS?

- The majority of young people are interested in sports and love sports
- A small group of young people are truly interested in sports. It is a low percent compared to the number of people that play sports.
- University students will play because it is popular there. They play because of the season or the activity.
- Because they have competition (2x)
- It is interesting/positive activity (2x)
- It is a personal interest
- It is challenging (2x)
- They like it especially when they can bet (3x)
- It is a form of gambling
- The media (3x)
- Because sports figures are heroes/ they are fans of the players (3x)
 - They are an inspiration for them and make them want to play in that kind of sport
- Sports are information that they can talk to their friends about. If their team wins, they will message it to their friends
- It is a way to make fun in their group of friends
- They play sports because it doesn't waste their time
- Parents force them to play sports because parents think this will keep them from wasting their time (2x)
- The ones who are interested are the ones who play (2x)
- Sports makes them healthy (3x)
- They watch football because they play it. By watching, they watch the position they play and copy the dressing style
- Sports help them be social & make friends
- Even though at first they might not have friends but they are there and they will make new friends.

- Women play because it gives beauty to their bodies. For example, girls will do aerobics
- If the sports activity is done by a church, they like to go because they can spend time with foreigners
- It makes youth feel useful
- They develop skills
- By playing, they can become professionals in that sport
- It does not destroy people
- Only few young Christian are interested
- If they are interested, sports will be an inspiration but not for women
- The volleyball team that won in China had a great impact; it inspired the youth to play sports themselves

TRANSITION: HOW DO YOU THINK SPORTS IMPACT YOUTH?

- Sports are better than [computer/video] games
- It depends on the person (3x)
 - For some it is good but for others it can lead to gambling problems
 - If the person has good discipline, he will know how long he can play and he is able to control himself. (2x)
- Sports will affect people's lives too
- It can help them develop
- It is good for youth because it helps them develop leadership skills
- It helps them develop friendships
- It can help them relax, even in examination time
- It can benefit their career
- It teaches discipline
- It teaches them teamwork (5x)
- It is good for youth because when they play, it is good for their health (4x), they use some of their energy
- It may be that kids are shy or their friends will laugh at them but when they play sports, they will have more confidence
- It is not harmful to them
- If youth do not have friends, they will not play sports
- It is not the thing that interests youth most
- Sports do not lead to anything
- It can be a problem if they have problems organizing their time
- Sports is not the problem; but the gambling is (4x)
- Sports can lead to crime
- Those who gamble, do not play the sport most of the time, they only watch the score
- Those who play sports will not play games and those who play games will not play sports
- Sports activities are fellowship and can be used as in evangelism
- Sports takes a lot of their time, it is better for young people try new things
- It helps them be accepted (2x)
- Sports is not distracting
- It helps them build good relationships
- They can spend time with others
- Sports can improve their minds
- It allows for creativity
- It is not good because it leads to fighting
- Youth have to pay a lot of money to play a sport (2x)
- Sports help them release the power in themselves
- If they do not play sports, they may use their power to harm others
- Sports figures can become their heroes because of television (2x)
 - When someone who they know is good at the sport also, they may want to be like them
- Thailand is very good at some specific sports
- Some adults do not support it because they do not like sports

- If adults set up a place for them to play a sport, teenagers will like it
- Generally, it's not effective. It depends on the youth themselves. Mostly, the students will do both studying and playing sports.
- Some of the athletes pay too much attention to sports that they don't do good in their study (2x)
- Some students will play sports just to have scholarship.
- The sports are advantageous because they help the youth to be more emotionally stable and manage themselves accordingly.

KEY TOPIC 1: WHAT OTHER THINGS DO YOUTH FIND INTERESTING?

- IT/Computers and/or Technology (4x)
- Chatting (2x)
- Computer Games (inc. online games, play-station) (10x)
 - One youth gave his parents heartache and they do not know what to do because on Sunday, he went to play games with his friends after church
 - They play late into the night & are within their own world
 - They will play for many hours and not go to school but will play games on-line or chat
 - They can develop skills, like writing, through games
 - They have Superstar
- Internet (3x)
- Blogging
- Facebook (4x)
- Hi5
- MSN (a messenger program similar to skype)
- Teenagers like fast communication, like the reality world (2x) and openness
- Comic books (2x)
 - especially university boys
- They like to dress like the character in Japanese comics
- Girls like to read contemporary novels, especially with Japanese or Korean covers (but Thai writing)
- Magazines
- Taking photos with their mobile phones (3x) and uploading them (2x)
- Dating
- Media
- Fashion (3x)
- Music (6x)
 - Some music has good meanings.
 - They really like the kind they can dance to
- Dancing (2x)
 - Because it is challenging. They can practice and create their own dances. They have dance teachers who are between 13-20 years old.
- Competitions
- Movies (2x)
- Korean movies & series (2x)
- Korean trends
- Celebrities
- Korean celebrities
- Beautiful or handsome singers
- Campaigns to help poor people
- Campaigns to help with global warming
- To do good things for the King
- Plant a tree
- Things that make themselves feel good
- Normally, youth are not interested in politics; they find it boring.

- Shopping
- Clothes & accessories
- Hanging out
- Travel
- Karaoke
- Study
- Art

KEY TOPIC 2: HOW DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION SUPPORT YOUTH?

- Not too much
- The activities to influence students are for evangelism, like Friend for Life Camp, Adventure Camp, LTI, Building Homes for Morgans (Thai people that live near the sea)
- Teaching them music (2x)
- Have a website (2x)
 - for non-Christian students but it is not popular
- Youth should get support and we need to encourage them through the online world
- Opened a hotline for them to call in
- Language tuitions
- Korean classes
- Teaching English (2x)
- Having sports activities/competitions (6x)
 - Organize challenging activities for boys, like shooting or sports
 - They will supply the sports equipment for youth to use
- Focus on university students
- organize night games to communicate and to have fun (2x)
- Having group activities to have them interact with other people their age
- Have an open house for activities (ex. Table tennis)
- Organized a tour to some of the attraction places
- Organized evangelism concert
- Camps
- We can support them to have competitions in public.
- We can teach and train them to work in teams & a team player
- We can set teaching teams, such as computer teams et al. to help them
- Youth are interested in many fields but the church only responds one way. We should have many types of media
- Copy outside-the-church activities and make them more applicable for the youth in the church
- We need to enter into their world
- We need to invite them to help in the ministry
- Build someone that youth can trust and who can provide them with consultation
- They will have a movie and music night
- Do not support youth playing games
- If teenagers like art, they will find them instructors
- The obstacle of playing [sports] at church is time because their time is not relevant; then they can't see and play together. They can play together when the church has a camp.
- The church will support children's sports team (3x) if teens are interested.
 - We will even raise money to support youth
- We try to support them in sports and have sports clubs but it's not a big deal because there is no competition at church
- They promote sports and have started to organize sports clubs although there's not much attention given to it.
- Limited space, don't have enough equipment for sports (2x)
- There are some sports activities churches won't support because they have no place

- We will make them feel they belong to a family (2x) and help them build relationships within the church
- God can change their lives; but it will always depend on that person who accepts God whether or not they will improve their lives or not
- But there are lots of things that hinder them joining teams [church events], such as time and distance

KEY TOPIC 3: WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOUTH HAVE?

- The wrong attitude towards sex
- They are confused about sex
- The problem of the opposite sex
- Boyfriend or girlfriend relationships (2x)
- Relationships- they do not talk upon meeting face to face but prefer to chat online
- They live with their girlfriends before they are married
- They are looking for love in all the wrong places
- They lack love
- Families (4x)
 - Parents not understanding
 - Do not spend time together
 - Parents do not have enough time for their children
 - Parents have time but no love for their children
 - Parents do not set a good example at home
 - No discipline
- Broken families
- Thai students learn things that they are not interested in. Some students learn because of their parents and what their parents say (2x)
 - This can make some bitter
- They get money from their families but not enough. They have to make money because their friends have money and they want to as well & they waste their money on unnecessary things
- They do not have good role models/examples
- Celebrities are not a good example
- Lack of peer acceptance
- They do not know as much as their friends, for example about the Korean stars, and so they have to work to catch up
- Kids cannot get along with their friends/peers
- The major problem is friends
- They live immoral lives
- Drug use which they can pass onto their group of friends
- They do not realize drug use is wrong
- Addiction to drugs (not too much) but mostly to alcohol and cigarettes
- Women smoke cigarettes because it is fashionable
- Girls overdress and want to wear brand name things
- There is an alcohol shop near the university
- They have financial problems
- They work because they need to pay for their studies
- Christian students, even though they know God, still want money and invite friends to join business networks.
- When they finish school, they go to the alcohol shop
- They have many examinations and they cannot manage their time
- Students will attend tutorial classes to make it to the university entrance examination
- Some over-study
- Some students do not study
- Study issues; the students are so concerned what university to go to

- Teenagers will worry about studying, especially high school students who are in the year of going to study in university. The parents will worry & try to push them to study harder.
- They are not interested in studying & they have problems with it (don't study enough) (2x) because they don't know want to be in the future
- Some commit suicide because of low grades
- Parents do not help them with their homework
- They put too much intention on tuitions
- Private school students have less problems than government (public school) students because they are able to learn about things that they are interested in.
- Games and/or game addiction (10x)
 - Can lead to gambling
 - Impacts families when they beg for money & lie to play games
 - Kids get addicted through their friends
- The Internet (3x)
 - Some will play 3 hours a day or sleep late (2x) because of the Internet; some will use the Internet when they get the assignment from their teacher
 - They explore pornographic websites
 - High school student won't be more addicted than students in university
- Too much free time (2x)
- They have no time
- Unable to communicate with people because they spend too much time on the computer
- The media does not satisfy them
- They do not see the problem with porn websites
- Too much competition
- They believe that no one can really be a good person
- Lack of discipline
- There is no evangelism or devotion
- They think in the short-term.
- They do not like to repeat
- Parents come to church late so they do to
- Cell phone
- Sleep late & get up late (2x)
 - Miss Sunday service
- Some are shy
- They are in their own world
- Gangs
- They do not want to join [church] cell groups
- Do not like to read the Bible
- Do not like to listen to sermons
- Big mouths
- Do not listen to anybody

KEY TOPIC 4: DO YOUTH THINK THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION IS THE SOLUTION FOR THEIR PROBLEMS?

- Yes (2x)
 - because they like to come to church
 - we do activities they like, for example dancing.
 - Children when they like the activities, they can be transformed & accept the things they need
- No/Not enough (2x)
- Some/Maybe (2x)
- They do not want our help
- They do not think we can solve their problems
- Maybe they think we can help with some things but not all their problems

- Some think that we are not the response for them
- We can help but only in indirect ways, like the aspect of attitude
- Our help is only in small way, not like bigger, well-known organizations, like the Pavena Foundation
- It helps to shape their thinking, behavior & attitude
- The activities that are helpful for them have a benefit
- Have a friend that is a good role model
- This is the best for the improvement of their knowledge and abilities
- Christianity is not the answer for them.
- On the university, there is a Christian organization but students there think that they give advice based on the depth of the relationship the person has with the organization.
- Non-Christians think that church is a religious building & do not dare to come in
- They think about their friends first and do not really think about us
- The church helps and teaches them but it is up to the teenager what to do (2x)
- Give them advice & help them solve their problems
- Spend time with them
- If the teenager plays a lot, they will try to stop them from doing it and engage them to alternative activity that is more meaningful and productive for them. (2x)
- If the students have academic problems, they will provide tutorial services.
- We are willing to help their basic problems but it depends on the teenagers if they are willing to be helped.
- If teenagers thought that the leaders do not approve what they do, this will cause them to be afraid of the leaders and therefore will not talk to them or open up.
- Teenagers want to be accepted.

KEY TOPIC 5: WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES & BARRIERS TO WORKING WITH YOUTH?

- There is a big gap of ages & they do not want to open up to us (7x)
 - They cannot talk or understand each other
 - If we let the same age look after them, that is good but they must respect or think they are reliable
 - The timing is off because adults have to work and the activities between adults and youth are different. (2); we need to manage our time so we can be available for youth.
 - They will not talk about their problems to us.
- There is a difference in thoughts- their thoughts are not at an age where they can control emotions (2x)
- There is a gap because there is a difference in ideas; we try to tune and adapt.
- Society- we cannot reach or understand everyone
- We are not necessary to them
- They do not trust us (2x)
- They see us as too good for them and thus, might not understand them and so they do not want us to know their problems
- You have to win their hearts first before they can accept you (2x)
- Understanding the truth of God is not go deeper, like adult because there is no evidence to make them understand clearer that why they can't force them to do anything. But family and friends can be an influence in them so when they accept God, may be because of a friend or their society, but from themselves
- Youth rely on themselves and so others are not important to them
- Too little officers
- The major problem is the lack of time that we can spend with youth (2x)
 - When we do not spend time with them, kids do not have an open mind or want to work with us. If they form a close relationship with someone, they will work with them but not someone they do not have a relationship with.
 - If the leader at church takes the time to be with a teenager, they will help the teenager have a good relationship with God
 - Neither groups have time for each other

- The problem is how to get youth to be more open-minded to us
- Our activities are evangelism; we do not have activities that can draw them from the dark side
- Need staff that have skills in counseling youth
- There is a lack of adults to help youth solve their problems
- There is a lack of knowledge and we do not have the ability to develop them
- There is no media to engage them
- Lack media resources (2x)
 - Lack a team to use media, which is influential with youth, to reach youth
- Students are afraid and do not have the confidence to talk to Christians or learn about Christianity
- There is a lack of knowledge about Christianity
- Christian staff does not have a good attitude to reach out to students; they are afraid of the students
- When students want to talk to staff or know God but are afraid their families or friends will not accept it
- The religion is the obstacle because in the old religion they can drink or go out but as Christians, they cannot
- Christians have a lack of understanding of student's social life & likes (2x)
 - Teenagers think differently
- Christian students understand non-Christian students more than staff
- The obstacle is in Thailand, most people are anti-Christians (2x)
- Presently, Thai people are individualistic and have their comfort zone
- Society is getting worse so young people tend to be careful with strangers
- We only care for good kids no bad one
- We select who to love and care for so our work is not the answer
- We have to find out what our good points are and whether or not we are using them
- They only want to hear what they want
- Teenagers feel pressure from church
- Teens do not develop themselves; like in discipling (they do not read the Bible, pray, etc.)
- Youth come to [church] meetings late
- Youth have no discipline
- They do not believe in the leaders {Christian}
- Pride
- They have an attitude that they know more than others
- Interrupt when teacher teaches
- Make problems or fights in the group like when someone speaks, they will interrupt {2x}
- Have a different idea

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THING SAID?

- Teenagers are important (2x) because it is hard to solve
- Even if their problems are bad, we still need to work with teenagers. We need to help and motivate them. We do this for Jesus Christ.
- Families and problems are not the obstacles but we need someone to work on this
- Families are weak and children are scared to express what they really want to do with their lives because they are scared that society will not accept them.
- If the family is weak, they will lose that relationship and allow the world to control them
- We need to come up with a solution for them
- Strategy will help the teenagers in the right way
- If teenagers will not see that they have a problem, they will not want our help
- Youth want someone that can help
- They want someone they can trust
- They want someone who can understand them and be a good role model
- They need to know their value and their dressing for acceptance. Students want acceptance from their friends.

- Youth need good role models because if they don't have that, they will not have confidence or inspiration. We want the government to be serious about this.
- Thailand lost the way to lead people.
- God
- A person may work in many ways but the most important is to win people
- We tell them that we are family & they are not alone and hope that they will come back regularly. We want youth to know that they have someone who cares about them and wants to help them solve their problems. For example, they can get help with their homework
- Christians and/or the church have to improve their ability to address the needs of students (2x)
- By improving staff, we can improve teenagers now and in the future be what God intends for them to be
- We should help them communicate in the group, making friends, and
- We have to watch how we behave
- We should give more to youth
- We have to be ready to change. We want something so we have to be willing to give back something
- Church has found a way to figure out the teenage problem- one by one & helping the youth solve their problems one at a time
- Teenagers are not sure that the church can help them
- If teenagers think that they are the problem [that is, they perceive that the church looks at them this way], they will not want to join the group
- Everything is important; (2x) like sports have good benefits that can help young people. Someone can learn to play a game. If they have a friend that likes it to, they will share it together & spend time together and share
- We need to be their counselor; discuss among ourselves how to help the youth but we can only reach them to some extent
- Society needs to change; we have lost the image of God. We must have a strategy to help them understand the creation of God by teaching and showing them how to help people.
- The environment is a problem, like bars

Compiled Data from Evangelical Leaders & Pastors Focus Groups

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THIS GENERATION'S YOUTH?

- They have a sense of personal independence even though they are following what others their age are doing.
- Families do not have time for their children so they are watching TV and Computer games even though the parents don't know what they are doing
- They lack confidence so they try to create an image to project to others
- They have addictions (drugs)
- They are aggressive; energetic
- Games (2)
- Homosexuality is on the rise
- Social networks are popular like Facebook and Hi5. They try to see how many friends they can have and try to make themselves look good in their profile (better than real life)
- Internet popularity- can be helpful or harmful
- Church should be doing more exciting things
- Pastors and families could get the kids to help with learning how to use computers
- Materialism pushes some kids to get cell phones and other things
- Girls may turn to prostitution or families get in debt in order to buy the latest fad or fashion (2)
- Materialism and the media are challenges to youth
- There is too little time spend as families and materialism
- There are similarities with Christian/Non Christian
- Attitudes toward church and spiritual things
- There needs to be relevant means of communicating the Message of the Gospel for Youth
 - Programs that attract youth

- Need for collaboration
- They are interested in everything around them
- Dangerous because they easily get mad; they are easily influenced by friends; they are self-centered
- They have their own world
- Impolite or doesn't respect or listen to the adults
- They are impatient
- They care about their friends.
- They create problems.
- Promiscuity
- Broken families
- Try to copy super stars by their dress and hair styles
- They don't care about copyright laws (situational ethics)
- It is hard to invite them to church unless there is something where they can express themselves like dance

WHAT ABOUT THE YOUTH IN YOUR CHURCH - ARE THEY THE SAME OR DIFFERENT THAN OTHER YOUTH?

- They are different (6x) because they are afraid to do something bad. But the non-Christian teenagers would just do what they want to do
- In some ways they are the same (2x)
- They have the problems with themselves and their families (2x)
- They are not accepted
- They live in at-risk communities
- The churches should do more exciting things to gain the attention of youth (3x)
- The church must decide whether to adjust or expect the youth to change and become more like adults
- Some churches think repetitious prayer will make changes but it doesn't really work with youth
- Youth are really interested in dance and should be allowed their own expression even if adults don't like it
- Programs that involve activities of interest to youth (dance, bikes) draw them to the church's programs.
- Churches must look at the good traits in teenagers and develop these traits for them to become better persons.
- Their friends in school influence them and they want to be like their friends.
- Normally, teenagers would like to hang out with their friends but Christian teenagers would not just hang out with their friends but also go to church.

KEY AREA 1: GIVEN THE YOUTH IN THIS GENERATION, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE FUTURE OF YOUTH IN YOUR CHURCH?

- They are very good at understanding technology
- Youth change and transform very fast. For example, they have to respond to the changing world (what happens outside the church)
- They feel that the spiritual boring
- If the church doesn't change their presentation and adapt to the new way, youth will find it boring
- If the church has no plans for the teenagers, they will not go to church because there's nothing for them to do there. If there's no youth in the church then in the future it will be a dead church because there is no one in the church anymore.
- Teenagers do not go to church because the church doesn't respond to their needs (example: old songs/hymnal)
- Teenagers do not have good moral behavior but Christian teens might be better because the church cares for them and teaches them the right attitude.
- It is dangerous if the church does not do anything to relate to the youth. Then we will lose them.
- It is important that we reach them while they are still children.

KEY AREA 2: HOW INTERESTED ARE YOUTH IN SPIRITUAL THINGS?

- Youth are not very interested in church programs (2x)
- They are slow to accept the spiritual
- The presentations in the church is boring for them (2x)

- Youth will pay attention to someone who takes an interest in them. For example, a mentor can help them, carry them, and pay attention to them
- Youth don't like religion, they think of it as religious traditions but are interested in spiritual life and a relationship with Jesus
- The church should use Biblical heroes to help youth understand a relationship with God (Daniel, Joseph)
- Youth are interested in the spiritual life that will help them deal with problems and temptations (2x)
- They want a personal relationship with church leaders that involves time and not just talking
- Youth from rural areas tend to focus on material success until they are established; then have the same needs
- Teenagers believe in fortunetellers because they want to know what their future is and knowing their future makes them feel better.
- If teens find a Christian that will talk about spiritual things, they might be converted to Christianity but if they don't then they will just believe in fortunetellers.
- Teenagers are interested in spiritual things; the church must know the way to draw them in.
- Teenagers are interested in religion but sometimes people in the church would keep them away.
- Teenagers in the city have many distractions that keep them from being interested in spiritual things
- Teenagers in the rural area are still interested in spiritual things and are easier to reach

KEY AREA 3: WHO HELPS LEAD YOUTH TO CHRIST? / WAYS TO LEAD YOUTH TO CHRIST

- Friends (4x)
- Father & Mother
- Youth learn about churches through the Internet
- The church must create programs and opportunities specifically for youth (media centers, tutorial help, food/coffee) (2x)
- People (Christians) are the best ones to witness to the teens by showing a model through changed life. (3x)
- Involve the teenagers in the church's activity, that will make them feel important
- It is important to use youth language when communicating the Gospel (the monks do this on TV)
- Using celebrities to present Christianity to teens (like Tor)
- Students are full of energy and enjoy extreme activities (like bungee jumping, etc)

KEY AREA 4: WHICH MEDIA HELPS TO LEAD YOUTH TO CHRIST & HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE IT?

- Media (but we don't use it often because it is expensive) (4x)
- Competitions (dance, music, knowledge) (2x)
- Need to have computer games that promote good values
- Use ideas from TV like reality, performance and game events
- Christian books, leaflets to help teens know Christ better (2x)
- Programs/activities that will allow the youth to come together
- Media, like power point or drama is important, but you have to work hard at it
- Movies and music are effective with teens, but it must be the type they like
- With music it's important to keep it contemporary, even hymns

KEY AREA 5: HOW DOES THE FAMILY INFLUENCE IN THE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS OF YOUTH?

- It is very important because the family is the connection between the church and youth
- Family/Parents has the ability to influence youth in their beliefs (5x)
- They can take time with youth but generally not enough (3x) so they will turn to their friends
- They can help youth improve their attitudes
- Families can influence youth to reduce their bad behaviors (2x)
- Families and youth want daughters to marry foreigners to get help for the family
- Families can learn from the kids (IT, email etc)
- Some families want to help the kids but don't know how
- Estimate that less than 20% of parents are really involved in their children's issues and lives

- Parents give more attention to small kids and less as they get older
- Parents put emphasis on kids getting through exams to make a better living
- Families generally encourage materialism
- Some families see their children's success as a way to improve the lot of the family
- A Christian teen will stop going to church because of persecution in the family
- Family involvement in the church helps in calculating values to the teenagers.
- Most parents blame/scold their teenagers when they do the wrong thing but they don't correct them.
- Parents should be good role models to their children especially the Christian parents.
- Teenagers who move away from home for education often get into drugs
- Teenagers lack role models because of broken homes
- Parents give money instead of time to their children
- Friends tend to have more influence than parents
- In the rural areas parents are busy working (farming, etc) and do not take time to teach their children what is right and wrong
- If the parents are strong in character and faith the children are more likely to grow strong

KEY AREA 6: HOW DOES THE CHURCH TEACH YOUTH GOOD ATTITUDES?

- The church encourages youth to be sexually pure
- They teach youth to love God
- They teach youth to read the Bible & love Scripture
- They teach youth to serve God
- They teach youth to love their neighbors
- They help youth be creative and improve their abilities
- They teach youth to be a good role model for others
- Church should help because parents can't help their children.
- Of course, church can help. Churches must have programs for the youth. They must also analyze these plans if they really are helping the youth.
- It's up to the youth if they could accept/adapt to the church's policy (like you should not wear mini-skirts, etc.)
- If the church is ready to teach good attitudes, teenagers can adapt.
- Some churches cannot teach the youth good attitudes because they themselves are fighting with each other.
- The church must teach teenagers about attitudes and good behavior
- Teach them when they are young before they become teenagers
- Have Sunday school to teach and advise them
- Churches need to help parents understand their youth and teach them how to be good parents
- The church needs to cooperation of the parents in teaching the teenagers
- Church must be intentional about building relationships with youth so they can take care of them
- Must provide discipleship for teenagers
- Teach teens and encourage them to live a good life
- In many cases the church needs to see themselves as the family for the children and youth
- Pastors need to take a day off and spend time with their families so they can be a good example to other parents

KEY AREA 7: WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS OR BARRIERS THAT MAKE YOUTH CHRISTIANS? NON-CHRISTIANS OR LUKE-WARM CHRISTIANS? WHY ARE CHRISTIAN TEENAGERS NOT FIGHTING FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN OR NOT HOLDING ON TO THEIR FAITH?

- Christian youth come to church with worries
- They are not interested in the spiritual
- They don't have strong relationships with God
- Youth's interest in church are the activities (2x)
- Youth have the wrong image about Christians in their minds
- Youth have the wrong beliefs

- The outside world influences them away from church. For example, their boyfriend or girlfriend may take them away from church or the media (2x)
- Drugs
- Pornography and emphasis on sex
- Lots of bad information is on the Internet and parents do not monitor their children
- Political leaders have eroded the respect that people have for authority. Youth are generally suspicious of the motives behind most leaders' actions.
- Games
- Alcohol
- Christian teenagers don't know how to live their faith.
- Fashion (because teenagers wear what they like to wear and older people in the church don't approve it)
- Christian teenagers don't mature spiritually because the church doesn't disciple them.
- Christian teenagers receive pressure from their friends regarding their faith. Friends make fun of them to the point that some walk away from Christianity
- Teens are pulled away from their faith through the influence of media
- Churches don't really care about the youth
- Language in the church is too old
- Leaders need to be approachable
- Must provide a balance in the church that meets the needs of teens and adults
- Must allow teens to take part in the ministry of the church
- There is a lack of youth pastors to minister to the youth
- The church lacks follow up after foreign mission teams come and help with evangelistic outreach to teens
- There is a need to have a teen version of the Bible and Christian youth materials
- We need high quality Christian camping programs and concerts

CONCLUSION: OF EVERYTHING THAT WAS SAID, WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT?

- To be a good role model to youth
- Be close with youth and take time with them
- The church needs to make changes in the method of communicating with youth while keeping the gospel message
- The church needs to stay current with changes in the youth
- Youth ministries should network together and with churches to provide better programs for youth (3x)
- There should be better training in Bible Schools and Seminaries on youth ministry
- Churches should have a kingdom view since youth are confused by the lack of collaboration.
- There is a need for the information from research and it is good when leaders can discuss issues like today
- Church should really care about the youth and take care of them.
- Parents have to take care of the teenagers
- Churches need to develop discipleship programs for youth.
- Even if the parents do not cooperate with the church, the church needs to find ways to reach out to the teenagers to become a positive influence in their lives.
- The church should consider making YouTube or Web site videos/cartoons that teach Christian values

Thailand Focus Group Notes for Teachers

OPENING: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM THAT BEAT CHINA?

- We like that the Thai team won
- We are proud (2)
- We would give more opportunities for them

INTRODUCTION: DO YOU THINK TOO MUCH MONEY IS SPENT ON SPORTS IN UNIVERSITIES?

- Do not agree that schools spend too much money on sports because sports benefit students (2)
- They use more money for maintenance than they use to pay teachers

- The students have to improve their talents not only in their studies. For example, they need to improve in singing or dancing; improve the students' potential (2)
- They have many students that have gifts or talents for sports but do not study well. Still, some of them achieve a lot in life
- Agree
- Schools spend money for new building for sports
- Teachers are asked during training to help children by not cancelling their right for the exams but to help them by giving secret assignments
- Sometimes students will ask for special consideration (e.g. special score, support) because through sports, they are making the university well-known

TRANSITION: DO YOU THINK SPORTS TAKES STUDENTS ATTENTION AWAY FROM STUDYING?

- No
- Sports support the students because they want to come to school so they can meet their friends (2)
- Schools support students playing sports (2)
- Have competitions and schools send them to competitions against other teams in the area
- Sports are the center of the community & gets people, particularly boys, talking
- The popular sport is football (2)
- For the good part, most of them have more discipline because they always determine the time table
- The thing that bothers student's studying is games
- Students that play games will not study and will miss classes. (2)
- Very much because most of them [students who play sports] fail. Someone got a grade from 1.9-2.6 because of training
- Students that play games will steal because parents do not spend time with them
- The game shop is the center for students; they will meet there before they go to do other activities, like trying to meet girls
- They go to the game shop not to play games but to go on the Internet and find friends to talk with
- If you do not go to the game shop, you are not in fashion
- Some go to the game shop because they can meet & talk with their friends there
- Students will also be supported in their studies
- Most of the sports men are not smart students. When entrance exams come, they will use their involvement in sports to get out of the exam. If they are good at sports, their grades will be moved up. This is why they focus more on sports than on studies.

KEY AREA 1: WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOUTH HAVE, BESIDES STUDYING, THAT THEY SPEAK WITH YOU ABOUT? IF THEY DON'T COME TO YOU, WHO DO THEY TALK TO?

- They talk about quarrels they have with others
- They want to be a leader in the group and have influence
- Drug addictions begin with someone and then others will follow because they also want to try it. When they get addicted, then they will also sell the drugs
- People that are using drugs will invite their friends to do the same thing.
- Normally, people start with drugs because they want to try it & see adults doing it
- In primary school, children want to know about sex and want to try it and have the experience
- Problem of friends (2x)
 - Children will have sex because they want acceptance from their friends
 - When they work in teams, some are selfish and do not do anything. Instead, they gossip, don't like each other, look down, try to be different from others
- Boyfriends and/or girlfriends.
- Fornication, some live together but are not married which some parents accept
- Someone, particularly the girls, will get pregnant and then they have to quit school. Boys, when this happens, are allowed to continue studying
- Youth will be have homosexual relationships, spend money ,or get tattoos so that they can have acceptance from their friends

- Normally when children have problems, they do not come to teachers but they go to their friends
- When students have big problems, they will first go to their friends and then go to their teachers or parents later. (2)
- They do not go to the parents with their problems because they are afraid their parents will blame them
- Students think their parents do not understand & will not listen to them
- Ask for permission to submit their work after the deadline
- Students who didn't get to submit their work are facing family problems (parents separation, nobody's home, left with maid) (2)
- Casual conversation
- Seek advice (study, family problem, sex, love) (3)
- Ask for snacks because students don't have money (2)
- Ask teachers to help them in their homework
- Some have to work and have no time for resting
- Too much work
- Too many activities
- They will search from the Internet, such as new ways for drugs or how to mix drugs by themselves.
- Language problem- some foreign students do not understand Thai. It alienates them from having friends, they have study problems, stress, sad and then health problems. Most of the Chinese students have to see the psychologist because they cannot talk to their parents about their problems because they parents do not want to hear any bad stories about their kids

KEY AREA 2: DO STUDENTS BORROW MONEY FROM TEACHERS? IF THEY DO, WHAT DO THEY WANT TO DO WITH THE MONEY?

- Normally, they do not borrow money (2x)
- Really poor students may borrow money so they can buy food (3)
- Normally, they receive money from parents and do not use the money on food but on gifts for their girlfriend or boyfriend, cosmetics, or clothes
- They use their money on the holidays to watch movies with their friends
- Parents give money to their children but do not pay attention to how the children use the money
- Some students use the money they borrowed for gambling

KEY AREA 3: WHAT OTHER THINGS DO STUDENTS TALK TO TEACHERS ABOUT?

- Mostly positive topics
- Senior students will come to ask about their studying or how to handle teacher
- Boyfriend or girlfriend of their friend (2x)
- They talk about their friends because they want the teacher to accept them
- Girls will talk about boys; boys will talk about girls
- They do not talk about themselves directly
- Normally, students want to know about the opposite sex
- Students will use the time that parents are not at home to have sex
- Someone asked about the abortion clinic
- They use public places to have sex, like public toilets
- Students show off so they can be the center of attention
- They will talk to their close friends who are the same race, same class because they can understand each other. So Chinese with Chinese, Burmese with Burmese and Thai with Thai. All these languages is a problem
- Going overseas with their parents
- About fashion clothing, cell phones, or other brand things
- Shopping place

KEY AREA 4: WHAT DO STUDENTS WANT TO DO IN THE FUTURE?

- The primary school students do not think about this; they are only interested in having what their friends have
- High school students become interested in the future and study
- They are interested in getting acceptance from their friends (3x)
- They don't have life goals; most of them will follow their friends
- They want to do what their friends do. For example, they will miss class if their friends do even if they do not want to do it
- Normally parents plan for students' futures, particularly in the rich families (3x)
- What is the student complaint? They complain about not understanding what the teacher is teaching. They are only interested in what the teacher is wearing or the teacher's behavior (sitting, standing).
- They have a lot of homework
- Parents give them money but do not have time for them
- They want to have love and warmth from parents
- Parents work too much
- Students do not have a clear goal.
- Students are interested in music.
- They might want to be celebrities.
- They might want to become like their parents.
- They want to be the opposite of what their parents have become.
- Follow the trends.
- Influenced by media; would watch a porn movie when parents don't give them advise
- Some students want to be a missionary
- Students don't want to be a teacher but don't look down on teachers.
- If they have a job or finish their degree, they will have to own their target, such as studying nursing because they want to have a certain career or work overseas to get a good income

KEY AREA 5: WHAT CAREER DO STUDENTS WANT TO HAVE AND DO THEIR PARENTS SUPPORT THEM?

- There are two groups of parents. In rich families, parents will expect & plan for the student even if it is something that the student does not want. In poor families, parents only want students to work and reduce the burden on the family so it is not necessary for students to study hard and/or pursue further education (they just need to work & help the family as soon as possible).
- Rich parents will be open-minded about what their children want to be but not when it comes to being a singer or an actor
- Many children have the ability or talents for sports, singing, playing musical instruments. They can earn money from this so parents do not mind then.
- Children that have problems in their homes do not receive support from their families
- Some parents have a lack of knowledge to help their children in their education. For example, the government has aid to help students with their education but the parents do not know about it and so the students do not benefit
- Parent support them. They will help in financing, by buying instruments or books to help them. They will try to cheer them on or help look for a job for them
- Other times, parents will force or determine what children have to do. Most of the kids are scared to explain why they do not like something and always do not have the right to make the decision

CONCLUSION: THINKING OF EVERYTHING WE TALKED ABOUT, WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT?

- The family is the most significant, particularly with students as they need good advice (2)
- Parents have to notice and pay attention to their children so that they can help their children when they have problems right away
- Parents and family will guide them and have influence to help them to live on earth, help them to look at things in a positive way, good manner or consciousness from which family and religion should help develop them

- They can solve their study problems, if they have good counselors, either from friends or teachers in their personal life. Parents should be their friends too.
- Older students do not pay attention and are not interested in their parents because their parents do not understand them and cannot help them according to their needs
- Students who place a lot of value on friends and spend too much time with their friends, when they are encouraged to do something wrong, they do and then problems occur.
- Students have problems and have more experience in primary 2-3. When they pass the experience in the beginning, they will continue like this.
- Students will be pressured if they have not had sex or do not have a girlfriend or boyfriend
- Parents do not know the proper solution to solve the sex problem and some parents, because they cannot stop their children from having sex, will show them how to avoid a pregnancy when they are having sex
- Parents do not allow for opportunities for children to talk to them.
- Children want someone to listen to them but there is no one to listen to them
- Parents blame their kids but cannot understand their children's problems or solve them
- Homosexuality is starting to happen at a younger age, like primary school, with boys and girls
- Students quit because of quarrels, pregnancy, or drug addiction
- Frequent communication between parents and teachers
- The environment and support from people such as friends because they have influence and are counselors

Compiled Notes for Government Officials

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE PANDA COMPETITION?

- Talk about it in the classroom about conservation of animals
- Talk about morals: learning from mother about taking care of baby, etc.
- Talk about human and animal work living together
- Teachers able to connect from panda to any subject – to use as teaching point for their subject

TRANSITION: HOW ARE YOUTH TODAY DIFFERENT THAN 5 YEARS AGO?

- In the past, Thai youth loved to give and showed respect to elders- good aspects of Thai culture
- Respect for elders/parents is decreasing (2x)
- Teenagers are learning from the new culture (3x)
 - Western culture really influences the family
 - Teenagers receive too much information from other cultures (like Korean culture) and forget their own culture
- They like to do what they like to do
- They do not really take much responsibility
- Global youth culture has high technology but does not encourage good morals
- In the past teachers/elders were the “holders of knowledge”.
- Teachers had greater influence & morals were taught in the classroom
- Students also learned morals from observing their teachers/elders.
- It is not like this today.
- Now, there is so much knowledge available that students are looking to more than their teachers so teachers do not have the much influence they used to.
- Technology has encouraged youth to imitate people on television
- Moral values are not being taught in the curriculum or caught by the students by observing their teachers/elders.
- In the past, teachers and parents could punish their children but now they have passed laws that they cannot touch children.
- The government, especially the Ministry of Education, needs to handle this situation by inputting moral teaching into the curriculum.
- Primary schools are the most important places to teach them about morals. Secondary school is too late.
- One soap opera has actually affected youth in a positive way

KEY AREA 1: WHAT ARE CHILDREN LEARNING IN AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM AND FROM OTHER PLACES?

- There is limited teaching time in the schools.
- Teachers are not only teaching by traditional methods in the classroom but are also teaching through service opportunities
- Students learn by doing for the community.
- Through these community service opportunities, students are learning how to work together.
- They learn about life through real-life practice
- Students are involved in recycling programs at the school.
- They bring in items to recycle, the items are sold, and the money goes into the student's personal bank account
- This gives them funds to buy pens, paper, etc. at the school store and they learn about finances, simple accounting, etc.
- Teachers also teach students about real life projects, like students caring for a banana plant or a vegetable growing project
- Students care for a plant, sell it and then use the money for the school/to help poor students, etc.

KEY AREA 2: WHO INFLUENCES YOUTH?

- In the home, parents are a strong influence.
- Children do what the parents want them to do
- In school, the teacher is a big influence on students
- There is a big influence from TV, but there are not many programs for children
- Television dramas (Korean and Thai) are not promoting good morals
- Parents do not pay attention to what their children watch on television (2x)
 - Kids still watch things & see things on the Internet
- Adults watch more television than the children
- School influences are good
- Social influences outside are not so good
 - Drugs
 - Drugs come to Thailand from other countries; even children as young as 10 know about drugs and become smugglers
- Theft
- Violence
- Religion can help society
- Education can help people contemplate their actions. It can teach self-respect, pride in achievement and diligence (particularly for prisoners)
- A lack of funds can take kids out of prison but then draw them back in (drug smuggling)

KEY AREA 3: WHAT IS THE REAL CONDITION OF THE THAI FAMILY TODAY?

- Many things have changed
- In the past, the extended family was intact and together
- Now, both parents work and grandparents live separately. This leaves children oftentimes alone because no one is around for them (3x)
 - Parents do not have time to give advice to children
 - Parents don't have time with their kids, only before bed, because most of the time they are in school
- The children today often do not have the same level of respect for their elders and do not obey them
- Children live in their own world with iPod, music, cell phone, texting, etc. (2x)
- Education is an important factor for the development Thai youth as it helps them learn how to make good choices.
- Need the family to be the primary place that children learn morals and school should then support that learning

KEY AREA 3: HOW IS GOVERNMENT SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH?

- There are government programs that promote youth
- The Ministry of Education promotes sports and recreation programs
- The Ministry of Education has organized a Creative Camp
- The Ministry of Education encourages music competition in schools

- In prisons, guards can regular what prisoners see
- In prisons, they have used music and sports activities
- Need to have programs for prisoners that teach reading, knowing the law, their rights and writing, as well as vocational education
 - Educated prisoners can teach uneducated ones
 - Government can send in teachers

KEY AREA 4: WHAT ARE THE BIG PROBLEMS FOR YOUTH?

- Internet/online gaming (2x)
 - Kids can use the Internet to chat with their friends
- Kids are influenced by media outside their homes
- There are laws that say that youth cannot be in cybercafés until 3 PM. But this law is not enforced
- Teens are sexually active in as early teens
- Homosexual activity is present among students
- Youth are copying the lifestyles they see in the movies and in the lives of entertainment personalities
- Students don't like to read
- The current political situation has caused youth to feel insecure
- Civil disobedience/violence has been a negative example for youth that causes them to think: "if they can do it, I can do too!"
- When kids have problems, they don't have anyone they can ask for advice. They don't consult with their parents but consult with their friends and draw their friends into their problems.

CONCLUSION: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING SAID IN THIS CONVERSATION?

- Government needs to pay attention to youth problems
- Family should play a vital role for youth and provide encouragement, even for youth who do wrong; they should not be cut off from the family
- The Ministry of Education tries to let the students know that they care about them and love them
- There needs to be cooperation between many different departments – not only the Ministry of Education
- There needs to be a national plan to help youth
- Need the government, NGOs, schools, and family to work together for youth
- The Ministry of Education needs to put morals back into the curriculum to promote good morals
- Need to do some training/surveys to promote youth doing service/community projects on weekend, etc.
- Teaching/training for parents on family life issues
- Parents need to be good examples for their children
- The government needs to provide follow-up programs for prisoners when they are released. They should be visited in their homes, have vocational programs, opportunities and programs that will help them assimilate to society
- Developing Citizens helps released prisoners start small businesses and has a high success rate

Compiled Notes for Senior High Students

OPENING: WHAT IS THE POPULAR TREND AT PRESENT?

- Fashion (6x):
 - Clothes, contact lens, tooth straightening (8)
 - Shoes (2)
 - Hair dying, beauty and health products (like Koutaio) to lighten your complexion (3)
 - Korean styles are popular; movies, songs, concerts and music (9)
 - Hip Hop fashion (including different colored shoes, big belts)
 - Western style is not an influence (Korean is the new fashion influence)
 - New style hair (2)
 - Body piercing (ear, tongue)
 - Ska Reggae music style (2)
 - Rock style (2)
 - Music influences style

- Hand bags (must be latest style)
- Panda
- Games (2x)
- Internet
- Braces for the teeth
- Social/Entertainment:
 - Facebook and social networking (film stars have pages) have to keep checking your Facebook (3)
 - Talking on the phone, sometimes sleep then continue conversations (3)
 - Sports
 - Cinema (2)
 - Dance contests (4)
 - K-pop (2)
 - Clubs (2)
 - Nutritional food and weight control (3)
 - Travel
 - Music
 - Singing competition
- Other:
 - Electronics like cell phones, i-phone and note book computers (Macs) (7)
 - Travel to go abroad and learn languages and have adventures
 - Youth like to buy brand name products and to do this they get money from parents or businessmen at the pubs
 - Young people get picked up on the street by businessmen for dates
 - Money is important
 - Going to university in order to get a high paying job in the future

INTRODUCTION: SOME PEOPLE SAY KOREAN CULTURE IS NOT GOOD, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT?

- Positive:
 - Korean fashion is better than western fashion
 - Some think Korean culture is good
 - It is good (2)
 - We don't really know the real Korean culture, only what we see in the media
 - Korea games online, products, make up is good
 - All cultures have good aspects to them
 - Korea can make it interesting among the students in telling of God
- Negative:
 - Some parents give money for plastic surgery as a graduation gift (2)
 - Korean culture tempts people to waste their money and time (3)
 - Creates pressure on those who do not really know themselves
 - Don't approve of the Korean fashion and are upset when their people copy Korean culture rather than value the Thai culture. (7)
 - It creates conflict when some of your friends prefer Korean and others Western Culture
 - People follow Korean fashions even if they don't like the influence (3)
 - Suicide influence of music
 - Some parts of Korean culture are not good (4)
 - Korean parties have alcohol, and consider Thai friends bad friends if they don't want to go to the party because of the alcohol
 - Thai people have plastic surgery to look more like Koreans
 - Koreans don't want to do business with Thai people because they think Thai people are lazy. There is a negative perception of Thai people. (1 disagrees with this)
 - Some Korean things have more influence, such as songs, but it all depends on if we conform or not.
 - It is not good because it becomes like an addiction to teens
- Neutral/None:
 - It depends on the attitude of the person (9)

- Korean culture makes no difference (3)
- We have right to do what we want but not cause trouble to others
- Korean teenagers that are over 15 years old always have plastic surgery but we should be the way God has created us (4)
- Korean culture is close to Thai culture
- Thai culture is being influenced by Korean culture by paying attention to outward appearance (Korean movie star)
- It depends how we use it if culture is good or not
- Korea is a developing country and has better facilities than Thailand, such as their water & sky train.

TRANSITION: HOW DO YOU FIND OUT ABOUT KNOW KOREAN TRENDS OR FASHIONS?

- TV (9)
- Magazine (8)
- Internet (8)
- Friends (6)
- Movies (4)
- Radio (3)
- Concerts (2)
- Malls
- Mobile phone
- U-tube
- Billboard ads
- Video games
- Thai movie stars because they copy Korean movie stars like hair style, fashion (2)
- Korean shops in Thailand
- Advertising
- Music
- Books

KEY AREA 1: WHAT DO YOU DO ON WEEKENDS?

- Shopping at the malls or night market and hanging out with friends (17)
- Karaoke
- Watch TV or news at home (13)
- Reading (9)
- Go to cinema (11)
- Internet and Facebook (9)
- Hi5
- Sleeping (8)
- Video games (10)
- Time with family (6)
- Play sports (football, swim, badminton, skateboard, tennis and taekwondo) (6)
- If you go out it is better to be with friends (4)
- Study/homework (6)
- Read comic books, watch cartoons (2)
- Travel (3)
- Hang out on the streets to people watch (2)
- Coffee shop to study with friends (2)
- Talk on the phone (3)
- Go to the park (2)
- Pray, go to church (2)
- Teach violin and Thai language to foreigner
- Watching TV has too much pressure to follow it all the time.

- Cook with my parents or friends
- Boyfriend/girlfriend
- Dates
- Motorcycle racing at Pattaya
- Helping younger siblings with language
- Tutoring
- Clubs (3)
- Go to night place
- Chores/housework (3)
- Part-time job
- Fighting (violence as a hobby; not a sport)
- Drink alcohol (2)
- Gambling
- Listen to music (2) from Internet
- Talk about politics (note: Teenagers don't honor the king; don't care if they have a king or not because they don't think the king has done anything good for the country. They feel the king is above the law.)
- Beauty salon
- Watch porn clips
- Eat
- Do nothing

KEY AREA 2: DO YOUR PARENTS SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES YOU DO ON WEEKEND?

- Positive:
 - Parents will not have a problem if it's a creative activity (example: teaching Thai language to foreigners, studying, or play sports) (5)
 - Parents want us to stay at home and cook (2)
 - They would like us to take extra classes like English or music but not through travel (7)
 - Some parents help you do the projects and activities that interest you if it is good (3)
 - Parents support things they have experienced before, but if they haven't done something (like go to a club) they won't support it (2)
 - Parents support them going to the temple
 - Parents support them playing the stock market
- Negative:
 - Parents do not like us on the Internet but want us to be at home (boring if no Internet) (4)
 - Parents get upset when you spend too much money (6)
 - Clothes you buy are sometimes thought to be inappropriate by parents (2)
 - Parents worry about you having an accident or get in trouble and discourage your activity (2)
 - If you are doing business with your friends parents are worried you will get in trouble or are working in clubs (3)
 - Some parents think the extracurricular activities are too expensive
 - Some kids sell illegal drugs; some of the parents agree because they get lots of money (2)
 - Parents complain about whatever you do (4)
 - Parents think if you go abroad it is for money; maybe the sex trade
 - Parents don't support hanging out with friends, sleeping, playing online games (2)
 - Parents don't support going to clubs (pop) (2)
 - Parent don't like when teenagers stay out late and sleep late (2)
 - Parent don't like when teenagers playing "camfrog" (Web cam activity)
- Neutral/Other:
 - Parents don't have control (4)
 - Parents neither support nor disagree; they don't mind the activities they do. (7)
 - Sometimes parents expect you to help them with their shops or business on the weekend (2)
 - Watch football or play Internet and computer games (3)
 - If you have no money there is nothing to do

- Party, drink and smoke (try drugs)
- Parents don't provide money for teenagers to do things. If they want to buy something they have to make the money themselves.
- Sometimes, mostly with home activities (Internet, Facebook, Hi5, playing games, shopping, exercise or go somewhere) because they do not want to stay alone

KEY AREA 3: THE INSPIRATION IN DOING THE ACTIVITY ON WEEKEND, IS IT FROM YOU OR YOUR PARENTS?

- From self:
 - Some parents give the freedom to decide what you want to do and when you have a problems you needs friends or parents to help (4)
 - I want freedom to do my own things without control (4)
 - Parents don't know what we do or they wouldn't let us go (3)
 - Going out; will lie to them and go out to be with my friends
 - Everything depends on myself as to whether I am happy or sad
- From parents:
 - My parents support my activities like they find me a violin teacher
 - Some parents are too controlling and we cannot do the things that we want
 - Parents are actually the first place to go when you feel bad
 - If what they want to do is interesting, the parents want them to do it
 - Most of the decisions regarding activities comes from parents but teens and parents don't do things together
 - Studying
 - I trust my parents and are confident that they love and want what is best for me
- Both/Other:
 - I like most of the activities that I do but sometimes parents want us to socialize or mingle with others
 - Your parents are a last resort when you need help or advice (2)
 - Older siblings can often help before you go to parents
 - Some older siblings will go to the parents behind your back after you have talked to them so you can't trust them
 - If you need money talk to Mom but if it is about study go to Dad
 - Older sisters can help with money too
 - Some people go to friends because they are not close to parents and the parents will make your life miserable
 - The isn't any family communication, want to spend more time talking with parents (2)
 - Some parents just give money
 - Rural kids tend to stay in when they first come to the city
 - Some care more about what their friends think than what their parents think
 - I am confident in my family relationship and I know that my parents love me.

KEY AREA 4: WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR FAMILY/PARENTS?

- Go out to eat on the weekend
 - Cook together
- Sometimes we all go to a movie
- We go to visit relatives (2)
 - They go home so that they can go to the temple with the family
 - Fellowship with family and relatives (make merit)
- We go to a festival
- Shop (food, clothes)
- Ancestral Worship
- We don't do much as a family only on occasions (2)
- We rarely do anything special since we are together all the time

KEY AREA 5: HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE THE GOALS IN YOUR LIFE?

- Self motivation and family (5)
- If parents are already working a field we want it is easier (4)
- I go with the flow whatever happens; no plans (4)
- Finish my bachelor's degree and master's degree (8)
- Make a lot of money so I can buy a house for the family (10)
 - Look after parents/family (2)
 - Buy anything we want
 - Family is the inspiration
- Be a nurse or teacher (4)
- Need commitment and effort to achieve goals (4)
- Keep looking forward, have good intentions, be patient and diligent in order to get a job you like (7)
- Manage time (3)
- Study and read a lot (4)
- Working with a relative is a good way to start toward goals (3)
- I want to study but no support from parents, need parents encouragement (2)
- Good social skills in to be effective in your career (2)
- Speak English fluently (2)
- Success = God + my own intention (2)
 - Know God and want to do His will more than my desire
- Set mini goals (achievable so more can be reached)
- Set only one goal (2)
- Don't want to set a goal for fear they will not achieve it
- Some think it is better to achieve your goals on your own rather than with family (2)
- Photographer and graphic arts (3)
- I would like to study law and my parents encourage me, I hope to be a judge or work in government (3)
- I have a lot of things I would like to do (2)
- I would like to be a flight attendant to travel and learn languages (2)
- I would like to stay in my hometown and stay in the same area as my family and farm (2)
- Start my own business (2)
 - because I don't like what I am studying, my friends talked me into these studies
- Guide or work in hotel and tourism management (2)
- I would like to be married
- My studies right now will probably not be my career
- I would like to learn culinary arts but my parents don't agree
- I would like to work with the church
- Join the military, because my parents are in the military
- I would like to be a bisexual
- I would like a spouse who really understands me
- Parents fighting is hurtful to me
- Friends can help
- Security
- Do the things you naturally like to do and are good at.
- Want to work overseas
- Want to be a good person and help people

KEY AREA 6: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW CAN RELIGION HELP YOU SUCCEED?

- Positive:
 - Prayer helps, God will change things and support us when we are discouraged or in trouble (8)
 - Fortune tellers, charms and magic can help in life (5)
 - Religion helps us to be morally upright for work like faithfulness, honesty (7)
 - Meditation can make you calm and relax (5)
 - Religion helps you be positive about life (3)

- Karma is an important influence, if you do good you receive good (3)
- Religion can help you be more disciplined (2)
- Encouragement (2)
- Tattoos brings good luck (2)
- Religion can help your character (2)
- Religion can help you at work. (2)
- Merit can help us out of problems.
- God knows what we want and he can answer what we ask for.
- Can help you be successful. You can hold onto it when parents die. (2)
- Pray and ask for blessing from Buddha.
- If you believe in religion, when you pray you will get what you pray for, and when you get what you pray for you are encouraged to reach your goals (2)
- Religion can help, but people who aren't serious about their faith don't have self-confidence (2)
- Yes. It can help us to have a good heart.
- People who think they are sinners and try to help themselves, get saved.
- I am a Christian. I don't know who can give me advice so I talk to God and he helps me. (2)
- Yes, God helps me learn more from my studies when I pray to him.
- Negative:
 - People too religious are "weird"
 - Sometimes religious values are opposite those at work: for example working in the pub
 - We can listen about Christianity but we don't like to be converted to Christianity
 - Religion should be a personal choice not pushed on you (2)
 - No [people do not need God], because their heart is hardened. Some talk about God; he will close his heart. Some want to do his own will but everyone needs help.
- Neutral/Other:
 - Religion doesn't make any difference, religion is not about your work (4)
 - Religion makes no difference to your employer
 - We don't need religion we have to rely on ourselves (4)
 - If you are grateful to parents you can succeed.
 - Depends. Some need fortune tellers to tell them, some have high self-esteem, some fear the need for help. When they know God, their lives change and things become clearer and they can accept what they have or do not have. They have more confidence to do the different.
 - People need acceptance, love, trust of something that they are searching for, respect the idol, want to have a soul mate because they don't know who He is

CONCLUSION: FROM WHAT WE HAVE SAID TALKED ABOUT, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART THAT YOU AGREE?

- Family:
 - Need advice and support from family (8)
 - Family time (6)
 - Families often don't understand you so it is uncomfortable to talk with them (4)
 - Some people are aggressive because they see families fight (2)
 - Some talk about family (father) abuse of kids
 - Parents are important (3)
 - Parents do not understand teenagers
 - Support a family or companion I love
- Relationships:
 - Friends can be a help or the cause of problems (5)
 - Good friends (4)
 - Boyfriends/girlfriend relational problems
 - Social skills
 - Self reliance (2)
 - Love is important
 - Teachers help

- Need a role model (2)
- Youth are without strong influences and need to be understood better (2)
- Success:
 - Education is necessary for career. Success is necessary (3)
 - Working experience (2)
 - Set future Goals (5)
 - Benefit and dangers of Internet for communication and searching data from worldwide source (2)
 - To follow the plans you have (2)
 - Need motivation for success (2)
 - Money is important. You must have money to be able to continue your education
- Religion:
 - Religion is good (4) but not help to successful (1)
 - God helps you succeed
- Other:
 - Trends and fashion
 - Drugs are a problem
 - The weekend is important – you have a rest time and spend time with others.

Compiled Notes for Junior High Students

OPENING: WHICH GAMES DO YOU PREFER?

- FF games
- Online games (they can talk with friends while they play)
- Playstation 2
- X box games
- Racing Cars
- Stepping on balloons
- Cards
- Dot.A

INTRODUCTION: HOW MUCH DO YOU PAY TO PLAY THESE GAMES AND FOR HOW LONG DO YOU PLAY THEM?

- 1 or 2 hours (3)
- On weekends all day
- 3 hours
- About 2 hours
- 10-15 baht per hour
- 2-3 hours
- 6 hours
- 1 hour
- at least 30 minutes
- 4 hours
- 7 AM – 4 PM

TRANSITION: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT KIDS YOUR AGE HAVING BOY/GIRL FRIEND?

- It is good to have one but you cannot spend time if you are studying
- Parents do not no permit us to have boy/girl friend
- I would like to have one because it gives me someone to talk with
- Keep it a secret
- Too young to think about this. (2)
- It makes me happy.
- Mostly Sr. high students will have a boyfriend/girlfriend.
- It is normal
- If you don't have one you are not cool (left out)
- I don't know because I've never had one

- I prefer not to have one, because it is annoying.
- You should wait until you work
- Sometime I want one if I feel lonely

KEY AREA 1: WHAT ARE YOUR FRIEND'S PROBLEMS?

- Father has a second wife
- Family
- Boyfriend/girlfriend
- Financial problems
- Studying rarely
- Fights with friends over a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Not listening in class
- Hanging out with bad friends

KEY AREA 2: HOW DO YOUR CLASSMATES BEHAVE?

- They do not understand their subjects
- They like to play games
- The students and teachers do not understand each other
- The parents make them study and learn
- Drug Addict
- Novel/Comic Addict
- Sex problems
- Smoking, drinking, riding motorcycles at night
- Selling drugs in school

KEY AREA 3: WHEN YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WHO DO YOU GO TO FOR ADVICE?

- Parents
- Friends (3)
- Someone you can trust (2)
- They do not consult their parents because they could be scolded (yelled at)
- Mother (2) – best person to help us
- Grandparents
- Brothers or Sisters
- Teacher
- Act alone (2x)
 - Keep it with yourself
 - Fix the problem on your own

KEY AREA 4: DO YOU THINK THAT RELIGION HELPS YOU SOLVE PROBLEMS IN LIFE?

- Yes, I think so because religion gives peace of mind and helps you be happy
- Yes, if we learn enough about the religion (go deep in the religion) it can make us a good person and we can withhold ourselves from bad things.
- Yes, religion is the source of the heart and mind.
- No, they are too lazy to listen to the long sermon (temple)
- No, they do not understand the religious language
- Some, but it mostly depends on yourself (2)
- Yes, but only a little bit
- When we go to church we can forget about our problems for a while
God can help you some, but not with everything
Maybe, if you believe

KEY AREA 5: WHEN YOU GROW UP WHAT WILL YOU DO THAT IS DIFFERENT THAN YOUR PARENTS HAVE DONE?

- Pray with the children (2)
- Spend more time with the children (2)

- Pay attention to the children
- Talk more with the children
- I will never leave my children
- Take care of my children
- I will not nag my children
- One student says they never think about that
- Yes, but I don't know how to do that.
- Nothing, because I don't have parents
- Take other people's advice
- Travel together
- Provide opportunities for my children to study extracurricular subjects that they are interested in (music, dance, etc)

KEY AREA 6: WHAT FAMOUS PERSON DO YOU LIKE AND WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE LIKE THEM?

- A cartoon animator/illustrator (Udom Taepanich)
- Film Star (Sombat Maetanee) (3)
 - Movie Star
 - Korean
 - Famous Singer
- Michael Jackson because his is a good dancer
- Coach of a football team in England
- Kick Boxer Champion (Manas Boonjamnong)
- Sports star (2)
 - Rugby
 - Football (Christiano Ronaldo because he can play football very well)
- Doctor or Nurse
- Government (2)
 - Politician
- Teacher
- Still confused
- Anything but a teacher
- Einstein
- Bei Slur guitar player
- I want to be like my aunty
- My dad

KEY AREA 7: WHO IS YOUR HERO?

- Isaac Newton
- I prefer to watch them than to be like them
- Ultraman is my hero
- My computer teacher
- Bill Gates
- Jesus Christ

CONCLUSION: WHAT POINTS MADE ARE MOST IMPORTANT?

- Importance of studying (2)
- Friends (2)
- Having boy/girl friends (2)
- When friends have problems
- Future Goals
- Games
- Heroes or idols
- Friends
- What you believe is important