

Spiritual State of the World’s Children: Summary Table, Sierra Leone



Notes: Surveys were administered in randomly selected accessible schools. Inaccessible schools are those in conflict zones or areas of extremely low population, and those that cannot be reached by public transportation. Reported respondents are those who participated in the survey and answered the question. Not all participants answered all questions. The composition of the sample set—3,982 students aged about 13 to 18—indicates a skew towards female attitudes among subjects under 16. Data was collected from February to April 2009. SSWC was completed in June 2009 for OneHope by the Metadigm Group.

Sierra Leone	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects	Key Notes
Family Relationships and Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74% report an overall positive family experience. 66% frequently show love for their mothers and 49% for their fathers. 62% feel that mothers and 45% that fathers frequently show love for them. 55% feel very close to their mothers. 39% feel very close to their fathers. 49% of respondents report their parents as married. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71% do not live with both natural parents. 23% report that their father is dead. 9% report that their mother is dead. 26% report that their parents have been divorced. 39% spend no time with fathers and 23% with mothers talking about what matters to them. 71% sometimes or frequently wonder if their mothers and 61% if their fathers love them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38% (12% more urban than rural) chose a traditional idea of family: those related by birth, adoption, or marriage. 35% (19% more rural than urban) think any group of people living together is a family. Despite that, only 7% to 8% agree that cohabiting homosexual couples are families. 28% said home is where they feel safe and loved. 26% said it is where they feel comfortable even though they are not in a close loving family.
Relationships with People of the Opposite Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91% expect to be very happy in their marriage. 86% believe God meant marriage to last a lifetime. 78% agree that problems have been exaggerated and most marriages are healthy and fulfilling. 69% think that where children are involved, divorce is not acceptable. 65% want a marriage like their parents’. 65% want to be a virgin when they marry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 67% agree that it is very hard to have a successful marriage these days. 52% indicate premarital sex for a couple in love is always or sometimes acceptable. 49% expect that marriage will end in divorce. 44% of all respondents have had sexual intercourse. Parents were the least reported source of information about sex. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Females are 27% and urban youth 12% more likely than their male and rural peers to want to remain a virgin until marriage. Urban youth more than their rural peers believe God meant marriage to last a lifetime (by 9%) and want a marriage like their parents (by 8%). Older youth (by 18%) males (by 12%) and rural youth (by 8%) report more often than their younger, female, and urban peers that they have had intercourse.
Behaviors and Beliefs in Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 94% report that they did not use an illegal drug in the three months before the survey. 91% did not use tobacco. 89% had not been legally drunk. 87% did not gamble or bet money on something. 78% did not try to physically hurt someone. Studying from school materials and reading a book occupy the most time for students in a given week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57% lied to a friend or peer and 49% to an adult in the three months prior to the survey. 53% believe you have to bend the rules get by. 44% say it’s ok to break the law if no one is hurt. 42% watched a pornographic movie. 37% tried to hurt someone emotionally. 40% cheated on an exam or evaluation. 29% stole money or a material possession. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Islam is the greatest reported influence on subjects’ thoughts and actions. 83% report that the Bible provides an indisputable description of moral truth; but 62% believe truth can mean different things to different people and that no one can be sure they know the truth. 60% know something is morally or ethically right if it works in their lives.
Religious Background and Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 93% believe the universe was created by God. 90% report that a close relationship with God is very important for their future. * 86% agree the Bible is accurate in all its teachings. * 85% believe in the efficacy of prayer. * 71% agree that forgiveness of sins is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ. * 65% have made a personal commitment to Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 83% believe all religions pray to the same God. * 82% believe the Holy Spirit is only a symbol. * 80% believe good people earn a place in heaven. * 72% believe all religions teach equal truths. * 51% deny Jesus’ physical resurrection. 49% believe God is no longer personally involved in humans’ lives or experiences. 48% believe in ghosts; another 29% are not sure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% of respondents self identify as Islamic. More respondents indicated a sure belief in ghosts than in God 71% believe that people can define truth in contradictory ways and be correct. 61% attend religious services at least weekly. 54% believe they will go to heaven for following religious rites.
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% of respondents report that they are very satisfied with their lives. 47% reported “a lot” of influence by the Bible and the Christian faith in their lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22% are not at all or not very satisfied with their lives. 13% of respondents report suicidal thoughts in the three months before the survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 54% believe that a full and satisfying life is possible without the pursuit of spiritual maturity. The most indicated desirable conditions for the future are a large house and a degree.

* About 85% of survey participants responded to these questions.