

**Spiritual State of the World's Children
A Qualitative Study**

Tamil Speaking Youth Report

Malaysia

February 2011

Prepared by:



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Completed Report



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 653 million children and young people.



NECF MALAYSIA

The National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) Malaysia is an umbrella body representing about 2,500 evangelical churches in the country. NECF is one of the three founding members of the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) and is represented through the CFM, on the Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. It has been able to garner the evangelical voice in making its distinctive marks on the nation, especially in prayer, research, leadership development and evangelism. The current emphasis on community transformation seeks to mobilize churches to contribute their resources towards nation building.

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Section I: Executive Summary

General Information for Malaysia Discovery Project

From May 27 – June 2, 2010 27 focus groups were convened in Malaysia. This included groups from Northern, Central, and Southern parts of the country. For this report (Tamil-speaking youth) 11 Tamil student groups, 2 groups of youth pastors, 3 groups of evangelical leaders and pastors, 1 group of parents, and 1 group of teachers met to provide information for this project.

Key Issues

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES: RELATIVE TO CHURCH & YOUTH MINISTRY

- Youth pastors and church leaders recognize the significance of social networking among the youth.
- Youth pastors acknowledge their need to learn what teens enjoy and what they want.
- Christian teens are inclined to be more accepting of others regardless of ethnicity.
- Pastors and youth pastors recognize the importance of leading and teaching young teens in biblical values while they are still pliable.
- Church leaders acknowledge the hunger for reality and authenticity among the youth.
- Youth value friendships and staying connected through Social networking
- Youth have a high level of interest and involvement in sports activities.
- Youth look to the Internet as their main source of information.
- Youth are looking for role models to follow
- Students are attracted to large youth-focused events and gatherings
- Young teens are more open to building positive relationships across ethnicities.
- Older youth feel that religion is important in providing guidance and source for life – application.
- Youth show respect for parents as their preferred source of advice and counsel.

WEAKNESSES & THREATS: RELATIVE TO CHURCH & YOUTH MINISTRY

- Church does not seem to be capitalizing on social networking for relationship building
- Pastors are skeptical of the effectiveness of using social networking as a ministry tool due to its “impersonal” nature.
- The means of engaging the youth in sports appears to be under utilized.
- Youth ministries seem not to be capitalizing on this opportunity
- Due to compartmentalization of age groups within the church, youth have limited opportunity to develop mentoring relationships with adults
- The church tends to react rather than respond to the negative aspects of media
- Limitation of English proficiency within the Indian youth community hinders interpersonal relationships across ethnicities
- Lack of mentors and role models.
- Youth ministry is mostly focused on church youth, neglecting youth who are lost.
- Youth do not see church as relevant to their interest;
- Youth see the church as outdated
- Youth do not connect the church with enjoyable activities.

- The misuse of the Internet is endangering to the moral fiber of youth
- The popularity and negative influence of secular media which youth are drawn to emulate
- The divisive nature of racism within the youth culture.
- Bullying and gang fighting among younger teens
- Inability to build and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.
- Youth often see the church in general as not applicable to their lives.

Recommendations

- *The church must find ways to change and adapt to today's youth:*
 - Design ministry and tools that will build a strong foundation of the basics of the Christian life for 10-13 years old.
 - Encourage use of the Indian version of The GodMan movie (OneHope tool), and other similar Christian electronic media tools to expose youth to the One True God.
 - Provide avenues for youth to express their talent and creativity by involving them in the use of media inside church
 - Senior pastors and leaders need to see the social networking thru the eyes of the youth. Older generation must see the potential of the current social networking trend and use it as a tool to draw the youth to the church.
 - Youth ministry must develop media formats where youth would be able to express themselves freely.
- *Strengthen Family Relationship*
 - Conduct family-oriented events such as camps, sport festivals, etc. to foster stronger ties between parents and children.
 - Encourage families to plan intentional meal times as connection to their children
- *Evangelism*
 - Involve youth in ministry and mission as an avenue to make God relevant in their life
 - Establish programs that will intentionally bring Kingdom-impact outside the church.
 - Conduct youth camps and events that will give opportunity for youth to have an encounter with God
- *Discipleship*
 - Establish heart-to-heart connections with the youth by youth ministry leaders
 - Encourage senior pastor and ministry leaders to foster stronger ties with the youth.
 - Conduct regular informal meetings with the youth as part of discipleship program

Responses to Research Questions/Areas

1. What are the main interests of Malaysian youth today?

- a. What is the most common media that appeals to youth?**
- b. What activities attract youth?**

Malaysian Indian youth place a high value on friendship. This is indicated by their activities, which involve mostly their friends and peers. While positive forms of interaction with peers such as sharing food during lunch, talking with friends and participating in school sponsored sports activities are most frequently mentioned, several teens identified negative aspects of social behavior which include picking on younger students, bullying, playing pranks on teacher, gang fighting and watching gang fights. Additionally, for older youth the priority of peer-to-peer relationships manifests itself in sports activities and meeting up with friends outside of the home just to hang out.

Interestingly, youth indicate that spending time with their family is deemed a valuable use of time. Both the older and younger youth report activities (e.g. going out/taking family trips, watching TV and movies, sharing/talking) they carry out together with their family. These activities suggest that family relationship with their family is also important.

Generally, both older and younger teens rely heavily on social networking through computers and handphones to stay in constant contact. Many students report that they could not live a day without their handphone. They also admit that this 24/7 availability through handphones has become a distraction to their studies. Their pre-occupation with social networking further underscores the importance of friendship for them.

School is the primary social connection point for younger teens. Being less mobile than their older counterparts, outside of school they most commonly meet with friends through Facebook, and online chats or games.

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

- a. What differences in perception exist between parents and teens regarding the role of the family?**
- b. Who do youth go to for answers when they have a problem?**

Across all groups, the Internet was identified as the main source of information for this generation. This influence is bound to increase because of the government's commitment to give one million personal computers to lower income students as a part of national development. However, evangelical leaders are concerned that without the appropriate levels of guidance and oversight, this sudden increased Internet access will become a dangerous avenue of misuse. Furthermore, parents see their children's preoccupation with the Internet and social networking competing with quality family time.

Astro is another favorite place Indian youth say they go for information and entertainment. Tamil movies and serials present a lifestyle that young people desire and aspire to emulate. This includes fashion and the message of the music contained in the films. Star actors serve as modern-day heroes and role models for Indian youth.

Secular youth festivals are popular among teens. The church generally views these events as having a negative influence and discourage youth from attending. Some youth pastors suggest that the church rethink its position to avoid being seen as disconnected from society.

Another competing influence is the education system where much time and effort is spent on shaping the minds and values of the next generation. With this, parents expressed concern over the politicizing of education and its affect on the youth.

When it comes to dealing with a problem, youth report that they rely slightly more on family than friends for guidance. However, this margin narrows significantly, trending towards friends, beginning at age 16.

3. How does language and ethnicity affect today's Indian youth?

Younger teens identified racism as the main problem they encounter in school. In contrast, older teens strongly emphasized a commitment to equality and respect among the races. This is, however, harder to implement where there is the absence of a common language.

It is interesting to note that teachers find that students who are just beginning secondary school (age 13) quite naturally make friends among other ethnic groups. However, by the second year, teachers see children gravitating towards others of their own ethnicity. These ethnic groupings tighten significantly in the third year, producing racial division.

The need for proficiency in both English and Tamil is a matter of concern within this community. Elders see the loss of ability to read and write in Tamil eroding culture. At the same time, proficiency in English is necessary for personal and economic development. Even for students with potential, low English skills result in low self-esteem.

4. What key issues and problems are Malaysian Indian youth dealing with today?

While youth of all ages deal with issues and problems, the source of these problems changes according to the age group. Younger teens identified issues pertaining to personal identity and self-esteem like being teased regarding their physical appearance, or for low marks and doing poorly in sports. Bullying, gang fighting and fighting over a boyfriend or girlfriend were also frequently mentioned by this age group.

With older teens, the majority of problems center around relationships. Many teens identified jealousy, misunderstandings between friends, and trouble in boy-girl relationships as the main issues for them. Other serious problem areas identified were drug usage, unemployment, fighting and revenge.

Church leaders see materialism among parents and its impact on the children as a major problem for this generation. The adults' quest for financial achievement is being passed on to the younger generation. This is further fueled by absentee parents who endeavor to substitute material things in place of themselves. Church leaders also see the parents' pre-occupation with their children's education as part of the parents' over emphasis on material things, even at the expense of instilling spiritual values.

5. How do Malaysians view the current education system?

Overall, students report that they enjoy school, though only a few give academics as their reason for this. Most associate school as a place to be with their friends. At the same time, several students indicate little or no interest in studies and school activities.

Teachers see that the current education system places so much importance on exams that creativity and the ability to use this knowledge in practical ways is being sacrificed. Students are confused and having a hard time understanding how the material is relevant to them. Parents also identified this as a problem. Emphasis on memorizing spoon-fed facts is replacing the ability to think and analyze.

As mentioned earlier, parents are concerned about the politicization of education. Additionally, parents see excessive homework and compulsory extra-curricular activities as hindrances to spending time together as a family.

6. What is the current relationship between the older and younger generation in Malaysia?

Parents expressed positive sentiments regarding the relationship with their children. They see themselves as the primary influence in their children's lives, both by example and teaching. Parents agree that it is important to begin building strong family relationships and laying a moral foundation while the children are still young. At the same time, teachers and spiritual leaders believe that parents are not doing a sufficient job of teaching children to respect the elders.

According to youth pastors, students feel that the older generation is critical of them and that adults view youth culture as "weird." Teachers and youth pastors identify technology as the main contributor to the gap between generations in terms of social interaction and language. Both groups see that while students have developed their own set of on-line social skills, they are lacking in the ability to communicate appropriately in face-to-face interaction and showing respect to the older generation.

7. Are Malaysian youth interested in religion and spirituality?

The majority of older Indian youth say that religion plays a significant role in their lives. They expect religion to provide guidance and personal fulfillment.

Religion is less important and personal among younger teens. Religious practice for them is often tied to following along with their parents. They expect religion to provide peace and protection, and to perhaps mete out punishment when they do wrong.

Overall, youth remain optimistic that different religions can co-exist in harmony through adopting the same mindset and showing mutual respect. Their experience in National Service is cited as an example of this. Teens say they currently do this by looking past ethnicity and status in their relationships with peers. There are a few, however, who express uncertainty about maintaining harmony between religions, even to the point of saying that it is not possible since every religion considers itself to be correct.

Regarding Christianity, youth pastors say that teens tend to see the church as irrelevant to everyday life and equate holiness with a “boring” life. According to them, unchurched youth regard Christianity as “just another religion” and “too spiritual.”

A hindrance to youth being interested in Christianity in some case is the restriction placed on the expression of youth culture within the church. Because this generation is entertainment-oriented, they look for the “WOW” factor at church and in the youth ministry.

8. What is the current state of youth evangelism within the Malaysian Indian community?

The primary focus of youth ministry revolves around church youth and activities that will keep them in the church. Pastors and church leaders acknowledge that there is a hunger for reality and authenticity among Indian youth. Youth pastors used the term “passionate and lost” as two words that describe this generation, but they admit that the mindset of the church as a “holy” place for “good” people often results in neglecting the lost.

9. What are practical ways to make Christianity and discipleship relevant to this generation?

Church leaders recognize that there are many relevant ways to disciple today’s generation. Primarily, it is important that pastors and youth pastors see relationship building and mentoring as a part of the discipleship teaching process for youth. For youth coming from Christian homes, the church needs to look for ways to intentionally engage parents in the youth discipleship process.

Youth pastors believe that there is a need for the church to involve the youth in ministry and mission as an avenue to make God relevant in their life. Opportunities should be provided

for youth to express their talents and creativity. Additionally, teens must be given occasions to have personal God-encounters. This will also enable them to boldly evangelize their peers.

While students are looking for authentic relationships, pastors and leaders should endeavor to make the church look as people and not just buildings. Youth will feel more comfortable if the entire church, including the older generation is more accepting. The church needs to move together across generations to bring Kingdom-impact to the life of the youth.

Leaders agree that utilization of upgraded media is an effective tool to catch the attention of the youth. However, they also believe that effective youth ministry is more than cutting edge tools. It requires a dependency on God and a desire for the manifestation of the supernatural. While hiring youth pastors to be responsible for the youth in the church is deemed necessary, church leaders believe that commitment, resources and involvement of the church across generational lines is also required.

Pastors recognize their important role in modeling care and connection with youth to the congregation. In order for youth ministry to be most effective it cannot be compartmentalized as just the responsibility of the youth pastors and youth workers. Moreover, leaders believe that when the church stops being afraid of the world (negative influence), it can begin being more effective in reaching the youth.

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 Malaysia Discovery project, focus groups¹ were conducted throughout Peninsular Malaysia to gather information on the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of Malaysian youth as well as the challenges that exist in conducting ministry in Malaysia.

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 Malaysia

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 Malaysia'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
- 13-15 Year Old Students
- 16-19 Year Old Students
- Youth Pastors
- Teachers
- Parents

Regions for Focus Groups

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

- Northern
- Central
- Southern

¹5-8 people who have something in common and are called together to speak on how they feel or think about an issue or idea

Leadership and Facilitators

OneHope in partnership with National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) conducted this research project. Rev. Ty & Cina Silva (Regional Directors, OneHope Asia Pacific), Rodel Lacson (Ministry Consultant, OneHope Malaysia), Rev. Jeremy West (Ministry Coordinator, OneHope Thailand) and Joy B. Lojo (Regional Research Coordinator, OneHope Asia Pacific) facilitated the project in conjugation with Eugene Yapp (Executive Secretary for Research, NECF).

Rev. Ty Silva, Rev. Jeremy West and Joy B. Lojo conducted the focus group training on May 27-29, 2010 at the Nilai Springs Resort & Hotel in Nilai, Malaysia. A total of 20 people were trained to serve as focus group facilitators (herein referred to as facilitators) for this project.

The following people served as focus group facilitators: Eugene Yapp, Jeff Chok (National Evangelical Christian Fellowship), Lue Jun Yi, Deborah Yong (Scripture Union), Andy Chan, Chan Kah Loon, Rebecca Boon Hui Shi (Girls' /Boys' Brigade), Pastor Reuben Kamagalingam (Open Doors Malaysia), Patrick Jairaj, Kahmani Chantharan, Sathis Nair (Tamil Commission), Ng Phui Han, Khew Joong Harnn (Assembly of God) and Sherlin Long (His Sanctuary of Glory).

The following people served as note takers: Larry Lee, Jeff Chok, Pastor Daniel Loh (National Evangelical Christian Fellowship), Jason Lai (Scripture Union), Tan Ser Joo (Girls' Brigade), Sharon (Rawang), Kahmani Chantharan, Benjamin Manic (Tamil Commission), Khew Joong Harnn (Assembly of God) and Tabitha Long (His Sanctuary of Glory).

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 areas², focus group participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences and knowledge of the subject matter. Each focus group had approximately 3-7 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

On April 13-16, 2010 meetings were convened in Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya to identify research questions. At the training, these research questions were reviewed and modified;

² See pages 15-16 for topic areas for each demographic group

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 Rodel Lacson (OneHope Malaysia) and Eugene Yapp (National Evangelical Christian Fellowship). The following persons assisted in coordinating groups: Bro. Jason Fong (Scripture Union), Choy Ying (Girls' Brigade), Pastor Gabriel (Rawang), Pastor Daniel Loh (Tamil Commission), Rev. Clement Wong, Pastor Elijah Kong (Assembly of God), and Pastor Chris Long (His Sanctuary of Glory).

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.

Data Analysis and Reporting

A note taker 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 English.

This report addresses the questions and topic areas identified by OneHope, NECF and other 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 main interests of Malaysian youth today?
2. What influences are most important in shaping youth's values?
 - a. What differences in perception exist between parents and teens regarding the role of the family?
 - b. Who do youth go to for answers when they have a problem?
3. How does language and ethnicity affect today's youth?
4. What key issues and problems are Malaysian youth dealing with today?
5. How do Malaysians view the current education system?
 - a. Students
 - b. Parents
 - c. Teachers
6. What is the current relationship between the older and younger generation in Malaysia?
7. Are Malaysian youth interested in religion and spirituality?

- a. What do Malaysian youth consider to be the appropriated relationship between religions?
 - b. What are the barriers and challenges in the minds of Malaysian youth towards Christianity?
 - c. What help do youth expect to receive from religion?
8. What is the current state of youth evangelism and discipleship in Malaysia?
 9. What are practical ways to make Christianity and discipleship relevant to this generation?

FOCUS GROUP TYPES

Youth Pastors and Youth Workers

- What did you do in last week's youth meeting?
- What do you like best about being a youth pastor?
- What are two words you would use to describe this generation of youth?
- What is the main issue or problem that Malaysian youth deal with today?
- How do Malaysian youth see church and its influence on them?
- How is the church culture keeping pace with the world around it, especially youth culture?
- How does peer pressure and media influence youth today?
- How would you compare the interest of youth in church and church activities compared to sports or fashion?
- Given the things we have talked about here, what tools or methods do you think might help ministry to this generation be more effective?

Evangelical Leaders & Pastors Focus Groups

- What do you consider the top current event in the news this week?
- How long have you been in the ministry?
- What two words would you use to describe Malaysian youth today?
- How would you describe the interest level of Malaysian youth in religion and spirituality?
- What do you see as hindrances to youth being drawn to the church and faith in Christ?
- What are some practical ways to make Christianity relevant to this generation and encourage and discipleship?
- What challenges and opportunities do you see for youth ministry compared to 10 years ago?
- What role does media play in the lives of youth today?
- What is your opinion regarding the relationship between the younger and older generations in Malaysia?
- Among all the things that were discussed, what do you think is the most important or what stands out to you?

Teachers

- How did you decide on teaching as a profession?
- How is teaching different today than when you were in school?
- What are some of the contributing factors that have created this change?
- What is the main issue or problem that you and your friends deal with?
- What is your opinion regarding the relationship between the younger and older generation in Malaysia?
- What do you see as the biggest influencers on youth culture?
- What comments do you receive from students about the current education system?
- How does ethnicity and language affect your classroom dynamics?

- What role should media and technology have in the classroom with today's youth?
- What extra curricular activities seem to interest students most?
- From what we have talked about, what stands out to you as the most important?

Parents

- What is your favorite part about being a parent?
- What is your family's favorite past time to do together?
- What obstacles do you encounter in finding time to spend together as a family?
- What do you see as the interest of your children in spiritual things?
- Do you as parents give your kids the freedom of religion?
- Who or what do you think is the main influence in your children's life?
- What are ways we as parents influence our children's attitudes and behaviors?
- What can we as parents do to help our children have a meaningful and successful life?
- How do you as parents view the Malaysian education system?
- Should we as parents give our children freedom in choosing what they want to study or achieve in the future?
- From what we have talked about, what stands out to you as the most important?

16-19 Year Old Students

- What did you do last Friday? (Public Holiday)
- What are your plans for the school holidays?
- How long would you be able to live without your handphone?
- Which type of media appeals to you the most? (Internet, TV, Gaming, Movies, etc.)
- What are the favorite free time activities for you and your friends?
- What kind of activities do you do with your family?
- How satisfied/happy are you with the way "things" are in your school?
- What is the main issue or problem that you and your friends deal with?
- When you have a problem, who do you look to for advice?
- In what way do you look to religion to guide you?
- How do you think it is possible for different religions to co-exist in harmony?
- From what we have talked about, what stands out to you as the most important?

13-15 Year Old Students

- How are your exams going?
- What do you enjoy most about school?
- What is your favorite activity to do just for fun?
- Which type of media do you enjoy the most and why? (Internet, TV, Gaming, Movies, etc.)
- What type of reading material do you find most interesting and fun?
- How do you and your friends spend your time on the Internet?
- What kind of activities do you do with your family?
- What is the main problem that you and your friends deal with today?

- When you have a problem, who do you look for advice?
- What role does religion play in your everyday life?
- From what we have talked about, what stands out to you as the most important?

Section III: Synopsis of Data and Findings

Evangelical Leaders and Pastors

Pastors and church leaders acknowledge that national political dynamics are an important area of concern for the Malaysian religious community. Economic, telecommunications and language issues top their list, with the thought that many policies tend to benefit some more than others.

The government believes that its (MCMC) plan to more deeply penetrate Malaysia with broadband access (1000 new telecommunications towers) and the giving away of 1 million laptops to poor students is an essential element for national development. However, religious leaders that were involved in this research project believe that this rapid expansion of internet access will give worldwide web access without appropriate levels of guidance and oversight. It is also believed that, because of this lack of disciplined use of the internet, this access will also become an avenue of misuse (vices, anger expressions regarding national issues, etc.).

The majority of pastors saw within this generation the positive characteristic of being talented, while other church leaders were a bit more pessimistic. WIIFM (What's In It For Me) -- what makes me look best and popular -- was used to describe the common attitude that many Malaysian youth express. Some leaders believe that this generation is sheltered compared to their generation and spoiled by their parents. This situation encourages a lack of discipline and the making bad choices.

While parents will often spend much on a child's studies, this pre-occupation with education is conveying to Malaysia's next generation that nothing is more important for a good life ... not even God's will. Youth are concerned with their well being rather than spiritual life. This is leading to a decline in youth interest in religion and more traditional spirituality. At the same time there appears to be growing influence of teaching by self-proclaimed gurus.

Church leaders recognize a shift towards materialism. The message of "if you're a Christian, then God will bless you" (prosperity gospel) is encouraging a quest for material goods. It is believed that weak discipleship within the church world (no follow-up activities to build a strong Christian foundation) combined with parental attitudes for financial achievement (stated above) is partly to blame for this problem.

Parents themselves can often be the biggest hindrance to youth being drawn into the church and faith in Christ because they are not spiritually disciplined themselves. Pastors spoke of a lack of interest in "digging" into the Word of God as producing members who think they know a lot, who are wide in knowledge, but have no depth of understanding.

This scenario is causing current church leaders to find it hard to find someone to “pass the baton” to, to find the Joshua’s – emerging young leaders.

Pastors did acknowledge that there is also the problem that many youth find the church and its activities boring, with not enough programs catering to youth needs. The church must find ways to change and adapt to today’s youth. This generation is drawn to the world because the church is offering them a viable alternative.

Pastors and church leaders agree that to be effective we must reach the younger generation. Reaching the next generation must begin even before they are teenagers. Tweenagers (10-13 year olds) must be taught the basics of faith: prayer, the Word, and discipleship. The church must be ready to give answers to youth questions.

The pastor must not attack this generation from the pulpit, but “come down” and minister to the youth as a friend.

Because youth only spend a few hours a week in church (about 2), youth discipleship cannot be left to the church. The most successful work is done in partnership with parents. Proactive parenting (spiritually) is when parents connect with their children to bring them to a new level of godly living. This is important because bad habits are picked up more quickly/easily than good ones.

Changes in society have brought about changes in family dynamics. Today, the common situation is for both parents to hold down jobs. This is quite different from the previous generation’s experience of typically having one parent focused on home and family development. For reasons such as this, it is important today for parents to plan intentional family times – such as meals together - to help foster connection times with children.

While social networking is recognized as a great way for youth pastors/workers to touch base with youth, it is also seen as having the disadvantage of being less relational. Youth leaders that use FaceBook, etc., must be disciplined in their focus because church leaders don’t necessarily equate doing FaceBook as doing their ministry work. Pastors see direct, personal connection with youth as critical to effective discipleship.

Church leaders believe that the church is quite weak in responding to the challenges and opportunities that exist for youth ministry. Much time is spent in activities and conference attending which leaves not enough time to reflect on the more important things in ministry, such as mentoring the younger generation ... giving them someone to look up to.

Today’s youth are living in media. Although youth are not caught up with the mainstream media, youth are connecting significantly with others via the internet. Tamil movies and serials are also having a big influence on Tamil youth values and behaviors – usually negatively. Spiritually, Tamil movies highlighting of idol gods present a challenge to the church. What are Christians doing to promote their God?

Coming out of this massive media onslaught is a hunger for reality and authenticity among today's youth. The church must seriously consider and use the benefits of the media to reach this generation.

Malaysian church leaders believe there is a less intimate relationship between today's younger and older generations. This is increasingly being fostered in society by absentee parents who endeavor to substitute material things for themselves. Parents in relationship with their teens are able to teach both the good and the bad.

Language within Malaysia society is an often-discussed matter. Within the church world, language has not been an issue. In fact, church leaders state that they believe language is less an issue today than it was 30 years ago, because the Church has not allowed language to divide it.

However, Tamil pastors believe that weak language skills – specifically proficiency in English and Tamil by youth and young adults – have hindered individual and community development. The inability of Tamil youth (20-30 year olds) to read and write in Tamil is a matter of concern for preserving Tamil culture. One thought is that lower English language skill levels may cause youth to suffer low self-esteem. It is recognized that many youth have abilities but live with an inferiority complex.

Two significant areas of challenge for both the Church and today's youth are the influence of the Internet and the call of materialism. Pastors believe that strengthening the Christian family is an essential priority for the Church. They also believe that the Church must address the future for the youth, educating them about their future, their responsibility and their spiritual walk as a child of God.

Youth Pastors and Youth Workers

There are high levels of positive feelings in youth pastors/workers toward the youth they serve, not only as individuals but also as a group. Creative, Passionate, Expressive, Daring, Talented are words they use to describe today's youth. At the same time they have an awareness that this generation tends to be materialistic, overly protected, self-centered and ... lost. This evaluation seems to imply that youth leaders are living in the real world and are truly connecting with the millennial generation.

Malaysian youth pastors/workers have stated that youth having a clear self-identity is a main issue that they must address in their ministry to today's youth. Because they don't know their own identity, youth don't know how to relate to others. They tend to be superficial in their relationships with others. Outward things, like fashion and music, become very important to them. In their quest to discover who they really are, they tend to make hasty decisions that often lead to wrong choices.

Malaysian youth also have relationship challenges. This begins at home with many youth lacking a good father image, a mentor in life, a respected role model to follow and emulate. It was shared that the typical Chinese father is not close to his children. Although this does seem to be improving compared to previous times, many youth still lack this level of love and affirmation. Often this detachment from the older generation manifests itself in generational misunderstandings of respect, etiquette, and interpersonal mannerisms that are interpreted as disrespect to elders.

Youth pastors recognize the influence media has on today's youth. The Internet has made it possible for young people to engage in a virtual world that is essentially separate from reality. Youth pastors are concerned because it seems youth struggle in real life situations because they are so engrossed in the virtual world of the Internet. Participants agree that the media heavily influences young people and it shapes their mindset. This seems to be a challenge youth pastors deal with on a regular basis.

Today's youth see the church as boring and often out of touch with them and their needs. Some of this is perpetuated by youth's entertainment expectations. They experience entertainment outside the church and bring these expectations into their church experience. For example, youth are more interested in sports and fashion than church activities. The key factor seems to be providing an environment where young people can have fun and experience a genuine encounter with God. Until that happens though perceptions about the church will continue. For instance, some youth view Christianity as just another religion and that it is not applicable to their daily lives. Add this to the growing gap between the older and younger generations and one can see why today's youth are uncomfortable with church. Furthermore, youth pastors report that the older generation is too critical of the younger generation. More needs to be done within the church in the area of teaching the adult congregation how to relate to Malaysian youth. Most youth pastors acknowledge that this is not only a problem with the congregation, but with the pastors as well. In some instances, pastors do not even allow "youth culture" into their churches. This type of mindset is a barrier that makes it difficult for the younger generation to engage in Christianity. The consensus among youth pastors seems to be that the church and its congregants need to do a better job accepting today's youth.

Youth pastors have a variety of ideas when it comes to reaching this generation. There are a lot of methods and tools that could be employed to make Christianity more appealing. Media, fashion, language and music are all tools that the church can use to get young people more interested in Christianity. That being said, while youth pastors recognize the importance of these methods, the consensus seems to be that there needs to be a shift in the way the church and its leaders relate to the youth. Malaysian youth need to feel like they are a part of the church and not some separate group. Youth ministry cannot be compartmentalized. It must be a key part of the church and encouraged from the lead pastor. Furthermore, some youth pastors believe the older generation and pastors need to be less critical and more accepting of the younger generation. Their talent and creativity could be a real asset to the church if channeled properly. For this to happen though more mentoring and role modeling needs to

take place from the top down. Add all this to God's desire to see the next generation transformed, and real change can happen in Malaysia.

Teachers

Compared to the time they were in school, teachers see a big difference in the different aspects of the education system now. Attention on particulars such as lesson content, skills development and discipline are not fully provided which might have an impact on the attitudes and behaviors shown by the Malaysian youth nowadays.

Teachers report that there is a gap that needs to be filled up when it comes to the knowledge level of today's youth. Some teachers have noticed that some youth possess no creativity and cannot properly interpret problems. Teachers agree that their students have weak imaginations and this may be a contributor to their lack of creativity.

Regarding family life, teachers report that the topic of whose role it is to discipline the children is becoming an issue. In the past, the parents carried out the role of discipline. Currently, parents seem lax in this area, and they do not want teachers to discipline their children as well. This is a growing problem in the education system because parents are not teaching their children to respect elders.

Teachers notice that technology has contributed to the gap between the older and younger generation. Today's youth are greatly influenced by the Internet and this is reflected in their day-to-day activities. The Internet and mobile phones have widened the gap between the younger and older generation. Some teachers find it difficult to stay up on all the trends and changes in technology because everything changes so quickly. That being said, teachers acknowledge that they need to be quick and adapt to these changes. Teachers also report that the current generation does not purchase newspapers and that they don't care about anything but the Internet. While teachers admit teenagers are good at Internet social skills, they are weak in real life relationships. Additionally, youth do not like to talk to teachers.

Regarding the education system, teachers report that students complain about the curriculum they have to learn. Some students feel that the subjects are not relevant and wish they could choose more interesting subjects. Furthermore, students ask questions about the amount of homework they receive. Some teachers believe that these misconceptions by students are because the media is projecting the wrong message. Another contributing factor to this could be young people's admiration of celebrities. In some way this creates a false reality. As a result, some youth expect life to be easy without needing to work hard. Ironically, some teachers did admit that school is focuses too much on academics and not character-building lessons.

Another growing concern among teachers is the issue of student's transition between Forms. In the past, students had to pass an exam to move from lower secondary to upper secondary. Recently, this rule changed and even though students still take the exam, they are allowed to advance Forms regardless of the grade they receive. The problem with this is that some

students enter upper secondary school unprepared for the classes they will encounter. Teachers report that the system will develop nicely if some filter is in place that would prevent students who are not ready from entering upper secondary school.

While in school, teachers find that many students are interested in sports. While not expressed by the youth themselves, teachers believe that sports activities in the school are a venue for students to vent out their emotions.

The issue of ethnicity and language is a key issue in the lives of Malaysian youth. This issue is especially relevant in the classroom. Teachers agree embracing one's ethnicity even by grouping together based on race is not a problem as long as students do not offend one another. Furthermore, teachers have to balance this issue by being sensitive to all groups. This is a challenge.

While teachers tend to view the influence of media on the youth as a negative, some teachers do see the value that media and technology can have in the classroom. Since media is a part of teenage life, teachers agree that they need to use computers to teach because of the advantages related to visual attraction and animation. This could impact the learning experience in a positive way and create curiosity and interest among Malaysian youth.

Parents

Parents expressed positive sentiments regarding their role of raising and bonding with their children. The challenge to keep learning and keep up with their children needs at every stage of growth was also acknowledged. Going to malls or eating out stands out as the most common family activity.

Teens' preoccupation with staying connected to friends through social networking (Facebook, MSN, handphones) presents a challenge to family time. TV is also a deterrent – even though the family may be under one roof, the focus is on the screen rather than one another. Excessive homework as well as religious activities and compulsory extra-curricular activities eat away at free time on week days. Urban parents also find it difficult to carve out family time during the week due to work responsibilities.

While parents recognize the influence of friends and secular media, they still see themselves as the primary influence in their children's lives by their example and teaching. Parents identified the importance of guarding their children's relationships, including friends and other adults who can speak into their lives, especially spiritual leaders. They agree that it is important to begin building strong relationships with their children and laying a moral foundation while the children are still young.

Another competing influence is the education system where much time and effort is spent on shaping the minds and values of the next generation. Parents expressed strong concern over the politicizing of education. There is also concern on the emphasis of academic knowledge without practical life application.

Parents are divided on whether it is appropriate to give their children freedom of religion. (Note: All parents in the focus groups were Christian.) Those who believe that their children should make their own choice also said that it was important for parents to lead by example and provide guidance.

When it comes to a child's freedom to choose their course of study and career, most parents agree that this is appropriate. This does not remove the parents from the decision making process, but puts them in the role of a guide, especially in the area of helping their children identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Students

Malaysian Indian youth identify social life as what they like best about school. Positive forms of interaction with peers are most frequently mentioned, such as sharing food during lunch, talking with friends, and participating in school sponsored sports activities. However, several teens identified negative aspects of social behavior as what they enjoy most about school: picking on younger students, bullying, playing pranks on teachers, gang fighting, and watching gang fights. Even with this, overall, Indian youth indicated that they are satisfied with their school life as it is.

Electronic media plays an important role in the life of Indian youth. The first choice for the majority of younger teens is the Internet. More than half of older youth who say the Internet is their favorite pastime use it for playing games and visiting social networking sites like FaceBook and YouTube. Older youth, however, are more likely to choose physical activities and sports over the Internet.

Other types of media that youth enjoy include watching television, Tamil movies and listening to music (Tamil songs). Most of the youth would find it hard to live without their hand phone as it helps them stay in touch with friends and family. However, they also admit that it has become a distraction to their studies.

Besides spending time in media-related activities, Malaysian Indian youth also enjoy sports and hanging out with friends. Some enjoy creative arts like dancing, drawing and music, while others liked hands on activities such as modifying motorbikes. Some will read during free time, but only for fun and if they are in the mood. The reading material youth find interesting are mainly light-reading materials – magazines, comics, manga, and fiction books.

The most common way for Indian youth to spend time with families is for meals and outings – visiting family, shopping, eating out, watching movies – and special occasions, i.e. festival celebrations. Some indicated that they hardly spend time with their parents because “they are very busy”. Almost all youth who made this comment also said they “feel lonely”.

Parents and family are an important source of advice for Indian youth. However, as youth grow older the advice from friends becomes more significant. Younger teens look to parents/family

the majority of the time to get advice in problem solving (about 2 out of 3 times). Older teens look more equally to both friends and family for advice. As youth mature the quest for independence in decision-making manifests itself in comments like, "I compare both advices of friends and family, and take the good advice that applies to the situation". Older youth acknowledge that their parents have "more experience" and "know what is best," but they also say that parents tend to "talk" while "friends listen more" and "understand us better". A few youth go to their teachers for advice, while a smaller number tend to hold things in and keep their problems to themselves.

While every age group has problems to resolve, there are some important differences in the types of problems younger Indian youth (13-15) and older (16-19) Indian youth commonly deal with. The majority of older teens (more than 80%) see interpersonal relationship issues among peers as their biggest problem. These challenges have to do with knowing how to resolve misunderstandings, jealousy and problems with a boyfriend/girlfriend.

Younger Indian youth deal mostly with issues related to racism and struggles with self-esteem due to teasing from others. This age group frequently mentions fighting over boyfriends/girlfriends. Others feel that teachers are unfair to them, giving lower marks than they deserve.

Significantly, the majority of older Indian youth, and some younger teens, believe that religion is important in providing meaning and guidance for their lives. Many believe that prayer is important to daily life. Older teens are more likely to state a prescribed religious tradition that must be followed in order to benefit from their religion.

Though younger youth indicate that religion plays a lesser role in the lives, some do take comfort in an amulet or the concept of many gods who they believe will protect them. Religion for them also tends to be more impersonal, with some saying that they are only involved because of their parents or for the personal gratification of being a part of a band. Many others say that religion plays no role in their lives.

Indian youth indicate their hopefulness that different religions can peacefully co-exist and learn from one another. They see this contingent on the commitment of all groups to treat one another with respect and equality. Religion was identified as positive in overcoming racial divides: "As a Christian I am able to have many good Chinese friends." However, a few believe that harmonious co-existence is impossible due to racial discrimination and attitudes of self-importance and superiority.

Section IV: Secondary Information³

Formerly an agricultural country playing catch-up with its neighbors, Malaysia has flourished into a thriving hub of information technology. Malaysia is now among the most advanced countries in Asia and now bears the face of progress in the region (Robles, 2008⁴). This change could have greatly influenced the attitudes, behaviors and beliefs of Malaysian youth. To supplement the work done in this project, presented below are findings from additional research conducted on the behaviors of Malaysian youth.

³ As derived from secondary sources & not from the primary information collected from the focus group conducted for this project

⁴ Robles, Jojo. (2008). Past is Present in Malaysia 51 Years after Independence. PRLog Free Press Release. <http://www.prlog.org/10103992-past-is-present-in-malaysia-51-years-after-independence.html>

Media

One of the most evident consequences of this advancement is the preoccupation of Malaysian youth with activities involving the use of Internet. According to a recent survey by global market research company Synovate, 40% of Malaysian youth between the ages of 8 to 24 said that the Internet keeps them up-to-date, and 43% said that Internet gives them useful

QUICK FACTS	
<i>General Information</i>	
Area	329, 750 square kilometers
Infant Mortality Rate	6.6 deaths/1, 000 live births
Life Expectancy at birth	71.8 years (Male); 76.3 years (Female)
Internet Users	8, 692, 100
<i>Population Information</i>	
Total Population	27, 730, 000
Population Growth Rate	2.4% per annum
Population in Peninsular Malaysia	21.2 million
Male Population	29, 844, 870 (49.2%)
Female Population	30, 762, 077 (50.8%)
% of population that is 14 years old or younger	32%
% of population that is 15-59 years old	62.9%
% of population that is 60 years old or older	4.8%
<i>Population by Ethnic Groups</i>	
Malays and other Bumiputera	65%
Chinese	26%
Indians	4.0
Others (unlisted ethnic groups)	1%
<i>Education</i>	
% of Adults Literacy	88.7%
% of persons aged 6-24 not attending school	-
<i>Religion Affiliations (of total population)</i>	
Islam	60.4%
Buddhism	19.2%
Christianity	9.1%
Hindu	6.3%
Confucianism/Taoism/Traditional Chinese Religion	2.6%
Others	2.4%
<i>Information Sources: National Census 2000, Department of Statistics Malaysia. Census of Population and Housing Malaysia 2000, Dept of Statistics Malaysia.</i>	

information while 45% said that they plan to use the Internet more over other media⁵.

⁵ ADOIMagazine. <http://www.prlog.org/10103992-past-is-present-in-malaysia-51-years-after-independence.html>

Apart from blogging, social networking has also occupied the online activity list of Malaysian youngsters with over one third (38%) reading other people's social network profile pages. Thirty-one percent update their own profile pages while 44% take the initiative to read other people's social network profile pages as well as update their own⁶.

Reinforcing their love for the TV, 33% of the 906 people polled said they could not live without TV, 19% chose the internet, 18% said their mobile phones were what they couldn't live without, 2% said newspaper and 1% radio. However, 45% said they would use the Internet more often compared to the TV (22%), mobile phones (11%), newspapers (7%), radio (3%) and magazines (2%). Malaysian youths were also discovered to be active bloggers as 48% spent some of their time blogging and 38% said they read blogs and 22% read blogs and made comments on them⁷.

Education

Malaysia's national education policy has been formulated in the context of the country's vision of reaching developed nation status by 2020. The education system has been reformed to ensure the development of a highly educated and skilled as well as strongly motivated professional workforce. In keeping with its objective of providing highly skilled human resources necessary for the development of the nation, the Government has accorded high priority to education. The Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010) allocated RM50.6 billion⁷⁴ over five years to the education and training, an increase of RM 39.5 billion from the Seventh Five Year Plan (1995-2000)⁸.

The national education system, as stipulated in the Education Act of 1996, encompasses pre-school, primary, secondary, post-secondary and higher education. Pre-school consists of one to two years and primary school comprises grades one to six. Secondary school is divided into two levels: lower secondary, which lasts for three years (four years in the case of students who take a Remove Class⁹); and upper-secondary, which is two years in duration. Postsecondary school

⁶ Eusouff, Ray. Survey: 45% of Malaysian Youth Use Internet over Other Media. Yoyooh.com.. 2009.

⁷ Malaysian Youth Like Web, Love TV. <http://www.marketresearchworld.net/index>.

⁸ Data for the Ninth Five Year Plan were from "Higher education key to developed status: Malaysia" IslamOnline.net at < <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news.php?id=29164>>. Data for the Seventh Five Year Plan were from ESCAP (2002), p.1.

⁹ Data for the Ninth Five Year Plan were from "Higher education key to developed status: Malaysia" IslamOnline.net at < <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news.php?id=29164>>. Data for the Seventh Five Year Plan

lasts for two years and prepares students for higher education in colleges, polytechnics, universities and other institutions of higher learning. The national education system has three categories of educational institutions: those established and maintained by the Ministry of Education; those that receive financial aid from the Government; and those that are established and maintained by private organizations¹⁰.

Information technology has also been incorporated in education. The Ministry of Education has undertaken an initiative to establish a Smart School programme, which comprises schools equipped with computers to promote information technology among students¹¹.

Section V: Raw Data from Malaysia Discovery Focus Groups

Compiled Notes for Evangelical Leaders and Pastors

OPENING : WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE TOP CURRENT EVENT IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK ?

- National
 - Politics in this country (2x)
 - Sibü government elections
 - Subsidy issues in Malaysia (certain domestic products)

were from ESCAP (2002), p.1.

¹⁰ Understanding Youth Issues in Selected Countries in the Asian and Pacific Region. 2007. United Nations. NY.

¹¹ Youth in Malaysia: A Review of the Youth Situation and National Policies and Programmes. 2002. United Nations. NY

- Rights of people
- 1Malaysia
- Malaysia Communications and Multi Media Commissions (MCMC) will give 1 million laptops to poor students and build 1000 more telecommunication towers to increase broadband penetration in the nation.
- Some or only few people will get richer – a lot of government projects are just a channel for corruption for a few to get rich
- Just gives an impression but will not be followed up
- Urban poor students can have access to information – this will just expose the misdeeds of the government
 - Avenue for students to vent out their anger (against the government online)
- Information without guidance and oversight – this will soon lead to vices
 - Discipline/Guidance cannot be given by the teachers because they are absent
- Deal with moral and language issues, deal with what is most important
- Global
 - Oil spill in Gulf of Mexico – environmental concerns

INTRODUCTION : HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN MINISTRY ?

- 10-30 years

TRANSITION : WHAT TWO WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE MALAYSIAN YOUTH TODAY ?

- Sheltered – compared to older generation (of 30 years ago)
 - Spoiled
 - Where does the money go? – this is after spending much for a child’s course and then nothing happened
- Lack of discipline
 - -Making wrong decisions
- Narcissistic – what’s in it for me (WIIFM)?
- Rebellious
- Talented

KEY AREA 1 : HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE INTEREST LEVEL OF MALAYSIAN YOUTH IN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY ?

- Declining – they’re just looking for comfort and what is just done for them.
 - Materialism – no focus on religion

- Parents' pre-occupation with education – nothing else is more important, not so much on what is God's will
- WIIFM (What's In It For Me ?) – because of internet ; anything that will make them look best and popular
- Youth are concerned with their well being rather than spiritual life
 - No sense of spirituality
- Influenced with the teachings of self-proclaimed gurus
- Religion is another part of life

KEY AREA 2: WHAT DO YOU SEE AS HINDRANCES TO YOUTH BEING DRAWN TO CHURCH AND FAITH IN CHRIST?

- Hard to find emerging young leaders:
 - In our time, being a leader begins at 20, now it's hard to do something like that; it's hard to find Joshuas now.
 - There's no way to pass on the baton – this is a sad trend
- Culture shift toward materialism
 - The culture now says education is the basis for good life.
 - Church's idea – if you become a Christian, God will bless you. = Prosperity Gospel
 - Influenced with worldly material (PC, Facebook, movies, other entertainment)
- Weak discipleship in church
 - Nowadays, the church is not strong in basic discipleship. No follow up activities. Christians are growing up without the right foundation.
 - Wide knowledge but no depth. We think we know a lot.
 - Lack of interest in digging into the Word
- Parents themselves are the hindrance because they protect children from hardships of life making them spiritually weak
 - Unspiritual and not disciplined parents
- Church is boring and not catering enough programs for youth
 - This generation is going worldly because the church is not giving them much to come out of worldly things.

KEY AREA 3: WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO MAKE CHRISTIANITY RELEVANT TO THIS GENERATION AND ENCOURAGE DISCIPLESHIP?

- Start before teenage years
 - It's too late to start with teenagers, we should start very early, and we should start with the young ones. Teenagers are already set.
 - For example, teenage girls will trade sex for RM5. So there is really a need to start with the younger ones.
 - To be effective reach the younger generations
- Emphasize basics of faith
 - Go back to basics – prayer, word, and discipleship. Church became more complicated and trying to make it more sophisticated (more trendy, acceptable to the generation now) (2x)
 - Other parents are concerned with well being, we need to be more pro-active (spiritually)
 - Discipleship program is essential
 - Do youth orientated programs
 - The church must be ready to answer question of the youths.
- The pastor :
 - must stop attacking this generation from pulpit
 - must come down and minister to youth as a friend
- Proactive parenting
 - Youth spend only 2 hours a week in the church. A lot of work needs to be done on weekdays. Where is God during this time? Where are the parents?
 - Parents should do connecting with their children to bring them to a new level.
 - Bad habits are picked up more than the good ones.

KEY AREA 4 : WHAT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU SEE FOR YOUTH MINISTRY COMPARED TO 10 YEARS AGO ?

- 10 yrs ago the church emphasized the word and prayer but now it is focused on other matters.
- Change in family dynamics/priorities
 - Before, it is just one parent who would work but now it is both = reasons for lack of connection
 - Dinner & lunch time could be an interaction time with children.
- Youth leaders themselves need help
- Internet networking

- Opportunities :
 - Social networking – you can touchbase with them
- Challenges:
 - Youth worker thinks that if they're doing facebook they're doing work
 - Less relational
- People are 5-dimensional beings : sight, sound, touch, speak, etc.
 - You know when to pull back and to release
 - Young people are more easily drawn to uncleanness of the net.
- Uncleanness is a very powerful tool of the devil.

What is the church's response ? (Follow-up question)

- Quite weak
 - There's no time to sit down and reflect (on doing the more important things in ministry)
 - Influence of big churches over small churches – many conferences to attend
 - Playing the numbers game
- If church will take care of the family, then society will take care of itself (because family is the basic unit of the society)
- Need for mentoring within the church world
 - To mentor the younger generation – there's a big gap between the older generation and the new generation (a gap)
 - More personal touch is needed/important to get the people together
 - Go down to the ground more (reach the younger ones, go back to the basics)
 - Youth don't have someone to mentor them
 - They don't have someone to look up to

KEY AREA 5 : WHAT ROLE DOES MEDIA PLAY IN THE LIVES OF YOUTH TODAY ?

- Youth are living in media
 - Social networking – youth connect through this
 - Youth are not caught up with mainstream media
 - Tamil movies are highlighting their idol gods. What are Christians doing to promote their God?

- Most of the Tamil youth carry strong influence from Tamil movies/serials. Majority of the Tamil movies/serials have set a bad example for Tamil youth.
- Changing trends – hunger for reality and authenticity. They can spot a fake.
 - Because youth see no substitute for social networking, they are captured (trapped) in the vicious net
 - Christian must seriously use the benefits of media to reach out to this youth.
- Political awareness – flight or fight responses

KEY AREA 6 : WHAT IS YOUR OPINION REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE YOUNGER AND OLDER GENERATION IN MALAYSIA ?

- Less intimate
 - Absentee parents – compensating the absence through material things
 - Parents must go down to the level of their children to reach out to them.
 - There is a big generation gap between old and young. Someone has to fill in the gap to minister to the youth.
 - Missing the point of personal connection (impartation) because of internet/technology – they miss the way it works
 - Young lad in tears because he saw friends in FB having a good time while he is having a lousy time. His pastor talked to him and connected with him. The lad has given up video playing and he has now gone back to church.
- Many teachers, not so many followers (Paul’s message to Corinth cited)
 - There’s no strong follow up done for young people
 - Parents must go down to the level of their children to reach out to them.
 - Parents must able to teach the youth the good and bad.

KEY AREA 7 : HOW DOES LANGUAGE IMPACT NATIONAL HARMONY AND UNITY IN THE CHURCH ?

- No problem in the language ; it’s not an issue (2)
- There’s no division; they are more united now compared to before (30 years ago)
- Church has not allowed the language to divide us
- The Tamil community is left behind in the development of the country.
- The inability to read and write in English and Tamil have reduced significantly
- Tamil youth from the age 20-30 are not able to read and write Tamil properly.

CONCLUSION : AMONG ALL THINGS THAT WERE DISCUSSED, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT OR WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU ?

- Influence of the net – affecting this generation and the next to come. It can even intensify , it can even be a huge challenge to the church.
- Materialism – one of the issue this generation faces
- Strengthening the Christian family – it is the root cause
 - Surface problem (materialism) → surface cause →root problem (structure of the family) →root cause (disregard the priestly and prophetic role in the family)
 - Go back to Paul, be more international in spiritual fathering because misbehaved children often due to absentee fathers.
- Tamil youth are suffering low self esteem, many have ability but have an inferiority complex
- The church is overly concerned about the spiritual life of a youth. The church must address the future of the youth
 - Educate the youth about their future, their responsibility and their spiritual walk as a child of God

Compiled Notes For Youth Pastors

OPENING: WHAT DID YOU DO IN LAST WEEK’S YOUTH MEETING?

- Outdoor sports activities
 - Young people are encouraged to bring a friend along. The purpose is to evangelize. One of the activities is playing Frisbee.
 - Team games. They can bring along their friends. Some of those who came for the games will be back for service.
- Visitation
 - Send the youth out for visitations to various homes like old folks’ home, handicapped children home, mentally challenged people’s home and the hospital. The purpose is for the youth to learn to care and relate to the people ; to build bridges. Instead of getting money from church, they pool their money themselves to get some gifts to the homes they are visiting. The young people are split into groups for the visitation.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT BEING A YOUTH PASTOR?

- Seeing change in the young people’s life; transformation. There is satisfaction.
- Easier to lead than adults, struggle to bring out their energy, need to harness their energy. Need to see lives saved and transformation. Not just a mundane church.
- Able to build the church with the young people. Would like to see the young people rising up. Can see the Gospel brings out in a new method.

- Getting to know all types of people. It is a challenge. In the other hand can see their creativity too.
- Believe in building the next generation. A person makes the most important decision during their young age (focus on studies or mess it up for their future). If they do it right the first time, they have a good future, but they are not in the position to make such, youth leaders are there to lead them and teach them. As a guidance.

TRANSITION: WHAT ARE TWO WORDS YOU WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE THIS GENERATION OF YOUTH?

- POSITIVE
 - Passionate (2)
 - Creative (2)
 - Music
 - Color
 - Expressive
 - Talented
 - Daring
 - Adventure seeker
 - Multi tasking
 - Media-oriented
- NEGATIVE
 - Lost (2)
 - Materialistic
 - Too contented and comfortable, decisions made for them by parents
 - Overly-protected
 - Self centered

KEY AREA 1: WHAT IS THE MAIN ISSUE OR PROBLEM THAT MALAYSIAN YOUTH DEAL WITH TODAY?

- Self identity
 - They do not know their own identity. (2)
 - They don't know their identity thus they don't know how to relate to others.
 - They are being superficial in their relationship with others. It's like putting on mask when going out with their friends.
 - Fashion and music become very important to them. They lost touch in relationship.
- They are making wrong choices and hasty decisions
- Relationship challenges:
 - Lack of fatherhood or mentors, role models
 - Barrier acceptance, older generation view the youth culture as "weird"
 - Typical Chinese family where the father is not close to the children, but overall is improving compared to previous times
 - The youth do not know how to interact and respect the older generation due to Internet culture that lacks physical etiquette, ie. Mannerism and greeting people

KEY AREA 2: How do Malaysian youth see church and its influence on them?

- Boring (3)
 - Since they want to be entertained, they expect the same entertainment and wow factor from the church. They are thinking what they can get out of it. This is applicable to Christian and non Christian youth.
 - Very holy therefore boring. Expect the church to tell them to do the right thing. They know what advice they are going to get if they ask the pastors.
- Out-of-touch
 - Just another religion.
 - Too spiritual.
 - As they search for answers, they don't feel the church in general is applicable to their life.
 - Mindset of church as a "holy" place for "good" people only, therefore neglecting the youth who are lost
- Church leadership
 - God is raising up leaders that provides message that are more relevant to their life. (2)
 - Elders are too critical
 - Church is not preparing the adult congregation to connect with the younger generation
 - Church is performance-driven, eg. School grades. Dealing with the surface and not inside

KEY AREA 3: HOW IS THE CHURCH CULTURE KEEPING PACE WITH THE WORLD AROUND IT, ESPECIALLY YOUTH CULTURE?

- GOOD
 - Better than it used to be and slowly getting better and more relevant.
 - Relatable but still some distance off. The method of presenting the gospel to them is more acceptable to them. They want the church to be contemporary.
 - Keeping well with the pace with the culture. The church has youth meetings with contemporary songs. Last time it used to be just psalm and hymn. In Ipoh the church is found to be keeping with the pace. But we need to build relationship with them.
 - Intentionally raise up spiritual fathers/mentors and elders and pastors need to be role models.
 - Is the church meeting this experiential need? The awareness is there, more so in urban churches, but non-urban churches are less aware of youth issues, e.g. may youth in non-urban churches may not even have an e-mail address yet
- OFF
 - A lot more to learn about teen likings and what they want. There is still a room to explore. Some pastors still do not allow some youth culture in the church, there are

still some barriers. There are still people who have old mindsets that are far from the youth. (5)

- Those who are too long in church but not growing tend to see the religious things and stop the church from moving forward.
- Urban churches are aware but still discovering how to, or what methods to employ. The older generation needs to be more accepting of the young people, more trusting and not “limiting” them.
- Church must set boundaries and not boxes, boxes is labeling and label divides -> issue of acceptance

KEY AREA 4: HOW DOES PEER PRESSURE AND MEDIA INFLUENCE YOUTH TODAY?

- MEDIA:
 - Anything that gives them the source of identity like YouTube (the youth can have the freedom to post anything online and can be popular or be the overnight sensation) or Facebook,(because they can post anything online and like to see whether any friends like their thoughts) (3)
 - The media influences the peers and the peers in return influence the youth.
 - All sorts of media.
- They are living in the virtual world instead of the real world. (5)
- Give them false hope. (3) Young people are like consumers. Media makes them happy. However, they also drain out the young people creativity. The X generation is much more creative than the current Generation (generation Y or millennium generation). The young people are just there waiting to be serve. For example, waiting for new games to be out (PSP). The X generation is creating the games for them. It makes them less creative.
- Engross in the virtual world, they could not take the hurt of rejection in the real world whereas in the virtual world, they can handle the rejection.
 - The media really shapes their mindset. They even celebrate birthdays online.
- Friends are about media. If they want to know a friend they need to get connected with the current media.
- There are youth festivals (e.g. Youth '10) that are media-filled events and many of the youth outside the church attend. Church is disconnected from the outside world.

KEY AREA 5: HOW WOULD YOU COMPARE THE INTEREST OF YOUTH IN THE CHURCH AND CHURCH ACTIVITIES COMPARED TO SPORTS OR FASHION?

- CLOSE:
 - Previously church and others do not mix, but now everything is inseparable.
- MID:
 - Partially. Those who are serving will talk more about church. Youth generally need to know about their purpose and then they will be more inclined to the church. Those with purpose will live differently.
- FAR:
 - Very far apart, more are interested in sports and fashion

- The world has more to offer than the church. Church is only on the weekends.
- Church youth should be encouraged to attend festivals outside the church, church needs to open up
- A God encounter:
 - If they have a God encounter, they will talk about God. Without God, they will talk about other stuff.
 - Normally young people get together; they don't talk about the church. But some do get together and talk about the church for instance after the youth camp. Once they have a God encounter, they will be inclined to talk about church. In Ipoh, it is still more about others than church. Unless the church do something.

CONCLUSION: GIVEN THE THINGS WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT HERE, WHAT TOOLS OR METHODS DO YOU THINK MIGHT HELP MINISTRY TO THIS GENERATION BE MORE EFFECTIVE?

- Church need to embrace the 7 beliefs. Tools will be the media. When the church stop being afraid about the world that they can be more efficient in getting the youth. They need to upgrade the media in the church to catch their attention.
- Get young people involve in the Work of God. They can relate to God and be more interested. An avenue to make God relevant in their life.
- Have a church without walls; take the church out there. It is more than that in the church. Bring kingdom impact. When the church move together to impact the world, the world will ask question and be interested.
- The church needs to open door for the people to express. There are lots of talents and they need to discover and channel the creativity in the church. Learn to love and care for people, not just work on the church appearance, but also need to educate the people that love and care is important.
- 3 things, language, music and fashion. Tools and methods can help to be effective, but cannot sustain the ministry. God himself is needed to make it last. Everything is just a tool to get the youths attention, but God makes them stay on. (3)
- God given us the gifts, need to be bold to apply it, it will makes the difference. The world has the tools, but the church has the tools and ht supernatural. Need to raise up a generation that stands up and be bold.
- Mindset is that youth are the responsibility of the youth pastors and youth workers, hence those not "in the ministry" do not get involved in connecting and mentoring. Senior pastor needs to play an important role in connecting with the youth, being a role model to other adults.
- Youth ministry cannot be compartmentalized, need to be part of the church
- Need to focus on the youth, be open minded
- Youth ministry is about youth reaching out, not come on Saturday and "sing some songs".
- All the generation must come together for missions, not each ministry (youth, women, men, etc.) doing its own thing
- The older generation needs to come down to their level and accept the youth, only then can effective teaching happen

- Pertaining to senior pastor, it's easy for him to hire youth workers to reach young people but that is not enough, the entire church and all resources need to be channeled to have youth in mind.

Compiled Notes for Teachers

OPENING: HOW DID YOU DECIDE ON TEACHING AS A PROFESSION ?

- It was not a first choice course.
 - Did not chose to be a teacher. His choice is whether to be a police or being a temporary teacher. However his passion was built up being a temporary teacher and finally become a teacher for over 20 yrs.
 - No plans to be aducator, previous work in administrative work within a college. Started with counseling student (career or course). Providing solution to the students. Found satisfaction there and become an educator later.
- Decided on it while still in school/university
 - Decided to beome a teacher in 2nd yr of University, never think of it previously. Have the passion.
 - Decided in form 6. Like the relationship of teacher and student, can help the student change for good in life.

INTRODUCTION : HOW IS TEACHING DIFFERENT TODAY THAN WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL ?

- Knowledge Content
 - Big gap in knowledge, more knowledge based previously, but currently not much knowledge base. Void of knowledge, the beauty of language is taken away and just structure only, no literature.
- Skills Development
 - The system is design such a way to give importance in exam only. There is no creativity and students can't intepret problem. (2)
 - Without communication skill, the students can't approach the world upon graduation.
 - Currently is more spoon feeding, the system do not train students to think, only memorize.
- Discipline
 - The responsibility of disciplining children previously is from the parents, but currently parents do not do that. Student complain about teacher using the cane. Currently, parents want teacher to teach, but do not allow them to discipline their children. Furthermore, parents nowadays do not teach children to respect the elders.

- In comparison with the government system, the teachers can discipline the students, whereas in the international school system, caning is not allowed. However, he found that without caning, other forms of disciplinary actions can be used, such as warning, counselling, positive feedback and etc. He found that it is equally effective. (Commented by a formally international school teacher)
- Think punishment should be enforced from 11-15 yrs old. Not over 15yrs old.
- Punishment by caning is taking the easy way out for the educators giving discipline.
- It is commented that the above methods can only apply to certain students. (Commented by a government school teacher)
- School Atmosphere
 - In secondary school, the study environment is not conducive, just story telling or do nothing at all. In college, he finds himself having struggles because of the change in environment. Environment is able to make people do their best and be more hardworking

TRANSITION : WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS THAT HAVE CREATED THIS CHANGE ?

NOTE : DIDN'T GET TO ASK THE QUESTION

KET AREA 1 : WHAT IS THE MAIN ISSUE OR PROBLEM THAT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS DEAL WITH ?

- Education System
 - Problem not created by educators, but by the institution. The policy was enforced, creating contradiction among colleagues. Need to accept even do not agree to it. The conflict between academic and management is evident.
 - There are problems in the education system, as everything is focused in paper. He thinks that the students have to learn to think out of the box.
 - Do not encounter behavioral problem with student. He treats students as friends. His way of approaching them makes them respect him.
 - Blame the system and not the students. (3)
 - Malaysia have SRP previously. When the students cannot pass through SRP, they will not be able to continue their education. However, with the new system, PMR replaced SRP and it allows all students to pass through Form 3, and therefore all students will end their education in Form 5. This system let those who are unprepared to enroll to other courses and this creates a problem. Those who enroll in college do not have the quality to handle the course. On the other hand, foreign people fill the current low positions because the local people do not want to fill those positions. The system will develop nicely if there is filter. Every one becomes ambitious.
- Character Building

- Think school is academic-based; teachers are neglecting character building in school. (2).

KEY AREA 2: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE YOUNGER AND OLDER GENERATION IN MALAYSIA?

- Communication gap
 - Children do not like to talk to teachers but friends. They are good at Internet on social skills, not in reality and relationships. (3)
 - Current generation does not buy newspaper, all only using facebook. There is a huge gap created by the Internet and mobile phone. It destroys the English language. (3)
 - Young generation does not care about anything but Internet. (3)
 - Think that there are many topics that can't share with the younger generation, as he does not know what young people are talking. The younger generation is always talking about fashion and technology. Young people are not interested with what he says. Young generation is too narrow on understanding of technology. If technology is link to dollar, young people will be interested. Materialistic. (One does not agree with this).
- Lack of respect
 - People are not respecting each other; young people are not doing that. It is on newspaper everyday that students are victimizing teachers when they discipline them. To respect people is one solution to this problem.

KEY AREA 3: WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON THE YOUTH CULTURE?

- Internet
 - Feels this is a good factor. (2)
 - Facebook and you tube create curiosity.
- Role model
 - Follow people that they admire. (2)
 - Tend to follow the wrong people. Benchmarking is off for the young people. (2)
 - Everyone is searching for something such as his or her identity. It is lost now.
- Do not understand the trend of the youth.

KEY AREA 4: WHAT COMMENTS DO YOU RECEIVE FROM STUDENTS ABOUT THE CURRENT EDUCATION SYSTEM?

- Complaints

- The student asked, “Why need to study so much, why do we have homework, why could we not select interesting subject?” (2)
- Always ask why need to study the subjects that are not relevant to them. (2)
- Students are doing what the teachers want. Need to balance the system. They are confused. Students are asking why they are studying subjects that are not relevant to them. We need to give students way to express and we try to help them out. Need to listen to them, not just dismiss them.
- Confusion
 - Movies project that college life is free, but in real life it is different. Influence of the media and projecting the wrong message. Students find that the real college life is not what they imagine it to be. They want life to be easy and less of hard work. (2)
 - They do not the have purpose of the subject to their life. First of all they do not know why they are enrolled in the college.
- Lack of choices of programmes (subject) offered in Malaysia.

KEY AREA 5: HOW DOES ETHNICITY AND LANGUAGE AFFECT YOUR CLASSROOM DYNAMICS?

- Positive (from the teacher’s point of view)
 - Find that it is interesting to work with other racial group. He find that working with other races educators allow him to learn things about other culture. As he is from pure Malay school until graduation.
- Negative
 - First year students are good, but second year they start to group together according to ethnicity. In the third year, there is a larger gap. Students start to be racial, even in their comments to others. When the educators ask them to make a group and they will stick to their own ethnic.
 - Do not dwell on it or else it might bring out the problem. (Malay Muslim Educator).
 - Chinese stick to Chinese and Indian stick to Indians. She can’t see togetherness in the class. She encouraged them to communicate with each other but doesn’t work. She arranged for them to sit mixing around, but once she left, they will sit back according to their race.
- Challenging
 - Commented that this issue is only faced in Malaysia. (3) Overall, if they group together according to their ethnicity, it is alright, as they are in they comfort zone, as long as they do not offend each other. Teachers need to be sensitive and not take sides. It is a challenge. (2).

- The student needs to have comfort zone within them.

KEY AREA 6 : WHAT ROLE SHOULD MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY HAVE IN THE CLASSROOM WITH TODAY'S YOUTH ?

- Positive
 - It is part and parcel in the teenage life. Chalk is gone; there is smart board now. Computers and projectors are being common. (2)
- Negative
 - Student is weak in imagination, need to use computer to teach, there is visual attraction and animation. It creates impact. (4)
 - Need to improve on this.
 - Days of book and writing are gone.
 - Do not agree to bring technology to the class, as it is rigid and limited. The students need to be brought out for field trips and practical works. It should bring better effect. [However, this is limited by cost -commented by another person].

KEY AREA 7 : WHAT EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SEEM TO INTEREST STUDENTS MOST ?

- Sports
 - Sport is the majority. Venue for the student to vent out. (3)
- School – organized activities
 - Joining uniform bodies (e.g. Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade, Red Cross, Clubs) gives scores for scholarship applications. In short, the students need to join the uniform body in order for them to have enough scores to look good in their application for university later on. One the other hand, It is the teacher who leads the club that might cause the problem. Teacher in charge or curriculum society do not know how to play. For eg: Ping Pong Club. It is hard to find coach. Not having the right people for the right job, it will be a disaster. (3).
 - When the school tries to get someone to the activities organized, it will end up with the same person joining it.
- What the students want
 - Can't force the students. (2).
 - It should be what the student wants, they have their groups, it might not be Internet, anything that is not forced on to them. Should ask the students what they want. When he gave the students a choice, they formed a hobby club. He added that extra curriculum activities should balance with the student's needs and what school could offer. He even have rocket club formed by students.

CONCLUSION : FROM WHAT WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT, WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ?

- We need to get to their curiosity, to create an interest for the students.
- Think that we are in the cross road and there might be a generation gap. It is a dynamic world and people can't keep up with it. There is no stability. We need to look at the whole picture and need to have balance. Need to be quick to adapt.
- Community should not expect educators to keep up with the new things, as this will create pressure on the educators.
- All of us are criticizing, but it is because we want to change the future. It is good but need to have a way to amend the problem, a solution. To change or follow the system. But need time to change.
- Follow the rules, but need to maintain the quality.

Compiled Notes for 16-19 Years Old

OPENING: WHAT DID YOU DO LAST FRIDAY?

- Stayed Home (6)
 - Didn't go anywhere (3)
 - House Chores (2)
 - Watch TV
- Church's Meetings (4)
- Sports (2)
- Computers (2)
 - Play computer games (DOTA)
 - Online/Internet
- Shopping (2)
- Working (2)
- Study
- Wesak Day Parade

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL HOLIDAY?

- Outings (9)
 - Outing or visiting places (5)
 - Vacation with friends (3)
 - Ask youth leaders to organize trip for outing (2)
- Studies (2)
 - Revision (extra classes in school)
 - Prepare assignments (college students)
- Taking motorbike license

- Football competition
- Work

TRANSITION: HOW LONG WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT YOUR HANDPHONE?

- Can't live without it (14)
 - Not able to live without a phone (8)
 - A day or less (2)
 - 2-3 days (2)
 - 1 week
 - 2-3 weeks
- Can live without it (11)
 - Not a problem (7)
 - 3 months (2)
 - 2 months
 - More than 1 year
 - Not allowed to have a handphone until 15 years old
- Other related comments
 - With phone, cannot focus on studies due to SMSes and incoming calls (2)
 - It is important to keep in touch with friends/family to get updates (2)
 - Mom took phone away due to exams

KEY AREA 1: WHICH TYPE OF MEDIA APPEALS TO YOU THE MOST?

- Internet (11)
 - Chat with friends (3)
 - Youtube (2)
 - Games (2)
 - Can search for all videos/news
 - Can do business-planning to do own business in the future
 - Facebook
 - Regarding studies in college

KEY AREA 2: WHAT ARE THE FAVOURITE FREE TIME ACTIVITIES FOR YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS?

- Physical Activities/Sports (14)
 - Playing football – enjoy with friends (5)
 - Playing badminton (3)
 - Swimming (2)
 - Futsal
 - Hill climbing – cooling and releases tension
 - Motorbike riding or racing
 - Fishing
- Socializing with friends (12)
 - Eating and hanging around (6) – release tension and share problems
 - Joking with friends (4)
 - Eating at McDonald's – can be online and hang out with friends at the same time

- Ragging on younger students
- Electronic Media (7)
 - Internet (2)
 - Meeting in a port and have a chat
 - Video Games/PS2
 - Watching TV
 - Listening to music
- Time with family (2)
 - Spending time with family
 - Gardening with family
- Shopping
- Drawing
- Mechanics – repair and modify motorbikes
- Reading novels

KEY AREA 3: WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO WITH YOUR FAMILY?

- Sharing/Talking (12)
 - Eat together (6)
 - Talking to dad – joking, watch TV, share problems with dad or family problems (we are a happy family).
 - Share feelings to mom because not close to dad – dad too busy with work
 - Allows us to help friends by sharing their problem with family and getting advice – different experience solves different problems.
 - By sharing own problems and friends problem with family
 - House chores
 - Playing games with family (Monopoly), gets closer with family members
- Outings (18)
 - Celebration – festival (6)
 - Shopping (4)
 - Go to movies (3)
 - Attending a function
 - Visit grandparents
 - Swimming in the sea
 - Picnic
 - Go to temple
- Not close to parents because they are very busy – feel lonely (2)
- Don't do much together

KEY AREA 4: HOW SATISFIED/HAPPY ARE YOU WITH THE WAY “THINGS” ARE IN YOUR SCHOOL?

- Positive (16)
 - Enjoy school (7)
 - Happy because friends are there (6)

- Able to share problems with teachers and friends
- I'm a happy person because I come from a happy family. Going to school keeps me happy because I keep my friends and teachers happy too.
- Teachers like me because I'm good in sports and teachers are helpful.
- Not so interested in studies and school activities (6)
- Negative (5)
 - Fighting with one another (2)
 - Teasing
 - Ragging on the younger ones
 - Like school a lot and study, but not doing well due to family problems
- Like playing jokes (4)

KEY AREA 5: WHAT IS THE MAIN ISSUE OR PROBLEM THAT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS DEAL WITH?

- Peer Relationships (23)
 - Misunderstanding and jealousy between pillows (10)
 - Boy and Girl relationship (8)
 - Others being egoistic
 - Revenge
 - Face problems when one does better than another because of jealousy in studies
 - Bad habits – friends involved in drug dealings
 - Have a club, join the club (SIC – South Indian Club)
- Parents do not understand me well
- No proper job
- No problems

KEY AREA 6: WHEN YOU HAVE A PROBLEM, WHO DO YOU LOOK TO FOR ADVICE?

- Friends (7)
 - Best friend (3)
 - Friends (3)
 - Friends first, then family
- Family (7)
 - Mother
 - Father
 - Brother
 - Grandparents (closer to grandparents than to parents)
 - Own self first, then family
- Own self (2)
- Teachers
- God

Why?

- Friends

- Parents tend to talk about all other problems, but friends listen more than talk back.
- They understand us better than parents and easy to talk to.
- Parents
 - They have more experience, give reasons to actions taken and are helpful.
 - Compare advice of friends and family, then take the good advice that applies best to situation
 - Father because he knows the best for me
 - Family because they can advise well
- Teachers have a lot of experience and are open-minded.

KEY AREA 7: IN WHAT WAY DO YOU LOOK TO RELIGION TO GUIDE YOU?

- Prayer and guidance (19)
 - To make right choices by knowing the difference between the good and bad (15)
 - Guidance for problems and decision through prayer (9)
 - Without religion life is empty.
 - Trust in God that problems will be solved
 - Get to learn about the world, a guide to walk with God
 - The Islam way, we wash face to relax then pray to get peace because we know when we pray, God will help.
- No expectations (3)
 - Not need religion
 - There are a lot of good things in religion but I don't follow them, I don't believe in them
 - Never pray
- To get satisfaction and peace during hard time
- Punjabi/Sikh have 10 rules to follow (85% of teaching and 15% of self implication)

KEY AREA 8: HOW DO YOU THINK IT IS POSSIBLE FOR DIFFERENT RELIGIONS TO CO-EXIST IN HARMONY?

- Equality/Respect (10)
 - Respect each other (5)
 - Be friends without looking at race or status and treat all equally (3)
 - Can learn different things from different races or religions, so treat all equally
 - Get along the way we do together during National Service
- Can if everybody thinks in the same way (8)
- Negative (7)
 - Can never get along (2)
 - Everyone thinks their religion is right and important
 - Satu Malaysia (1Malaysia) doesn't work
 - Malay and Indian can communicate, but Chinese and Malay find it harder to communicate.

- Chinese are not so friendly because they think they are a bit high standard, not able to communicate properly due to most Chinese are from Chinese schools.
 - Don't know if it is really possible
- Avoid sensitive topics (3)
 - Don't curse or discriminate, but have understanding
 - Don't malign other religions and say things that make others angry
- I would like religions to co-exist 200%

CONCLUSION: FROM WHAT WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT, WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU AS THE MOST IMPORTANT?

- Can talk openly and share a lot of things among us (2)
- Achievement in life – success in self and academic, it is important for the people and country (2)
- We know whom we can share our problems with
- Relationships
 - Family matters
 - Spending time with parents
 - Relationships – if all relationships are in good hands, we can grow
 - Friends
 - Activity with friends was a nice topic
 - Help each other such as family and friends
 - Love from family is important
 - Understand each other
 - Respect
 - Trust
- Politics and Religion
 - Don't condemn people
 - Satu Malaysia
 - Religion can coexist peacefully
- School life topic was fun
- Religion topic

Compiled Notes for 13-15 Year Olds

OPENING: HOW ARE YOUR EXAMS GOING?

- Positive (10)
 - Fine because I studied (4)
 - No problem (3)
 - Okay (2)
 - English was easy
- Negative (8)
 - Difficult (5)
 - Not so good (3)
 - Mathematics was hard

- Civics was BOO!
- History/Geography was boring

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT SCHOOL?

- Negative Activities (10)
 - Bullying people (3)
 - Like to watch gang fighting (3)
 - Planning on playing jokes on teachers (2)
 - Truancy, but can't do it like I would like
 - Gang fighting
- Social (5)
 - Friends (2)
 - Eating with friends and sharing food in the canteen
 - Talking in the library
 - Going to the toilet together (girls)
- Education (4)
 - Teachers
 - Physical education class
 - Doing mathematics
 - English lessons
- Sports activities (2)
- The atmosphere
- New Laboratory
- New Library

TRANSITION: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ACTIVITY TO DO JUST FOR FUN?

- Electronic Media – Related (19)
 - Watching TV (8)
 - Playing video games (5) – One said: it releases tension
 - Going to cybercafé (3)
 - Playing with handphones (2)
 - Listening to music
- Miscellaneous (6)
 - Disturbing others (2)
 - Playing with elastics
 - Playing with paper
 - Pretending to ride a bike, sitting on the wall
 - Reading weird books
- Creative Arts (4)
 - Dancing
 - Singing – able to express myself
 - Playing the guitar – it is my hobby and it gives me peace
 - Drawing

- Socializing with friends (2)
- Sightseeing
- Martial arts – makes me feel safe and proud of myself

KEY AREA 1: WHICH TYPE OF MEDIA APPEALS TO YOU THE MOST AND WHY (INTERNET, TV, GAMING, MOVIES, ETC)?

- Internet (14)
 - To explore to see what is new
 - Chatting with friends
 - Searching for information for school work
- TV (12)
- Computer games because they are interesting
- Movies

KEY AREA 2: WHAT TYPE OF READING MATERIALS DO YOU FIND MOST INTERESTING AND FUN?

- Storybooks (3)
- Manga (2)
- Adventure (2)
- Only read for fun if I am in the mood (2)
- Magazines
- Comics
- Joke books
- Horror

KEY AREA 3: HOW DO YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS SPEND YOUR TIME ON THE INTERNET?

- Social Networking (5)
 - Facebook (3)
 - Chatting (2)
- Parents won't allow me to use the Internet (4)
- Play games with friends (2)
- Hanging out at cybercafés (2)
- Counterstrike
- Gambling on sports events
- Listen to music

KEY AREA 4: WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO WITH YOUR FAMILY?

- Outings (24)
 - Shopping (9)
 - Eat in restaurants (6)
 - Visiting other family members – grandparents, cousins, etc. (5)
 - Traveling (2)
 - Going for picnics (2)

- Media related (3)
 - Watch movies (2)
 - Watch TV
- Talk with parents (3)
- Joking with parents (2)
- Play together (2)
- Eating together

KEY AREA 5: WHAT IS THE MAIN PROBLEM THAT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS DEAL WITH TODAY?

- Racism (13)
- Relationships (14)
 - Fighting over boyfriends (6)
 - Fighting over girlfriends (6)
 - Gossip between families
 - Misunderstanding with friends
- Sports (7)
 - Less opportunities to participate in sports
Relational:14/47 (30%)
- Teased for loosing in sports (6)
- Teased for physical appearance – size, height, etc. (6)
- School (5)
 - Teachers who are unfair and give low marks (3)
 - Being teased for low marks in school (2)
- School bullies (2)

KEY AREA 6: WHEN YOU HAVE A PROBLEM, WHOM DO YOU LOOK TO FOR ADVICE?

- Parents (16)
 - Mom (6)
 - Dad (5)
 - Parents (5)
- Friends (14)
- Teachers (7)
- Family (4)
 - Sister (2)
 - Family members (2)
- Tell to no one

NOTE: 59% of the time, talk to family member over friends (20 out of 34 times)

KEY AREA 7: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE?

- Gives me peace (3)

- Guidance in doing right (2)
 - The talks or speeches I hear on religious topics guide me
 - I know I will be punished if I do something wrong
- I go to church because I get to play in the band (2)
- Only involved because of my parents (2)
- Protection
 - Having many gods to protect me
 - Wear a string around the wrist for protection
- As a Christian I am able to have many good Chinese friends
 - Not need religion
 - There are a lot of good things in religion but I don't follow them, I don't believe in them
 - Never pray

CONCLUSION: FROM WHAT WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT, WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU AS THE MOST IMPORTANT?

- Talking about the radical issues because we felt free to share what is going on at school (8)
- The school part was very interesting to talk about (8)
- Teasing one another (3)
- Comments about friendship (2)
- Comments about family (2)
- Comments about religion
- Comments about teachers
- Self confidence
- Prayer to God
- Spending time with family
- Fighting with brother