

GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE

Philippines

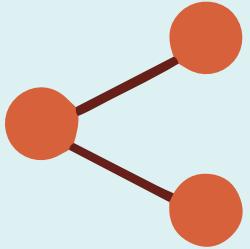


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Thank You

Thank you to our amazing Philippines team who were dedicated to exploring the issues of mental health for this generation and gathered all the data that made this report possible.

INTRODUCTION

Each new generation is unique, with its own gifts and challenges. Research can help us understand how the world looks through different eyes. This research explores the habits, struggles, beliefs, and influences of young people in the Philippines.

This study focuses on mental health for this generation. Awareness of and attention to mental health issues has been growing in the Philippines, but it remains a sensitive topic.¹ Cultural taboos and personal shame have kept many mental health issues hidden. In the last decade, however, people have started addressing them more openly, helped in part by a 2018 law expanding mental health services as well as research highlighting the problems.²

This report covers topics including wellbeing, mental health challenges, digital engagement, and relationships. It also reveals young people's views of God, Jesus, the Bible, and the church. This research project is a follow-up from a larger global study that surveyed thousands of teens across more than 20 countries.

Data was collected in the Philippines in March of 2024. Note that some totals in this report add to less than or more than 100% due to decimal rounding.



1 Martínez, A., Co, M., Lau, J. Y. F., & Brown, J. (2020). Filipino help-seeking for mental health problems and associated barriers and facilitators: a systematic review. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 55(11), 1397–1413. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-020-01937-2>.

2 Press Release - Hontiveros lauds signing of Mental Health Law, says "Help is finally here." (June 21, 2018). https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/press_release/2018/0621_hontiveros1.asp; Jelcy Mae G. Vejano, Hannah Irish S. Ibarondo, Patricia Kyle M. Diaz, and Angelica Joyce S. Barcos. "Attitude and Help-Seeking Behavior of Gen Z towards Mental Health: An Assessment." *Universitas* 9, no. 2 (2021): 1–1.

We hope you not only learn something new, but that your mind and heart are moved to action on behalf of this generation who so need the hope of the Gospel in their lives.

Every statistic in this study represents individual young people with their own sets of hopes, fears, and daily challenges. Each of them has a name, a story, and an eternal destiny. OneHope is dedicated to affecting those destinies by reaching every young person in every country with God's Word.

Let's see what the young people of the Philippines have to tell us.



ABOUT THE YOUTH

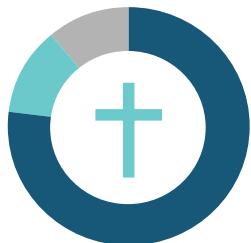
 YOUTH SURVEYED



AGE



RELIGION



CATHOLIC: 77%

 811

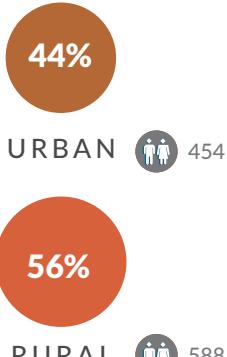
EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN: 12%

 131

OTHER: 11%

 113

LOCATION



 454

 588

ISLANDS

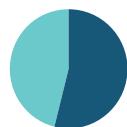


Luzon 37%   395

THE VISAYAS 32%   344

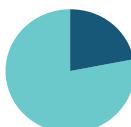
MINDANAO 30%   322

HOUSEHOLD



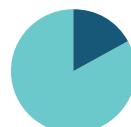
54%
TWO PARENTS

 568



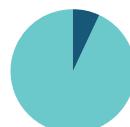
22%
ONE PARENT

 226



17%
OTHER FAMILY
MEMBERS

 175



7%
OTHER LIVING
SITUATION

 77

MENTAL HEALTH

PHILIPPINES REPORT

What We Discovered



58% of young people rated their mental health as average or above average.

Two-thirds of young people report **loneliness**.

Many are also dealing with **high anxiety and depression**.

Females reported worse mental health than males and are at a higher risk for **suicide**.



Consistent sleep and a positive family experience are closely linked to **wellbeing** across other areas of a young person's life.



Trouble sleeping and spending lots of **time online** relate to **poor mental health**.



1 in 4 young people have recently had **suicidal thoughts**.

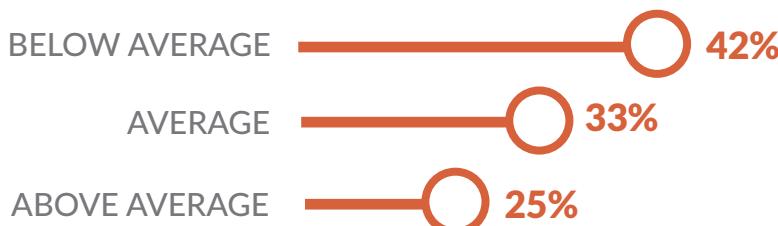
Mental Health

The report explores many different topics, but the primary focus for this research study was mental health. We wanted to understand how young people are doing with their mental health and give them an opportunity to share their experiences and struggles.

Young people's self-assessment of their mental health varied. Overall, only 1 in 4 rated themselves as above average. Females overall rated themselves more negatively as did people under 18 years old.

MENTAL HEALTH RATING

How would you rate your current mental health?



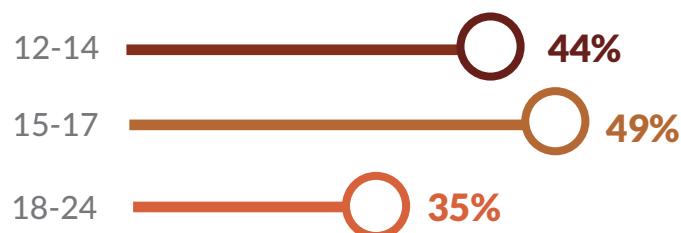
MENTAL HEALTH RATING BY GENDER

Below average mental health



MENTAL HEALTH RATING BY AGE

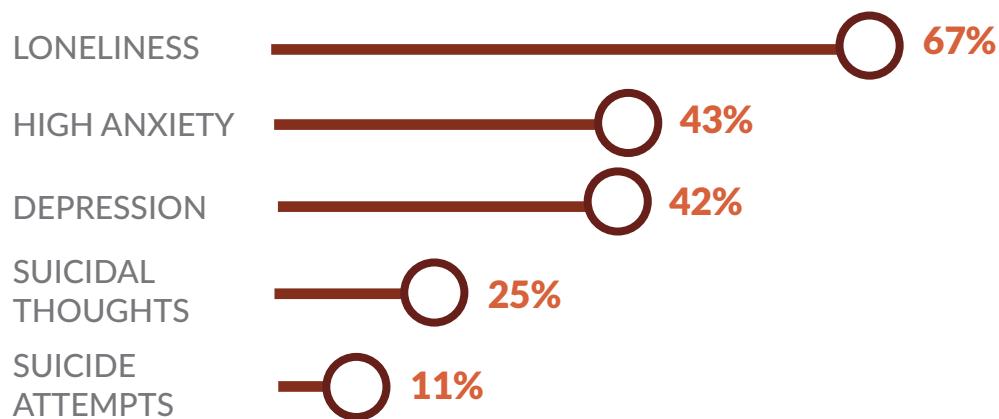
Below average mental health



When it comes to what young people are specifically dealing with, more than half of young people report feelings of loneliness. Many are also dealing with high anxiety and depression. Concerningly, 25% of young people report they have recently had suicidal thoughts and 11% even report having made an attempt on their own life.

MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

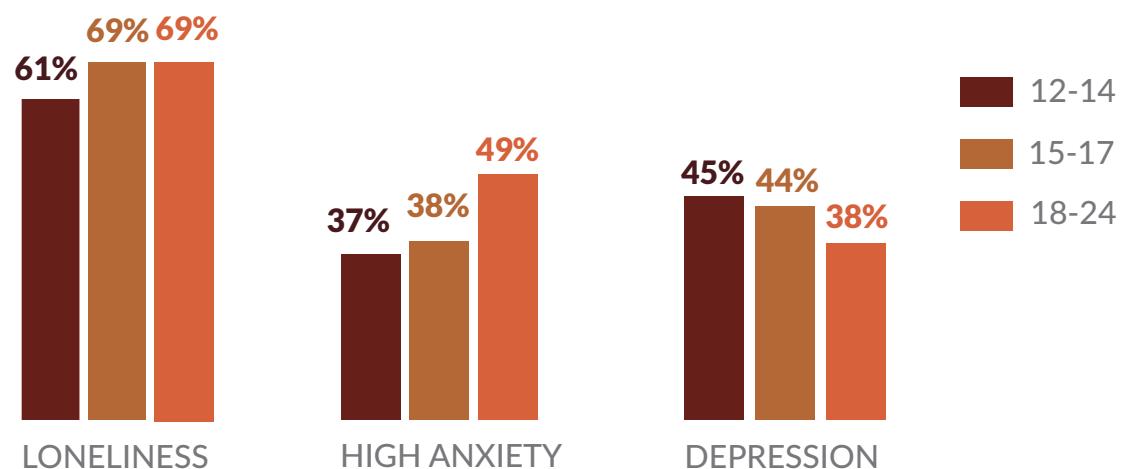
Within the past three months I have experienced:



These struggles affect youth of every age, but anxiety was noticeably higher for older respondents while younger teens were more likely to say they have felt depressed. The data also showed that females are struggling much more with their mental health than males.

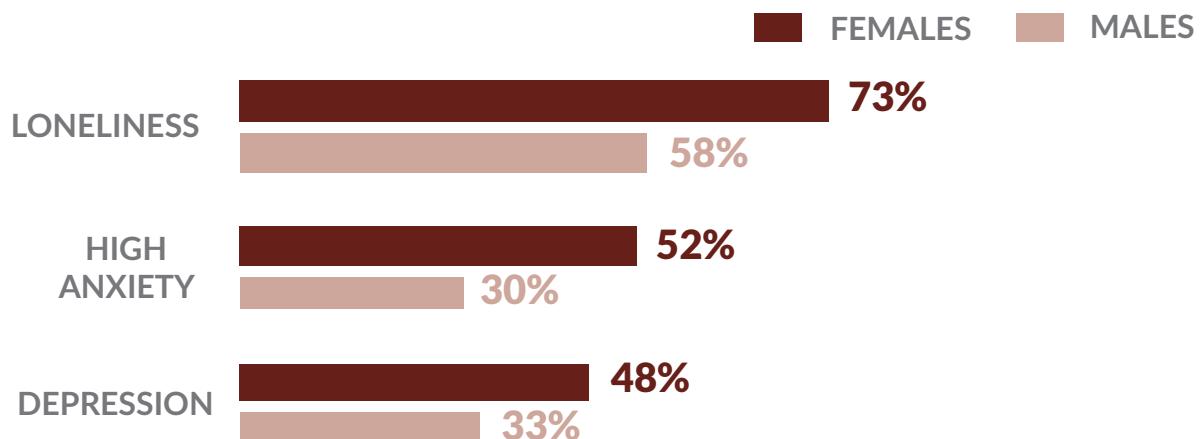
MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES BY AGE

Within the past three months I have experienced:



MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES BY GENDER

Within the past three months I have experienced:

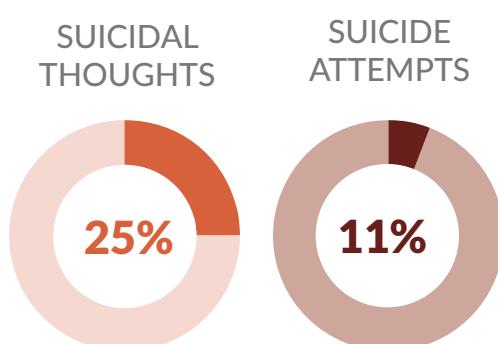


Suicide

Suicide can be an extremely difficult topic to think about and address, but it is a real threat in the lives of some young people. We asked young people to self-report if they had, within the last three months, experienced suicidal thoughts or made a suicide attempt. Sadly, some told us they had these experiences.

SUICIDE RISK

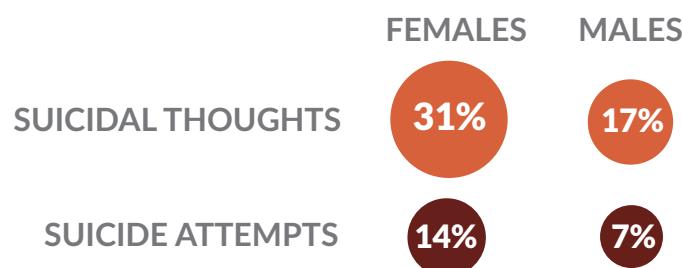
Within the past three months I have experienced:



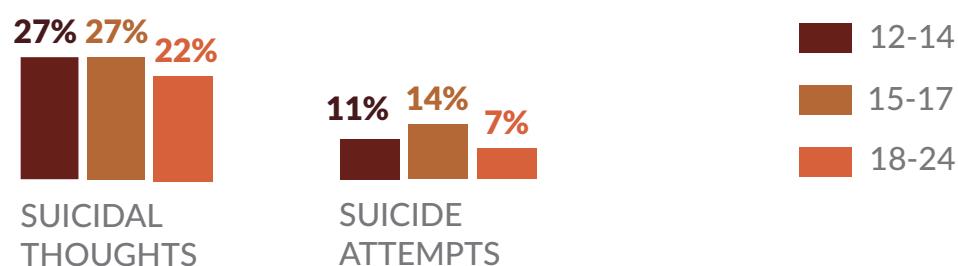
1 IN 4
YOUNG
PEOPLE
HAVE
RECENTLY
HAD
SUICIDAL
THOUGHTS

Females were about twice as likely as males to report suicidal thoughts and attempts. Suicide attempts were higher among young people ages 12-17 as compared with respondents 18 and older. Looking at the data by location, young people in the Visayas reported the lowest suicide risk compared to the other islands surveyed.

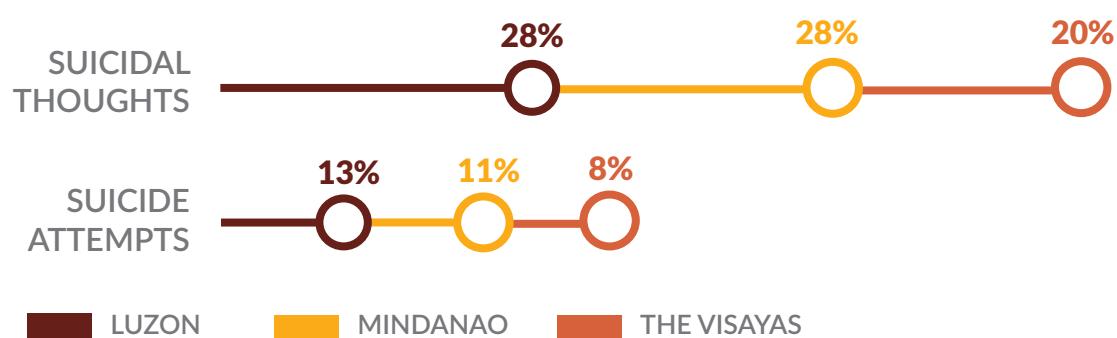
SUICIDE RISK BY GENDER



SUICIDE RISK BY AGE



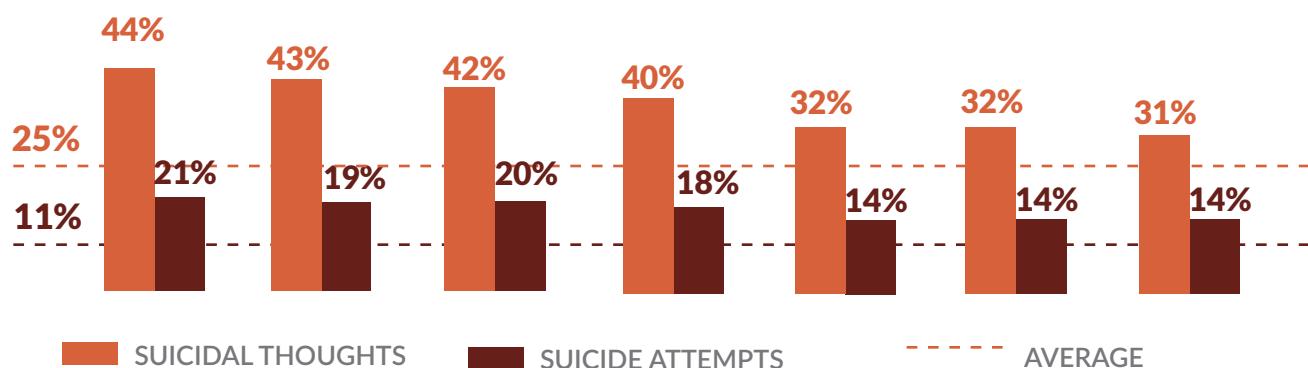
SUICIDE RISK BY LOCATION



Suicide risk is closely connected with other struggles youth are facing. In particular, the data showed strong connections to mental health struggles including high anxiety, depression, and loneliness. It also revealed connections to struggles with same-sex attraction, pornography use, online bullying, and getting drunk.

7 CONNECTIONS WITH SUICIDE RISK

Within the past three months:



Suicide risk is a concern for young people of this generation worldwide. It is not necessarily one event or experience that triggers young people to try to take their life, but could be a series of small steps and thoughts that each build on the other. Regardless of the specific circumstances, this data shows that some youth are in seriously dark places that are driving them towards desperate action.

We should be heartbroken for young people who are hurting so deeply they want to end their lives. When it comes to suicide, we are not looking at numbers on a page—but at real people's lives. Any number is too many and any percentage too high.

If you want help navigating suicidality and other mental health challenges together with young people in your life there are **resources** available at the end of this report.

Critical Factors For Wellbeing

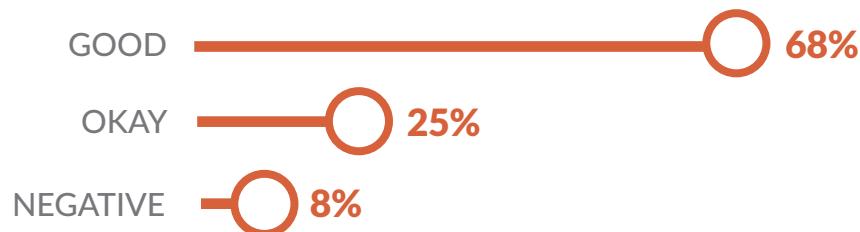
As we tried to understand the overall mental health landscape of the Philippines, three key issues stood out as important factors for wellbeing. They were family experience, sleep, and online time. These factors were closely related to key mental health indicators and represent helpful places to focus future efforts to address mental health challenges.

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

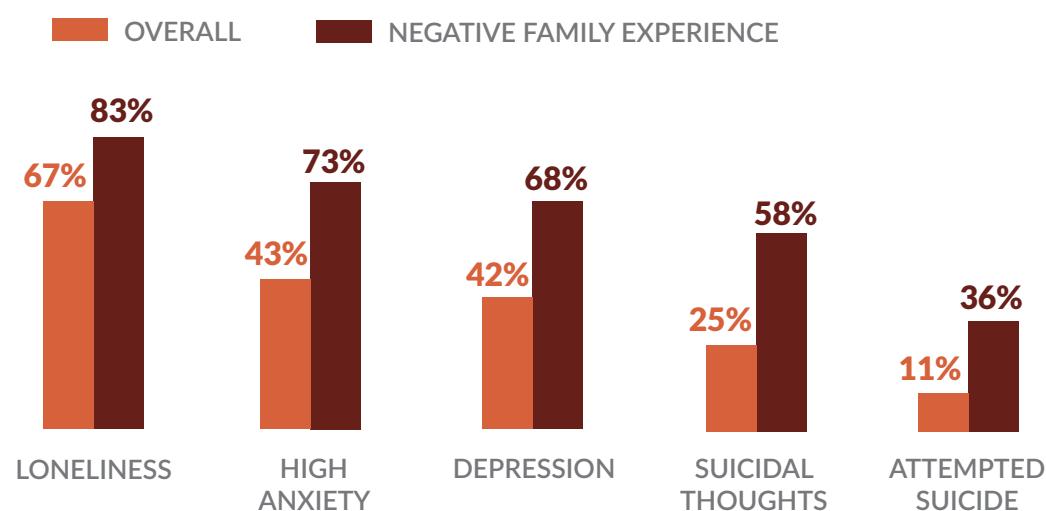
Young people overall report positive family experiences. But for the relatively few youth who did report a negative family experience, the impacts were profound. A negative family experience was strongly associated with all of the personal struggles we asked about in our research.

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

How would you rate your family experience?



PERSONAL STRUGGLES AND FAMILY EXPERIENCE



SLEEP

Sleep was one of the most important factors that impacted a range of mental health outcomes for young people across the Philippines. Only around 1 in 3 young people report they have been sleeping well. Females reported worse sleep than males, which appears to correspond to a wider pattern of females struggling more with mental health and wellness overall.

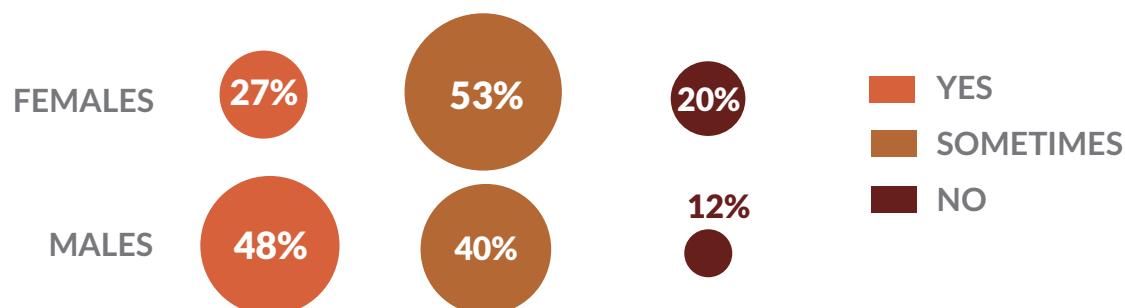
SLEEP

Have you been sleeping well?



SLEEP BY GENDER

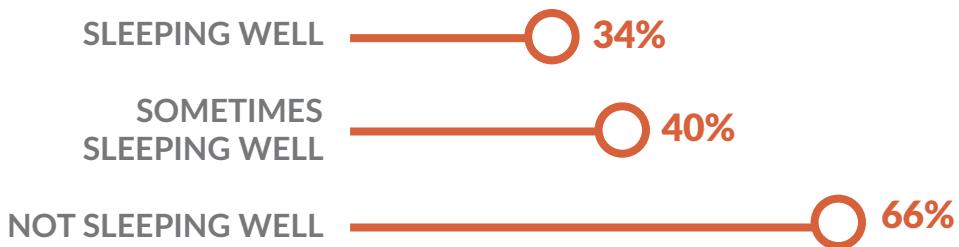
Have you been sleeping well?



People who say they get good sleep report better mental health, while those who struggle with sleep were far more likely to report negative mental health experiences.

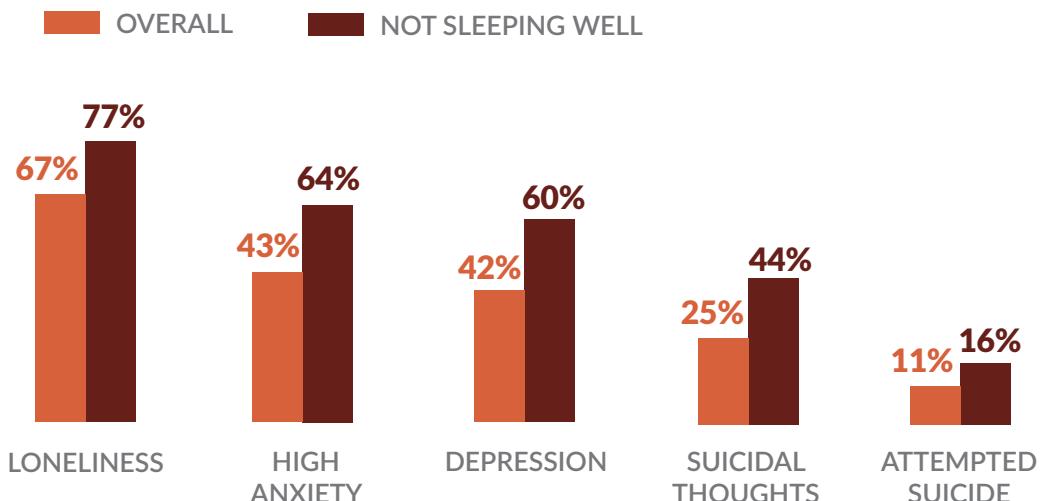
Encouragingly, sleep represents a practical point of conversation and intervention with young people who may be struggling. In addition to addressing mental health challenges directly, caring adults may find it valuable to work with young people on prioritizing sleep and building good habits around rest.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SLEEP



■ BELOW AVERAGE MENTAL HEALTH

PERSONAL STRUGGLES AND SLEEP



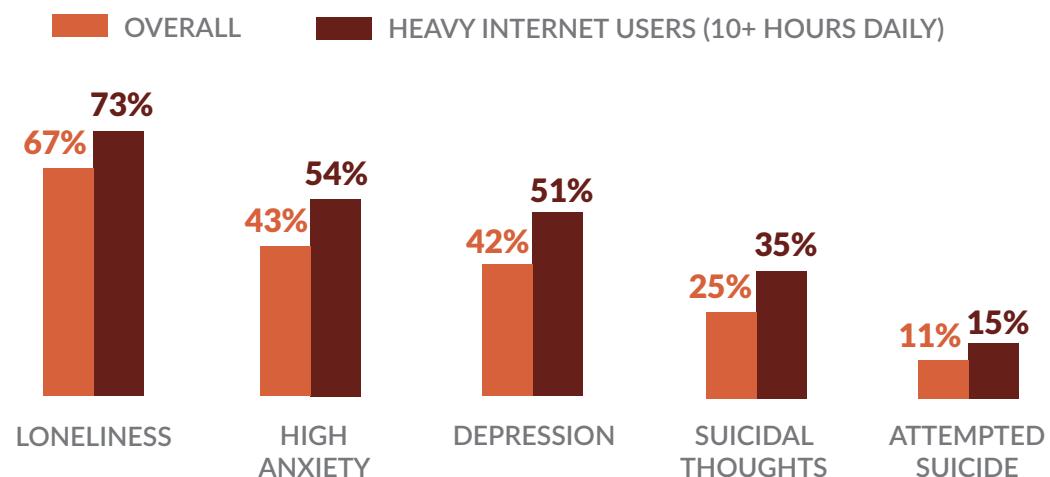
TIME ONLINE

Young people are spending an average of 6:36 hours online daily. One in four of those are heavy internet users who are spending 10 or more hours online daily. Young people who are heavy internet users were more likely to tell us they struggled with their mental health.

MENTAL HEALTH AND TIME ONLINE



PERSONAL STRUGGLES AND TIME ONLINE



Many of the factors in this report are connected to each other. For example, heavy internet users are three times as likely to report not sleeping well in the last three months compared to light internet users.

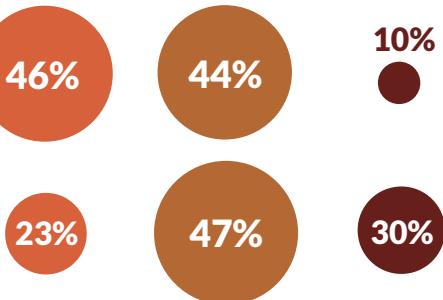
SLEEP AND TIME ONLINE

Are you sleeping well?

**LIGHT INTERNET
USERS** (0-3 hours daily)



**HEAVY INTERNET
USERS** (10+ hours daily)



YES
 SOMETIMES
 NO

Conclusion

This data can be a sad picture of how life looks when seen through the eyes of young people. The daily experiences and struggles youth face can seem overwhelming, but it is important to start by listening and understanding before we turn to action. It is also good to reflect on what the data shows us about the most strategic places for conversations and practical help in their lives. Here are some things to consider:

- **MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS**

This research should be a wake-up call about the struggles young people are facing and how those work together to bring them down. These issues are widespread and felt across age, location, and religious identity. How can we help young people feel seen, supported, and encouraged with the hope the Gospel holds for their lives?

- **SUICIDE RISK IS SERIOUS**

Some young people are feeling very hopeless and even thinking about ending their lives. In the Philippines, an alarming number have attempted to act on this thought. The data shows that suicide risk is not simple to understand—many factors contribute to creating a negative outlook for young people. How can we be alert to these concerns and ensure the young people we know are being deeply cared for?

- **PRIORITIZE SLEEP**

Caring adults often want to address mental health challenges directly, and that is good. But this report, as well as other research, should push us to take a hard look at the foundational impact of sleep as a basic physical need. A good evening routine and quality rest really impacts overall mental health. How can we talk to young people about this and support them in forming healthy patterns?

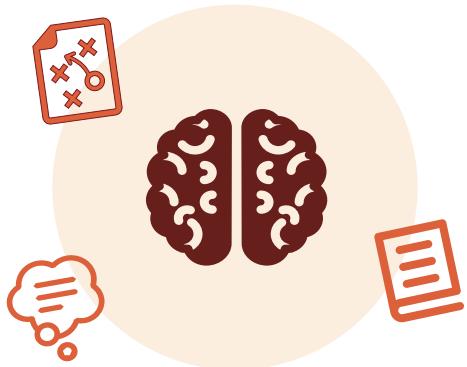
- **FEMALES STRUGGLE MORE**

One of the clearest trends in the data was the difference between the experiences of males and females. Females report struggling much more with their mental health including feelings of loneliness, high anxiety, and depression. Suicidal thoughts and attempts were also alarmingly high. It is critical to be aware of the individual struggles different genders are facing as we seek to support young people in their areas of challenge. How can we help the young women of the Philippines feel and inhabit the depth of their identity as beloved daughters of God?

CURRENT PRESSURES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

PHILIPPINES REPORT

What We Discovered



91% of young people in the Philippines report feeling sometimes or often **overwhelmed** at school.

Half of youth report feeling often **hopeful and energetic** while around 1 in 3 say they are often **calm/peaceful or confident**.

Females are more likely than males to report feeling **pressured** at school.



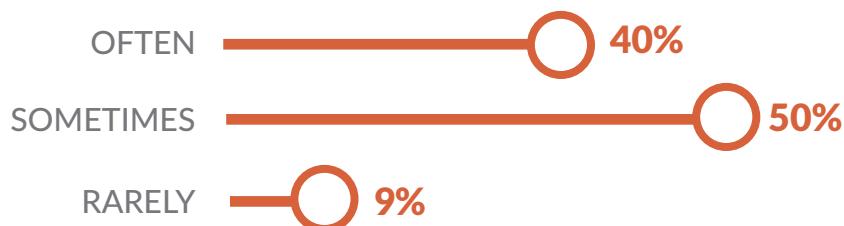
Males were more likely to report **feeling confident** than females.

Current Pressures

As we sought to understand more about the state of mental health among young people in the Philippines, we wanted to get a sense of their current stress levels and their general emotional condition. We suspected that education may represent a source of stress or pressure for many youth. The research showed that 2 out of 5 respondents said they often feel overwhelmed at school.

SCHOOL PRESSURE

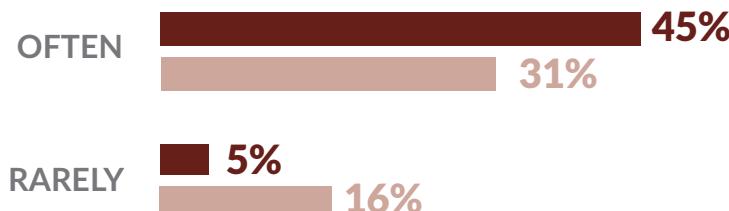
How often do you feel overwhelmed or pressured at school?



SCHOOL PRESSURE BY GENDER

How often do you feel overwhelmed or pressured at school?

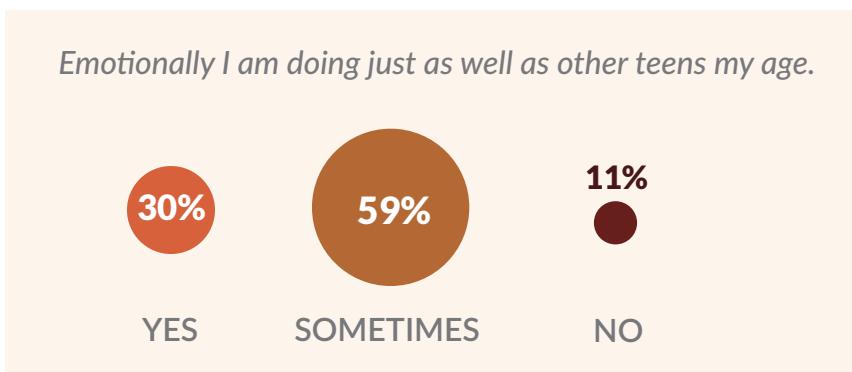
FEMALES MALES



Females reported often feeling stressed more than males. Many people who reported **often** feeling stressed or overwhelmed at school also reported sleeping poorly. Many were medium or heavy internet users, and more likely to live in cities than rural areas.

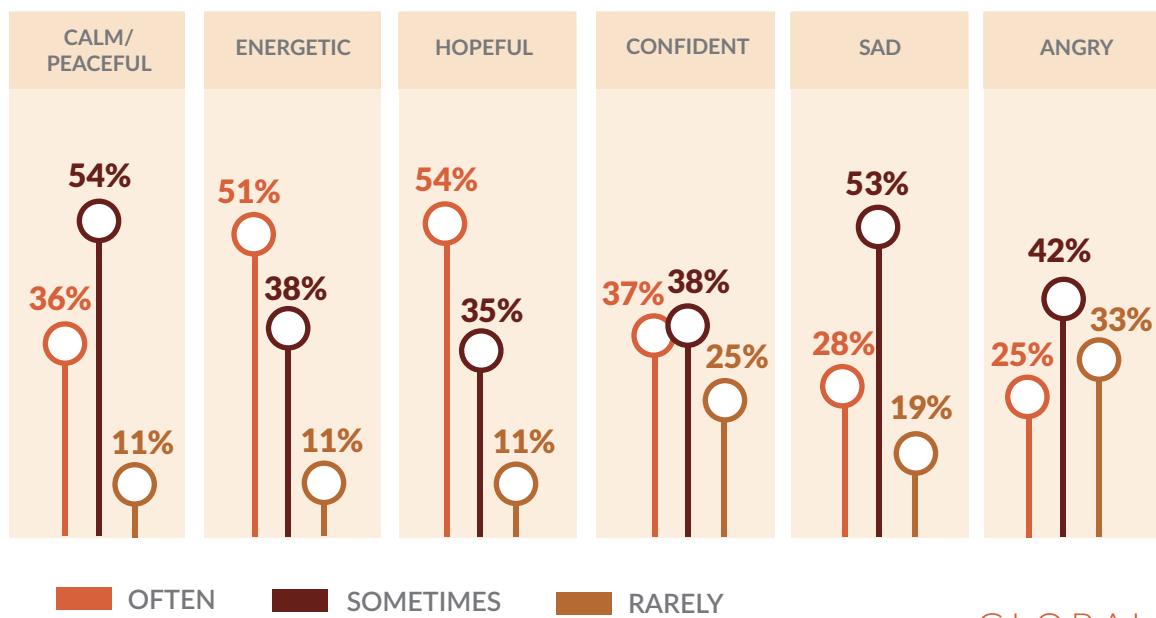
Feelings and Emotions

We did not, however, just want to know about stress. We also wanted to get a picture of the emotions young people feel. We asked them to compare their emotional wellbeing to their peers and to tell us how often they feel a range of six emotions.



EMOTIONAL PATTERNS

How often do you feel...





Good sleep, positive family experience, and low social media use were all closely related to feeling calm/peaceful more often.



42% of heavy internet users said they often feel sad, as did 55% of poor sleepers.



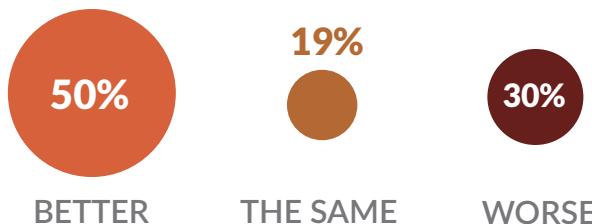
Females were more likely than males to say they often feel angry. Nearly half (44%) of people with a negative family experience also said they were often angry.

Future Outlook

Despite the challenges many young people face in their lives, they generally have hope for the future to be better both for the Philippines and for their personal financial success. However, females (35%) and older respondents (34%) were slightly more likely to say they think things will get worse for the country.

PHILIPPINES FUTURE

When I imagine the Philippines 10 years from now, I think things will be...



FUTURE SUCCESS

I believe that I can be financially successful in the future.



Conclusion

Healthy emotional processing is key for anyone, but especially for young people as they grow and mature. This data reveals what youth are feeling and the pressures that may be shaping their future outlook.

- **SCHOOL IS STRESSFUL**

Pressure at school is clearly a major struggle for many young people in the Philippines. This issue was one of the most common across youth surveyed, reported by young people of every age, gender, and location. How can we recognize this pressure in the lives of young people and help them navigate the stressors they are experiencing?

- **FULL RANGE OF EMOTIONS**

Young people's descriptions of their emotional experiences are a good reminder that there is a lot going on in their interior worlds. Most youth surveyed said they feel both positive and negative emotions. Developmental research shows that youth feel all emotions more intensely at this time in their lives. How can we help them name and appreciate the full complexity of their emotional experiences as they mature?

RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCES

PHILIPPINES REPORT

What We Discovered

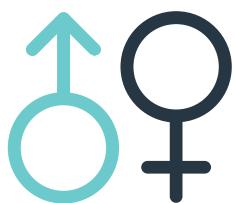


Most young people (68%) say their **family experience** has been **good overall**. Males are more likely to say this than females.



85% of young people have **close friends who know them well**.

Youth who have experienced **gender struggles** also reported more **mental health challenges**.



A **positive family experience** is one of the strongest connections to **positive mental health**.



Many young people report complex relationships with themselves. **1 in 4** young people in the Philippines report recently experiencing a **gender identity shift**. A similar number report feeling **same-sex attraction**.



Family Relationships and Influence

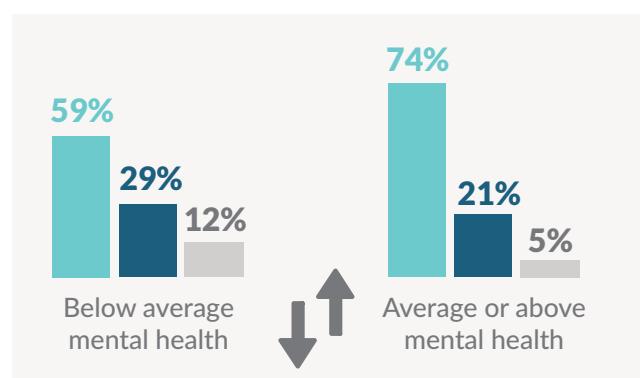
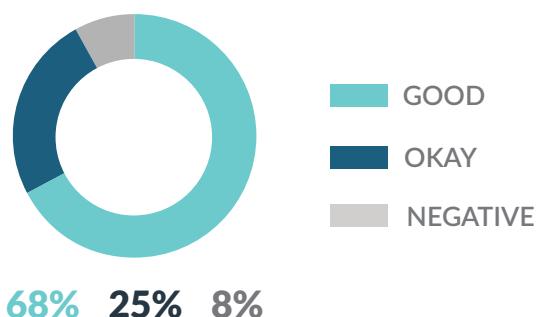
We wanted to know about young people's family relationships and how those relate to other areas of their lives. The majority of young people say their family experience has been positive overall. Males generally reported more positive experiences than females, and Luzon respondents had a slightly more negative view than the other islands surveyed.

A positive family experience was closely linked to positive mental health outcomes. Interestingly, this connection remained true regardless of who participants say they lived with (one-parent household, two-parent etc.).

68% OF YOUNG PEOPLE SAY THEIR FAMILY EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN GOOD

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

How would you rate your family experience?



FAMILY EXPERIENCE BY GENDER

How would you rate your family experience?

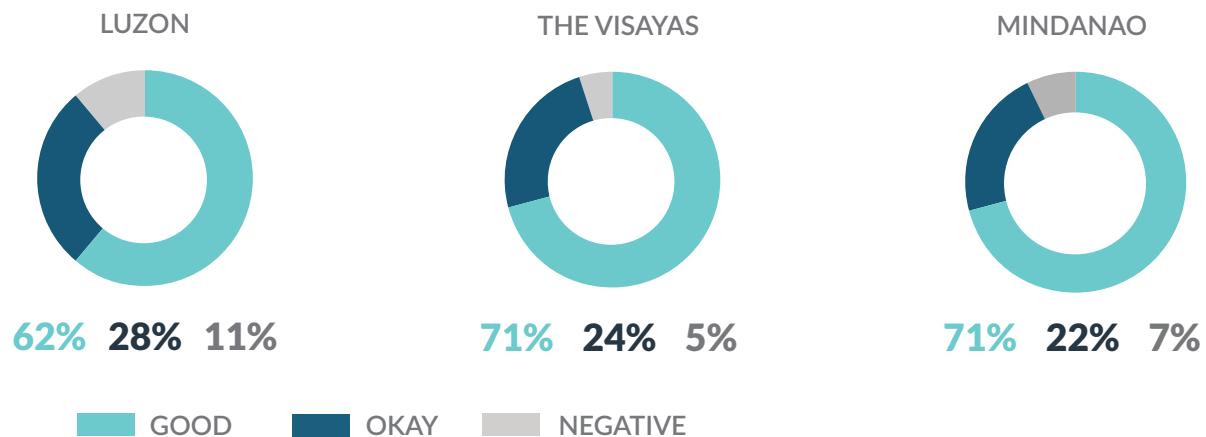
GOOD OKAY NEGATIVE

FEMALES 63% 27% 9%

MALES 75% 20% 5%

FAMILY EXPERIENCE BY LOCATION

How would you rate your family experience?



Family conversations can be an indication of closeness and connection. Family members were the most common source of information and guidance about personal issues and a strong presence for questions about gender and religion as well. Compared with global statistics, young people in the Philippines are more likely to turn to family with questions about sexual issues. A smaller but substantial number of young people also turn to the Internet for information about these topics.

INFLUENCE³

Where do you go most often for information or guidance about...

Personal matters *

- 1 Family members 45%
- 2 Friends / peers 31%
- 3 Social media / online sources 16%

Gender, sexuality, or other sexual issues

- 1 Friends / peers 32%
- 2 Family members 27%
- 3 Social media / online sources 26%

Religion and/or faith

- 1 Religious leaders or texts 42%
- 2 Family members 38%
- 3 Social media / online sources 9%

* mental health, family or relationship issues, etc.

³ Only the top three responses have been included

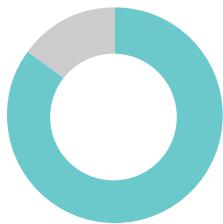
Across all three areas, males were more likely than females to turn to family members for guidance. Females were more likely to turn to friends except for questions about religion where almost half (46%) said they would consult a religious leader or text (compared with 35% of males).

Friendships

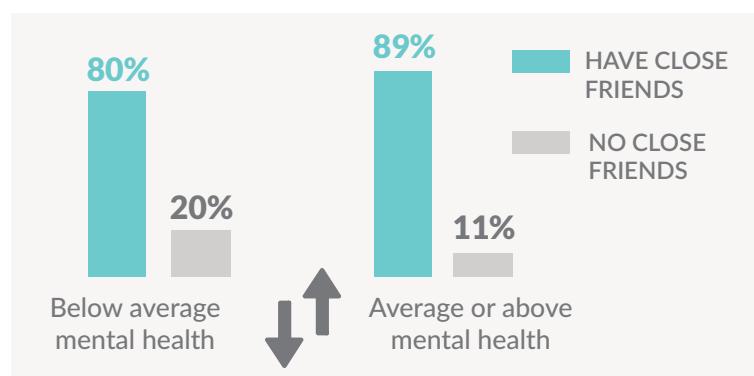
Encouragingly, the vast majority of young people in the Philippines indicated they have strong friendships in their lives, and this was consistent across regions, genders, and age groups.

FRIENDSHIP SATISFACTION

I have close friends who know me well



YES
NO



Having close friends did not relate to mental health outcomes as strongly as having a good family experience did. However, it did have some effect on young people's mental health ratings.



Relationships and Gender

Conversations around gender identity and sexuality are becoming more common for this generation. We saw this with young people in the Philippines as well. Around 1 in 4 youth say they would feel most themselves as a different gender. A similar number expressed that they have experienced same-sex attraction. Younger teens were more likely to report gender identity confusion.

GENDER STRUGGLES

In the past three months, have you:

Felt like you identify as a **different gender** than you were born with  25%

Felt **sexually attracted** to someone of the same gender  24%

GENDER IDENTITY CONFUSION BY AGE

Felt like you identify as a **different gender** than you were born with



12-14



15-17



18-24

SAME-SEX ATTRACTION BY GENDER

Felt **sexually attracted** to someone of the same gender



FEMALES



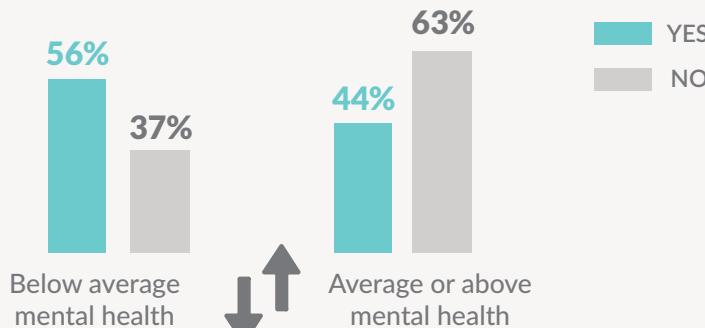
MALES

Females were twice as likely as males to report same-sex attraction. Rates were similar across islands as well as urban and rural contexts.

There is no straightforward answer for why youth may feel gender identity confusion or same-sex attraction. But the data does show that these issues connect with other challenges young people are experiencing. Young people who said they have felt gender identity struggles or same-sex attraction also report higher rates of mental health struggles and a range of personal challenges.

GENDER IDENTITY AND MENTAL HEALTH

In the past three months, have you felt like you identify as a different gender than you were born with?



GENDER STRUGGLES AND MENTAL HEALTH

Within the past three months I have experienced:



LONELINESS



DEPRESSION



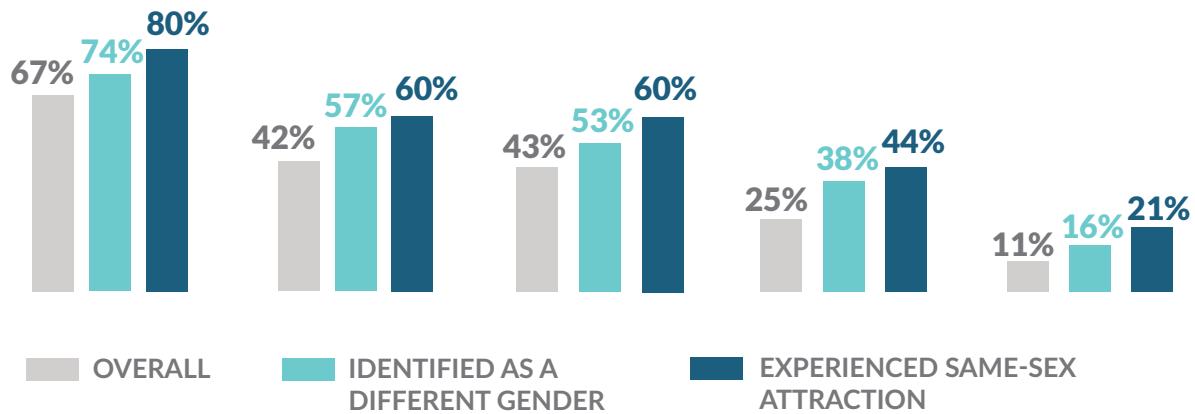
HIGH ANXIETY



SUICIDAL THOUGHTS



ATTEMPTED SUICIDE



Conclusion

As today's youth navigate life's complex issues and questions, it is clear that they benefit from having close relationships with the people around them. Family is particularly critical in supporting and guiding them.

- **FAMILIES MATTER**

The data was clear that positive family experiences connect to better mental health and wellbeing for young people. In addition, family is a first stop for young people when they have questions about a variety of issues. This should be an encouragement as we seek to support young people and their family structures. Investing in positive family relationships and closeness is well worth the effort. How can we equip families to step into this important role of discipling their teens and young adults?

- **PEER VOICES ARE PRESENT**

It is encouraging to see that most youth say they have close friends in addition to positive family relationships. Friends and peers are particularly apparent as influences in young people's lives on topics they feel less comfortable discussing with their parents or other adults. Females also seem to value the opinion of their friends more than males. Young people need both peers and mentors in their lives. How can we ensure they have healthy support and wise counsel no matter where they turn?

- **ONLINE INFLUENCE IS INCREASING**

While family, friends, and religious leaders were the top influences on young people, the Internet and social media were also prevalent. Young people are spending a significant amount of time online daily, which means there is a need for quality resources and trustworthy voices in this space. How can we provide digital spaces where young people can encounter biblical wisdom for life's biggest questions?

- **PREPARE FOR COMPLEX CONVERSATIONS**

The voice of culture speaks loudly to youth through music, media, and digital platforms. But culture will always continue to fall away from God's values. We need to prepare ourselves and this generation for honest conversations on topics like mental health, influence, and gender identity. We need to be ready not only to speak God's truth but to be good listeners for young people who may feel confused or doubtful on these topics. How can we help youth understand the plan God has for their relationships and identity so they can embrace that design in order to flourish?

RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

PHILIPPINES REPORT

What We Discovered

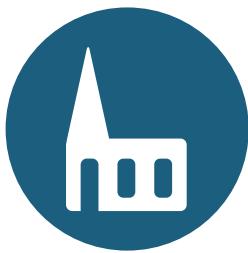
89% of young people say their faith beliefs or spiritual journey are an important part of their identity.



91% of young people identify as **Christian**, but only **11%** were discovered to be **Committed Christians**.



Committed Christians are just as likely as other young people to be **struggling** with **mental health challenges**.



44% of Christians say they **attend church** at least weekly.



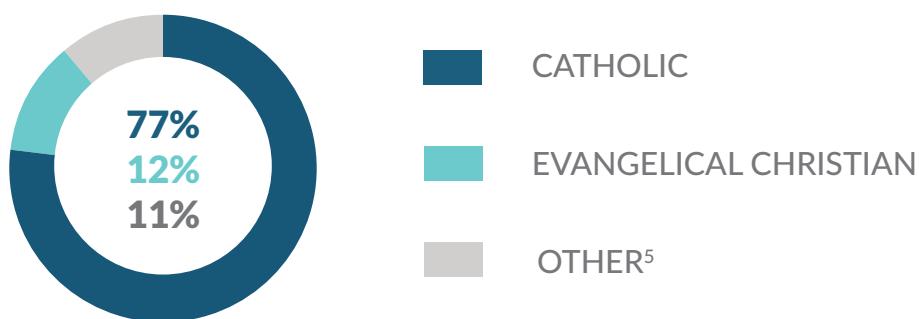
29% of Christian young people report **reading the Bible** on their own at least weekly.

Religious Attitudes and Behaviors

This research study was uniquely comprehensive in examining the role faith and religion play in the lives of the next generation. How important do they say faith is to them? How are they putting their beliefs into practice? We knew we wanted to explore the religious attitudes and behaviors of today's youth and the impact of those on other areas of their lives.

Across the Philippines, most young people surveyed identified as Christian or Catholic. Among Christians, Catholics were the most common (77%), followed by Evangelical Christians (12%). A much smaller group (2%) identified with non- Evangelical churches. While some reported following other religions, the numbers were too small to provide meaningful comparison.

RELIGION



But what does it truly mean to be a Christian? We looked at the core beliefs and key spiritual disciplines that would reveal a young person is a Committed Christian.

When we re-examined responses according to this definition of committed faith, we immediately saw a big difference. Just 11% of young people were discovered to be Committed Christians. Any Christian teen who did not meet one or more of the criteria for committedness was considered to be a "Nominal Christian" in this study.

⁵ All other religious affiliations represented sample sizes that were too small for meaningful comparison. They included: 3% INC (Iglesia ni Cristo), 3% Agnostic/Atheist/None, 2% Non-evangelical Christian, 1% Jehovah's Witness, less than 1% Muslim, and less than 1% Mormon.

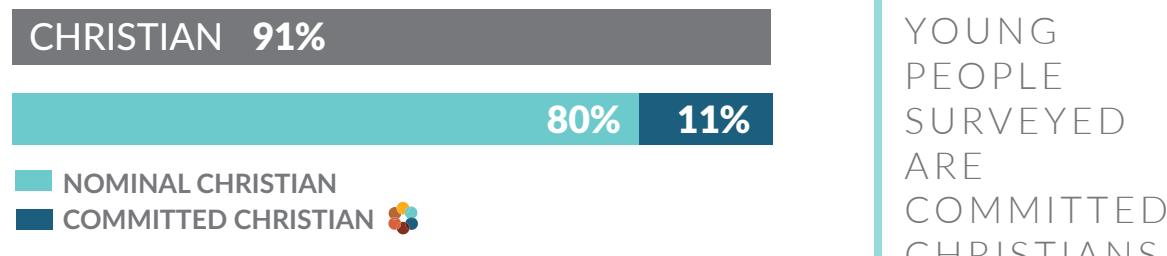
6 TRAITS OF COMMITTED CHRISTIANS

- Believe God exists and they can have a personal relationship with Him
- Pray at least weekly
- Read Scripture on their own at least weekly

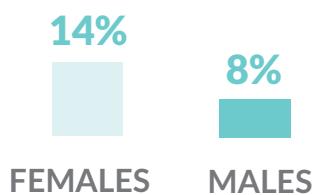


- Believe Jesus is the Son of God
- Believe that forgiveness of sins is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ
- Believe the Bible is the Word of God

While this might seem discouraging, it is important to note that committedness is higher in the Philippines than most other countries surveyed. Globally, a mere 7% of youth surveyed were found to be Committed Christians.⁶ In the Philippines, more females than males were discovered to be Committed.



COMMITTED CHRISTIANS BY GENDER

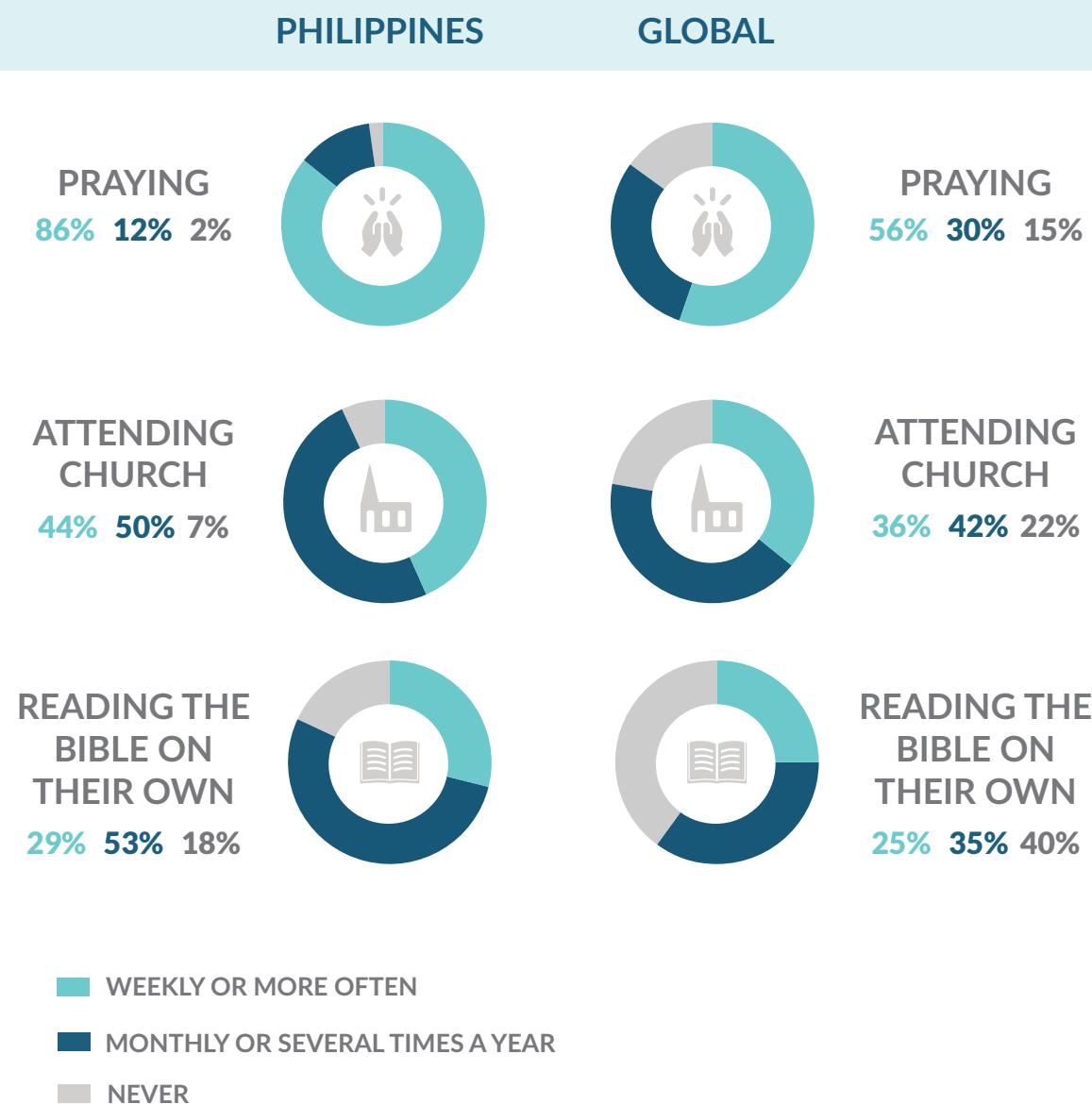


⁶ OneHope. (August 2020). Global Youth Culture, Global Report. www.globalyouthculture.net

How Young People Practice their Faith

Engaging in spiritual disciplines is how we grow our faith. Most Christian young people are embracing the habit of prayer in their personal lives, however fewer than half were seen to be regularly attending church or reading the Bible on their own.

FAITH PRACTICES OF CHRISTIANS



Most young people surveyed have scriptural views of God, Jesus, and the Bible, regardless of whether they identify as Christian or not. Evangelical Christians were much more likely to have these viewpoints.

Committedness to faith makes a big difference in young people's lives and how they choose to spend their time. Committed Christians are much more likely than Nominal Christians to be praying, going to church, reading their Bibles, and experiencing spiritual mentorship.

SPIRITUAL VIEWPOINTS

God exists and I can have a personal relationship with Him.



Jesus is the Son of God.



The Bible is the Word of God.



SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

 NOMINAL CHRISTIANS

 COMMITTED CHRISTIANS 



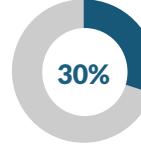
PRAYER
Pray daily



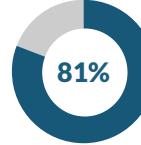
CHURCH ATTENDANCE
Attend religious services at least weekly



BIBLE READING
Read the Bible daily



SPIRITUAL MENTORSHIP
I have at least one non-family member who is helping me grow spiritually



JUST 7% OF NOMINAL CHRISTIANS SAY THEY READ THE BIBLE DAILY

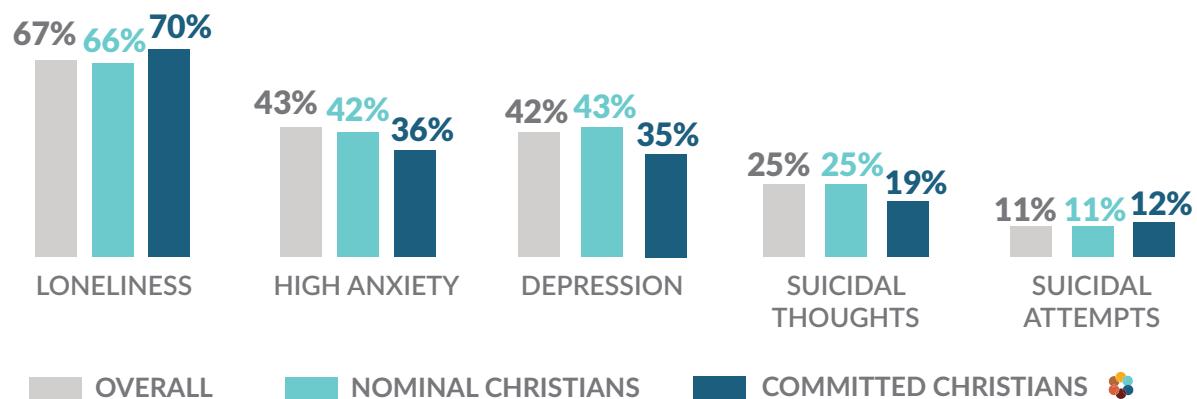
Faith and Mental Health

We were curious to explore how young people's faith impacts their mental health. Unfortunately, young people were seen to struggle with similar issues, regardless of their faith or committedness to it.

While Committed Christians struggled slightly less with depression and high anxiety, they were slightly above average for reporting loneliness and suicide attempts. While encouraging religious habits is a good thing, it may not be enough to solve all the challenges young people face. We need to take seriously the wellbeing of the young people in our communities at every level of health.

CHRISTIAN YOUTH RESPOND

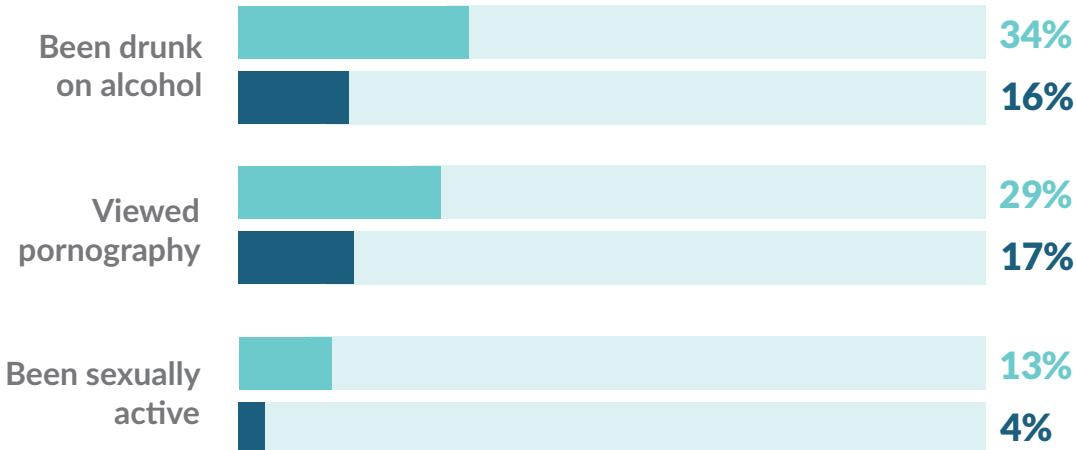
Within the past three months I have experienced:



RISKY BEHAVIORS

Within the past three months I have:

NOMINAL CHRISTIANS
COMMITTED CHRISTIANS 



Committed Christians did show more positive outcomes than Nominals when it came to risky behaviors including drunkenness, pornography, and sexual activity.

These are complicated findings, and can feel discouraging, but we are glad that young people felt they could be honest in their answers. More than anything we want every young person in the Philippines to experience the deep love and compassion of Jesus. We hope this information renews your heart to share the hope of the Gospel broadly and plant it deeply in the hearts of Filipino youth.

Conclusion

This data shows where young people are in their spiritual journey and helps us understand their religious identity, habits, and viewpoints. It also points us towards practical action as we seek to share the Gospel with non-believers and disciple Christian young people to maturity in faith.

- **LEAD CHRISTIANS INTO DEEPER FAITH**

The overwhelming majority of young people surveyed in the Philippines say their Christian faith is an important part of their identity. But many are not putting those beliefs into action in their daily lives. There is a large gap between those who call themselves Christian and the young people who are committed to living out that faith through their beliefs and behaviors. How can we help young people develop the spiritual disciplines that will root them deeply in Christ and mature them as believers?

- **DISCIPLING THE WHOLE PERSON**

A life of faith in Jesus Christ contributes to flourishing in every aspect of our person. Yet the research shows that even Committed Christian young people are struggling with mental health challenges like the rest of their generation. How can we demonstrate holistic faith and meet young people with the hope of the gospel in their struggles?

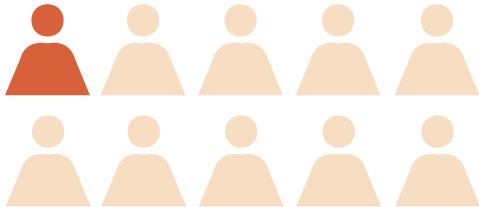
- **ADDRESS CHALLENGES IN COMMUNITY**

Many young people across the Philippines acknowledge religious faith and behaviors as an important part of their lives. These commitments represent an opportunity for church leaders and caring adults to be trusted voices in addressing mental health concerns, risky behaviors, and other challenges young people deal with. How can the church lead the way in seeking the wellbeing of young people in every area of their lives?

RISKY BEHAVIORS

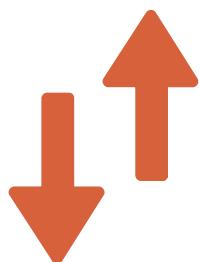
PHILIPPINES REPORT

What We Discovered



1 in 10 young people said they had been **sexually active** within the last three months.

Committed Christians are less likely than **Nominal Christians** to have recently been **sexually active**.



27% of young people reported **viewing pornography** in the last three months.



Males are **more than three times as likely** as females to have recently **looked at pornography**.



31% of young people report **recently being drunk**.



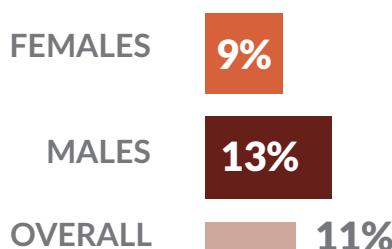
Sexual Activity

In addition to the interior worlds of young people, we wanted to understand things they do that may put them at risk or raise issues that need to be addressed.

The teenage and young adult years can be a time when young people experiment with their sexuality. This was a topic we specifically asked respondents to share about. In answering this question, youth defined for themselves what it means to be sexually active.⁷

SEXUALLY ACTIVE

Within the past three months:



Compared to global averages, sexual activity is relatively low among young people in the Philippines.⁸ Just 11% of youth in the Philippines reported recent sexual activity. Males were slightly more likely than females to have recently been sexually active. Sexual activity was much higher for young adults as compared with teenagers.

It was generally lower in Mindanao, perhaps partly related to the lower number of 18-24-year-old respondents from that island. Nominal Christians were three times more likely than Committed Christians to be sexually active.

⁷ Any participants who also reported being married were excluded to ensure this data represents only sex outside the context of marriage.

⁸ Across 20 countries surveyed in Feb-March of 2020, 29% of youth reported recent sexual activity.

SEXUALLY ACTIVE BY AGE

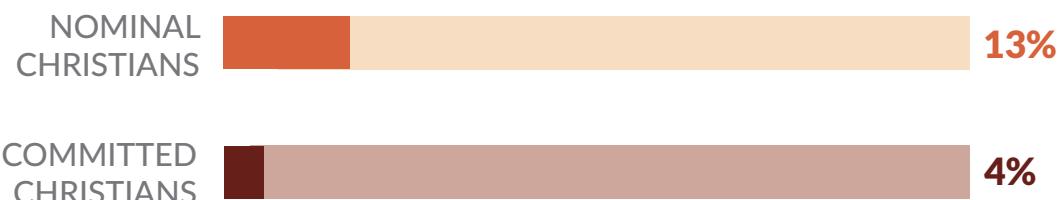


SEXUALLY ACTIVE BY LOCATION



CHRISTIAN YOUTH RESPOND

Sexually active within the past three months:



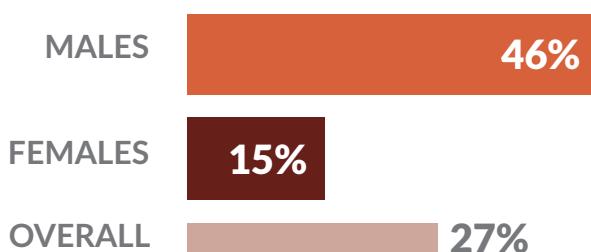
Pornography

Pornography is another sexual issue that highly affects youth. Global Youth Culture research has revealed that pornography is a hidden struggle for this generation worldwide. In the Philippines, the data showed similar trends. One in four youth reported recently looking at pornography, with a clear connection between viewing rates and more time spent online.

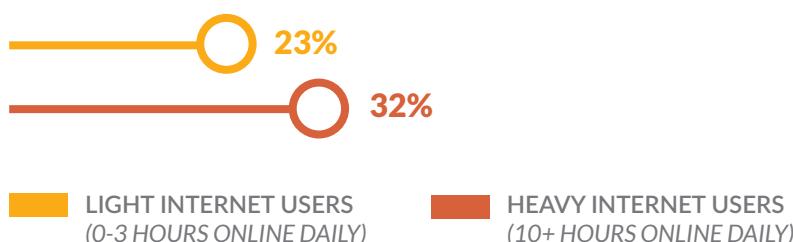
Males were three times as likely as females to be using pornography, a pattern that increases with age. Encouragingly, Committed Christians were around half as likely as Nominal Christians to have recently looked at pornographic material.

PORNOGRAPHY USAGE

Within the past three months:

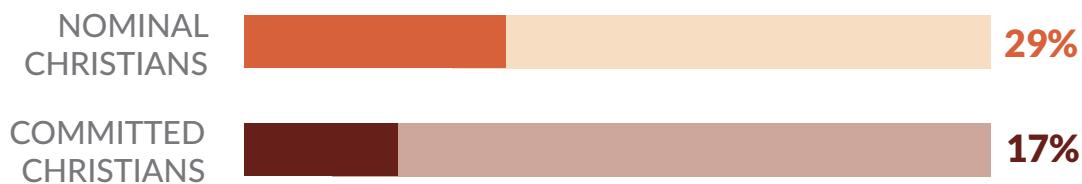


PORNOGRAPHY USAGE BY TIME ONLINE



CHRISTIAN YOUTH RESPOND

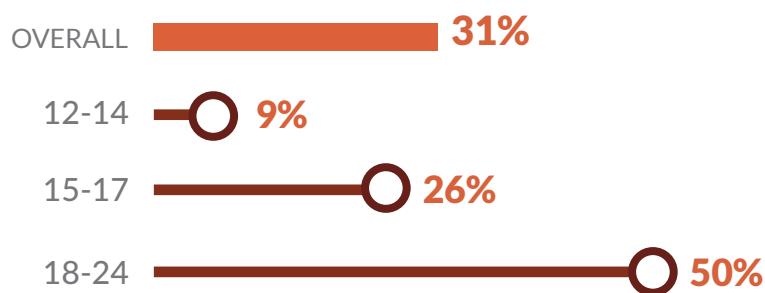
I have viewed pornography recently



Alcohol Usage

The challenges teens face are not always visible from the outside. But they can have external expressions. One in three young people reported recently getting drunk on alcohol. Alcohol use increased sharply with age, perhaps due to respondents passing the legal drinking age of 18.

Within the past three months, I have had enough alcohol to be drunk:



Conclusion

These are challenging topics to think about and address in Christian community. But discipling youth in biblical truths means we must address behaviors that are harmful or risky for ourselves and others.

- **PORNOGRAPHY IS A PROBLEM**

This is a significant issue for today's young people that is hiding in plain sight. We cannot assume the youth we know are protected from this, especially young men. Today's digital world makes access to pornography particularly easy and enticing. How can we address the pervasive issue of pornography usage that has ensnared this next generation?

- **YOUNG MEN ARE STRUGGLING**

While girls are more likely to report mental health challenges, boys and men are more often struggling with sexual behaviors. Nearly half of them admit to recent pornography usage. This is a troubling sign for how they view their desires, bodies, and those of others. How can we help the young men of the Philippines embrace the true joy of the life God intends for them?

COMPASSIONATELY SUPPORT

- It can be easy to turn to fear or judgment when we find out about issues like pornography and drunkenness. The great call of Christ is to a full abundant life. We must pray that young people grow less attracted to behaviors that may harm themselves and others. How can we compassionately come alongside young people to encourage them to share their struggles and seek help when needed?

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

PHILIPPINES REPORT

What We Discovered

Young people in the **Philippines** are spending an average of **6:34 hours online** daily



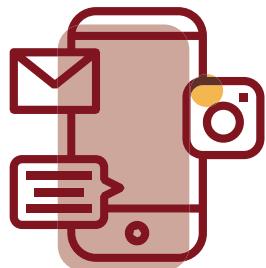
1 in 4 young people report being **online 10 or more hours a day.**



Young people who spend **more time online** report struggling more with their **mental health**.



1 in 3 young people report being **bullied online**. Those who have been bullied are more than twice as likely to have **attempted suicide**.



Youth primarily use **social media** to connect with **friends and family**.

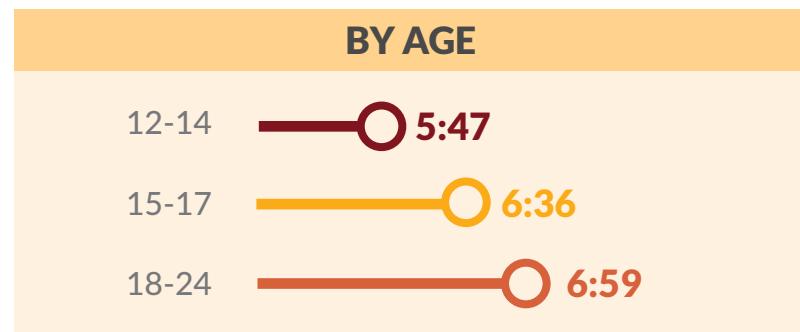
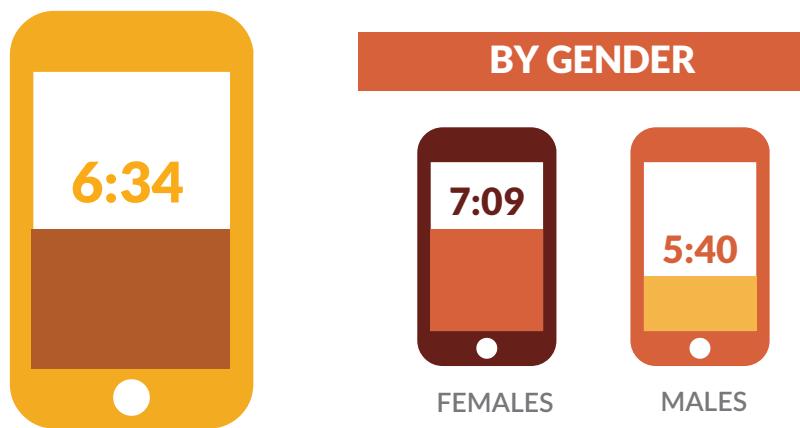


Time Online

The Internet is shaping this generation. Young people have access to vast amounts of information, opinions, and influences at any time of the day or night. But how much is this affecting youth in the Philippines?

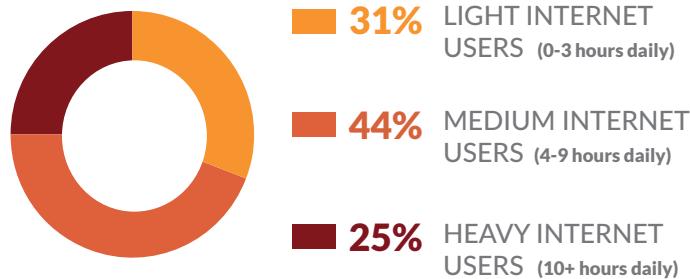
We wanted to find out how much time young people are spending online, how they are using social media, and how these activities are impacting their mental health. Overall, youth report an average of 6 hours and 34 minutes online daily. Females are spending more time connected than males, and time online was also higher for young adults as compared to younger teens.

TOTAL TIME ONLINE DAILY



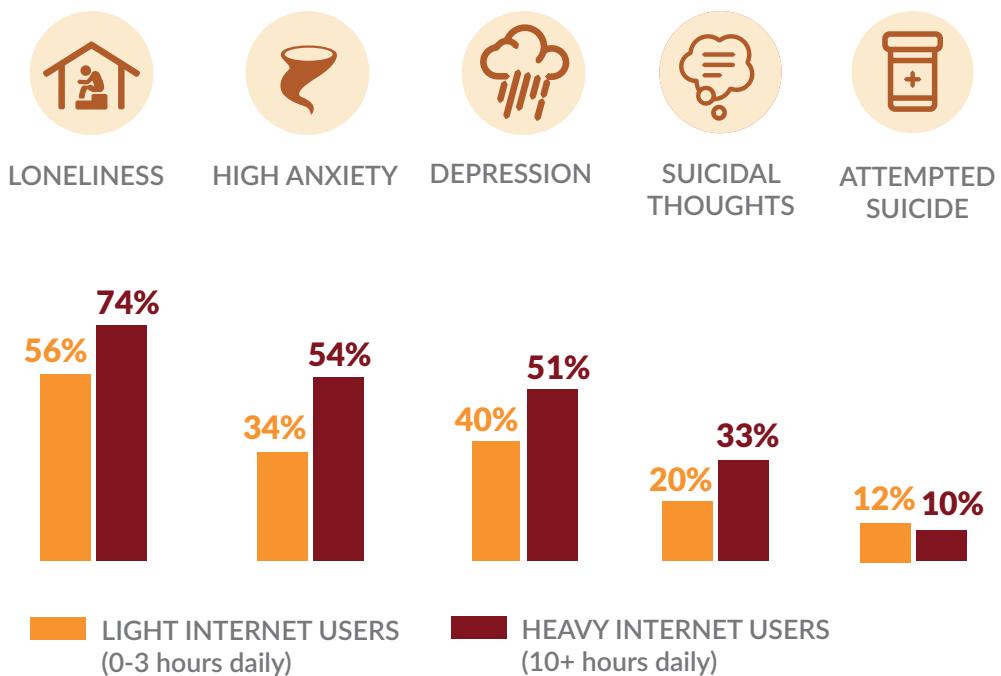
We were also curious what effect time online has on other areas of young people's lives. We divided respondents into categories based on their average time online. One in four young people were seen to be heavy internet users, sharing that they spend more than 10 hours online daily.

TIME SPENT CONNECTED



The data showed a clear trend between time spent online and mental health concerns. Heavy internet users reported higher rates for almost every mental health concern measured in this survey.

MENTAL HEALTH BY TIME ONLINE



There is a very real connection between the lived experiences of young people and their digital habits and choices. However, we are not suggesting that internet usage is the direct or only cause of these negative experiences. Youth who are struggling may be turning to digital platforms as a distraction or escape, which may end up adding negative experiences to their original challenges. The relationship is complex and nuanced, and is likely different in each young person's life. But this data does reveal a pattern which should not be overlooked.

Bullying

We found that the Internet can be a place where youth experience harm or inflict it on others. One in three young people reported that they have been bullied by someone online in the last three months. That number was seen to be higher for younger respondents and heavy internet users.

Being bullied online was connected to negative mental health reporting, not having close friends, and an alarming risk for suicide.

BULLYING

Within the past three months, I have:



Been bullied online **31%**

BULLYING AND FRIENDSHIPS

Been bullied online



- NO CLOSE FRIENDS
- HAVE CLOSE FRIENDS

BULLYING AND SUICIDE RISK

Been bullied online

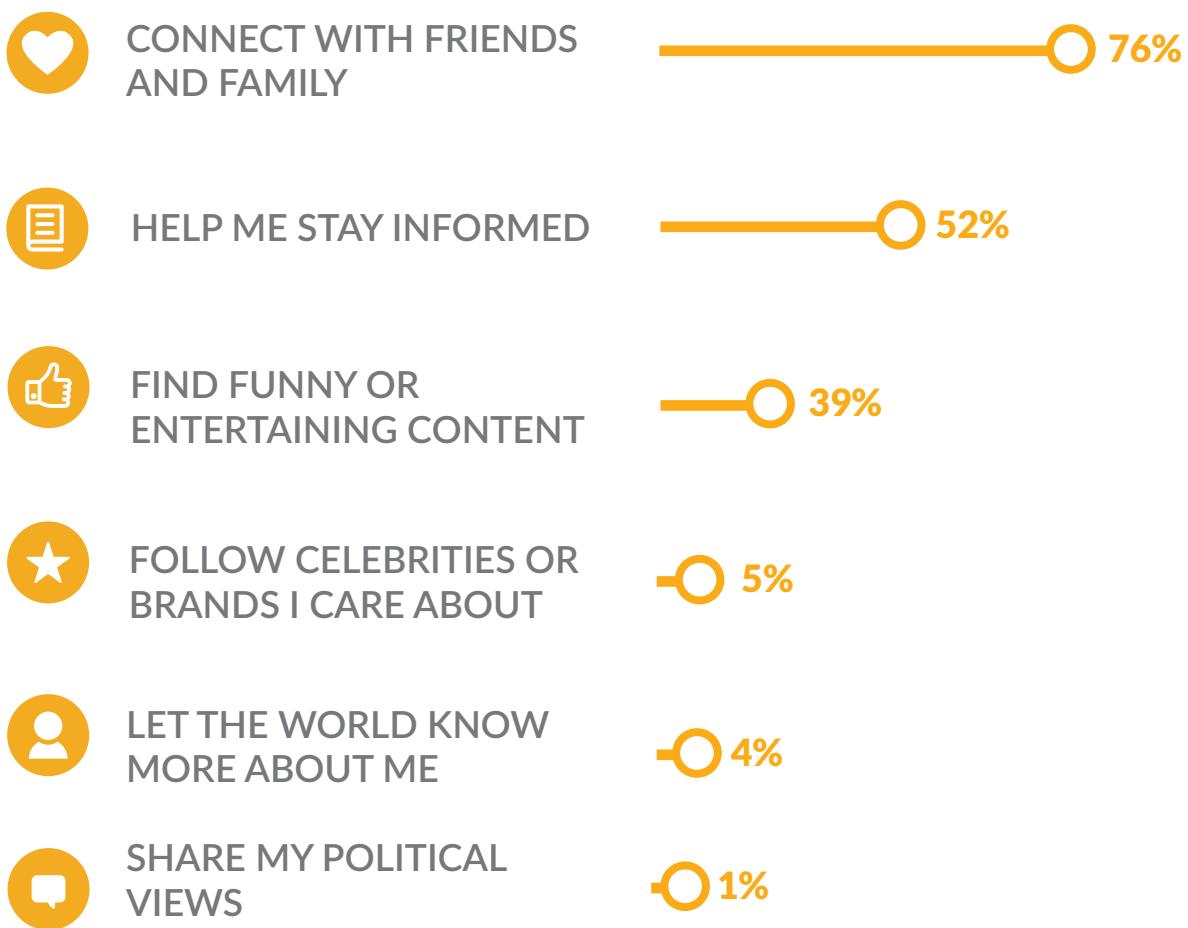


- SUICIDAL THOUGHTS
- ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

Social Media

The average time Filipino youth reported spending on social media was 3:18 hours. The most popular use for social media was connecting with family and friends, followed by staying informed about the world.

I USE SOCIAL MEDIA PRIMARILY TO⁹

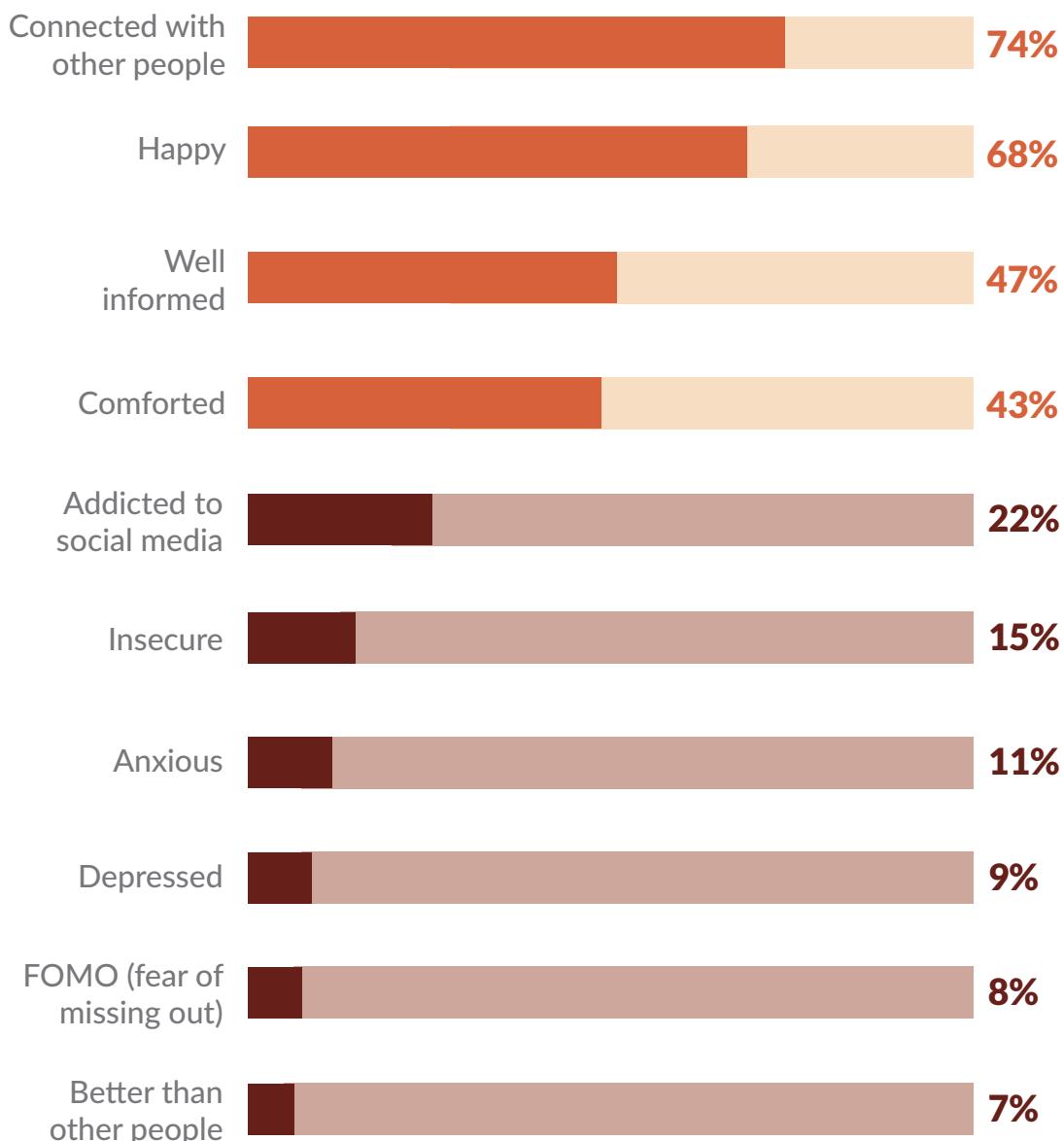


⁹ Note that respondents could choose up to two answers for this question, meaning percentages do not add to 100%

When asked how social media makes them feel, young people mostly chose positive responses, including connected, happy, and comforted. Around 1 in 5 also admitted that they feel addicted to social media, and some young people mentioned it can make them feel insecure, anxious, or depressed.

Females and urban young people users were more likely to report FOMO (Fear of missing out).

SOCIAL MEDIA OFTEN MAKES ME FEEL¹⁰



10 Note that respondents could choose up to two answers for this question, meaning percentages do not add to 100%

Conclusion

Constant connectedness to digital platforms is becoming a way of life for today's young people. More and more youth own phones and have ready access to the Internet. How will we help them navigate this new reality and engage them effectively with the Gospel message on these digital platforms?

- **LEVERAGE DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Technology can be a powerful tool to reach this generation. Youth in both cities and rural areas are getting online and taking advantage of the apps, websites, and social media platforms available. They are online connecting with others and interacting with content daily. How can we ensure there is Gospel content for them to find and life-giving online communities they can be a part of?

- **NAVIGATE THE TENSION**

While this generation appears to be embracing digital, we know from this and other studies that increased screen time is strongly related to negative mental health outcomes. Yet young people have many positive associations with digital and social media spaces. They are vital tools for connection and information. How can we be mindful of the changes digital is bringing and help youth navigate their engagement in a healthy way?

- **POSITION FOR THE FUTURE**

Digital connectedness is the future we are all headed towards, and youth are leading the way in this. We can't stop that, but we can take the journey with them rather than losing them to a digital world we are not part of and don't understand. As families, church leaders, and ministry workers, we need to be aware of how the world is changing and how we may need to change with it. How can we embrace digital alongside this generation and bring both wisdom and innovation to this space?



MENTAL HEALTH

TIPS AND RESOURCES

MENTAL HEALTH TIPS



After reading this report, it is clear that today's young people need help. When asked about their experiences in the last three months, young people shared the following concerns:

- 42% of Filipino youth reported experiencing depression
- 43% reported high anxiety
- 67% reported feelings of loneliness
- 25% reported having had suicidal thoughts

These are not distant numbers. These are our young people. As a parent or caring adult, it can feel overwhelming to know that our youth are struggling—but you should also know that you are not alone. We as the Church must take on the important task of loving, helping, and discipling our youth in the midst of their struggles.

In this guide, we present a three-part approach that will help you come alongside young people to help navigate these challenges.

STEP 1: BECOME FAMILIAR

The first thing you should do is become familiar with common symptoms of **depression**, **anxiety**, and **suicidality**. This will equip you to help young people recognize and label these symptoms in their lives.

Labeling our challenges is actually empowering. One of the primary ways we cope with difficult experiences is to find words and use specific language to describe them. As we come to better understand what is happening, we are better able to cope and share what we are experiencing with others.



STEP 2: TAKE THE INITIATIVE

After equipping yourself with knowledge about **depression**, **anxiety**, **loneliness**, and **suicidality** consider the following next steps.

 1. **MAKE THE FIRST MOVE.** Young people need you to make the first move. When depressed or anxious, they often have difficulty asking for help. It may feel scary or difficult to express what they are feeling. This means that you need to start the conversation.

 2. **ASK GOOD QUESTIONS BASED ON OBSERVATIONS.** We all become defensive when feeling vulnerable, and this is definitely true for youth. As we come alongside to connect with young people, we must ask compassionate, non-judgmental questions. One way to do this is to ask questions that arise out of your observations. For example: "I've noticed you've been sleeping a lot lately. Have you been feeling ok?" Use open-ended questions, rather than yes-or-no questions, as this allows young people to expand on their experiences.

 3. **OFFER GENEROUS EMPATHY.** Start the conversation with the assumption that young people's concerns are real. We cannot ask someone to share vulnerably and then minimize or dismiss their concerns. Even if our intent is to help the person feel better, jumping quickly to comments like: "It's not so bad," or "Look at the positives," can shut down the conversation. It may make the struggling person feel minimized or ashamed. Instead of immediately correcting, show that you understand by asking questions about their experience so you understand what they are going through and why they are reacting as they are.

 4. **STAY CALM AND NON-REACTIVE.** Parents and caring adults tend to be observant and often have good insight into the youth around them. But caring communication is disrupted when we react out of our own fears rather than responding compassionately. Rather than reinforcing the hard emotions or thoughts of young people by reacting to them, strive to be a calm, caring presence. By staying steady ourselves we can help youth express their feelings without getting swept away by them.

It was written of Jesus that "He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. And his name will be the hope of all the world." (Matthew 12: 20-21). We can learn from Him how to gently handle those who are burdened and weighed down by depression.



STEP 3: BUILD RESILIENCE

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity. We can help lower young people's risks for mental illness and help them cope with struggles by encouraging healthy practices.

FOCUS ON FILLING UP. Help young people discover what they need to stay full physically, relationally, and spiritually. Every person's baseline is different, so use the following diagram to help them identify their daily and weekly needs in these three areas:

PHYSICAL HEALTH:

- hours of sleep each night
- number of meals per day
- non-caffeinated drinks per day
- minutes of exercise every day/week
- medications taken as prescribed

RELATIONAL HEALTH:

- time with friends
- time alone

SPIRITUAL HEALTH:

- time with the Lord
- time in corporate worship

HELP ELIMINATE OR MINIMIZE STRESSORS.

Youth and young adults are moving into a phase of having more control over their lives than they did as children. But they may still need help in setting wise boundaries. Help them think about limits that may be needed on things like social media and extracurricular activities. Help them identify which activities they do out of joy and which they may do out of obligation or addiction. Empower them to say no when they need to and offer to help practically support in ways that they find helpful.

INSTILL TRUTH.

When youth get stuck in the alternate realities of anxiety and depression, they need to have truth instilled in them to carry them through these moments. Encourage young people to read Scripture and memorize verses or passages that they can turn towards in the midst of struggles. Offer to join them in this and share how you use Scripture to fight your battles.

HELP CHALLENGE THOUGHTS.

Sometimes, youth may need help seeing the bigger picture. You can help them by educating yourself on typical thought distortions and helping them identify when they get stuck in a cycle of crippling thinking. If you aren't familiar with types of thought distortions, a counselor can help.



CONCLUSION



Starting conversations with young people about mental health is never easy, but it is necessary. While our research showed that Filipino youth are struggling, it also found that family is the first place they go for advice when it comes to life's big questions. Let that encourage you and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you as you walk alongside young people. You are not alone, and the next generation isn't either

ONLINE RESOURCES

Axis Resources:

- [Mental Health Check-In: Questions to Ask Your Kid.](#)
- [14 Stress-Relief Tips and Resources.](#)
- [Suicide & Self-Harm Prevention Guide.](#)
- [Help Gen Z to Cope in a Fear-Driven World.](#)

Additional Resources:

- [BBC Headroom Wellbeing Guide. Catch It, Check It, Change It worksheet.](#)
- [Kate Bowler. "Pamela Morris-Perez: Suicide Prevention and Hope."](#)
- [Unstuck: A Teen Guide for Living in Uncertain Times. Trauma Healing Institute \(September 2020\).](#)

ABOUT ONEHOPE

In partnership with local churches, ministries, and governments around the world, OneHope has reached more than 2 billion children and youth with God's Word. Based on in-country research OneHope conducts, Scripture programs are designed to be age and culturally relevant. Since 1987, OneHope has helped kids experience God's Story, sharing the life-changing message of hope with children and youth in every country. onehope.net

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This project was an extension of a global research initiative that surveyed 8,394 teens ages 13-19 in 20 countries. The global study was conducted online in February-March of 2020.

Research was conducted for this project in the Philippines in March of 2024, surveying youth and young adults ages 12-24. The data represents a variety of locations and regions throughout the Philippines and questions were customized to fit the national context. Young people were surveyed in-person at schools and submitted their answers on paper. Respondents were not required to answer every question, however, sample sizes were sufficient for every question included in this report.

At the time of the study, the overall population of the Philippines was just over 118 million, with young people making up around 25% of that total. For a national population of this size, a sample of 400 is widely considered by researchers to be good representation. This report's sample of 1061 is well over that standard. For more information about statistically significant sampling visit: <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>

DEFINITIONS

CHRISTIAN

Youth who self-identified as Christian, but not as Jehovah's Witness or Mormon.

COMMITTED CHRISTIAN

Youth who self-identified as Christian, but not as Jehovah's Witness or Mormon, and who met the following criteria:

- Believe God exists and they can have a personal relationship with Him.
- Believe Jesus is the Son of God.
- Believe that forgiveness of sins is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Believe the Bible is the Word of God.
- Read Scripture on their own daily or weekly.
- Pray daily or weekly.

NOMINAL CHRISTIANS

Youth who self-identified as Christian but not as Jehovah's Witness or Mormon and who did not meet the criteria of core beliefs or habits established for Committed Christians.



GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE