

Youth Scan

September 2005

From the National Youth Council
"Developing a Vibrant, Highly-Connected,
and Self-Sustaining Youth Sector, and Nurturing World-Ready Youth"

Bringing you snippets of youth trends and issues compiled from diverse sources such as news reports, journals and press releases, Youth Scan aims to help you stay in touch with the constantly evolving youth scene.

1. Logged on, wired up and health-food focussed - Singapore's youth revealed

Synovate, Media Fact Sheet, June 2005

Synovate, a leading global market intelligence company, today released data from the first ever Young Asians survey. The study compared results amongst Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand and showed that Singapore youths had the highest rates of ownership of mobile phones, TV game consoles and digital video cameras, as well as the highest use of interactive communications when online. They lead the region when it comes to digital technology.

Some of the findings include:

About Internet usage and functions:

68% of Singaporeans access interactive communications every time or most of the time they use the Internet, the highest rate regionally (regional average 50%).

Virtual wooing lacks wow - only 1% of Singaporeans use the Internet for online dating, the lowest rate anywhere in Asia.

About income and spending among youths working full-time

Average monthly income in Singapore is US\$753.62, compared to the regional average of US\$673.93.

Singaporean youths are relatively healthy compared to the region, spending only US\$18.09 on fast food per month, the second lowest level out of all eight countries surveyed. The regional spend on fast food per month is \$39.33.

Spending on newspapers (\$9.17 per month) is the lowest out of all countries surveyed.

About income and spending - not working full time

Average monthly pocket money in Singapore is US\$107.88 compared to the regional average of US\$86.32.

Singapore's youth love electronics and toys. Their average spend per month on electronics is \$32.15 compared to the regional average of \$22.79. Their average spending per month on toys is \$21.52, compared to the regional average of \$15.97.

About personal product ownership

80% own a mobile phone, the largest percentage of all eight countries surveyed. The regional average is 62%.

31% own a TV game console, the highest rate for the region.

32% own a VCD player, highest rate for the region and 22% own a DVD player.

12% own a digital video camera, the highest rate for the region.

About attitudes

Young Singaporeans aspire to be wealthy, successful and educated. Top career choices are business owner (12%), the academic/science sector (12%), the medical profession (11%), and the government sector (7%).

22% of young Singaporeans worry about having enough money when they grow up.

About world peace

A large percentage of Singaporeans shun the greater good for their own self with 15% wanting to be more beautiful, more popular or more successful.

A further 15% want to change the way in which mankind treats each other.

2. Bloggers learn the price of telling too much

CNN.com, Monday, 11 July 2005

Blogs are everywhere -- increasingly, the place where young people go to bare their souls, to vent, to gossip. And often they do so with unabashed fervor and little self-editing, posting their innermost thoughts for any number of Web surfers to see.

Some youths say there's freedom in being able to share transparently with people who read their blogs—who largely are their friends and acquaintances. Some are, however, finding that putting one's life online can have a price. A few bloggers, for instance, have been fired for writing about work on personal online journals. Experts say such incidents belong to a growing trend in which frank outpourings online are causing personal and public dramas, often taking on a life they wouldn't have if the Web had not come along and turned individuals into publishers. Some also speculate that more scandalous blog entries -- especially those about partying and dating exploits -- will have ramifications down the road.

Surveys completed in recent months by the Pew Internet & American Life Project found that nearly a fifth of teens who have access to the Web have their own blogs. And 38 percent of teens say they read other people's blogs.

By comparison, about a tenth of adults have their own blogs and a quarter say they read other people's online journals.

Despite the potential pitfalls, youths still stick by blogging as it provides them a mean to stay in touch with friends and air their creative work.

3. A Topic that Frightens Youth Work

Youth Today, June 2005, By Peter Benson

This article addresses the concept of spiritual development among youth as taboo. Some simply equate it with religious development; others see it as unconventional or the "personal" side of religion. Because public discourse has remained largely shunned, we do not even have a shared definition of "spirituality". The author advocates that the healthy development of young people includes the responsible pursuit of meaning, purpose and contribution - thus the concept of spiritual development is worth deeper thought and study. He says a clear link exists between time spent in religious activities and healthy outcomes for teens and thus urges readers to rigorously look at how

spirituality develops over time in young people, so that we can nurture it in positive ways in every sector that touches kids' lives.

4. The Impact of Participation in Service-Learning on High School Students' Civic Engagement

RMC Research Corporation, May 2005

Youth in service-learning programs are significantly more likely to say they enjoy school and plan to vote, according to this study of more than 1,000 youths, half of whom were Latinos.

Researchers also found that the quality of service-learning programs directly affected the program outcomes. Programs that lasted at least one semester and were more organized yielded more positive results, as did those with more experienced teachers. Students who chose their own project issues had the greatest gains in civic knowledge.

The study compared civic engagement outcomes - such as civic knowledge, academic achievement and community attachment - among five high school service-learning programs and their respective schools' social science, government and economics classes. It found that poorly implemented service-learning programs had about the same effect as passive, lecture-type classroom instruction.

5. Holy Youth Work

Youth Today, April 2005

Some after-school programs in America are making some parents and kids excited by offering a workshop teaching kids to create comic books. The workshop helps kids produce comics as a means of exploring their artistic and organizational skills, improving their writing, practicing self-discipline and taking on issues of importance to youth. Years ago, authorities once linked juvenile delinquency to horror and crime comics. By 1997, youth organizations and even the government had turned to the comic book format to communicate with youth about problems. However, the question of whether producing comics produce measurable results is left unanswered as there are no studies on the impact of comic book programs. There is some evidence that arts and media projects have positive, measurable impacts on youth; but some say the benefits of creating comics might not be measurable due to the creative elements.

6. On the Frontier of Adulthood: Emerging Themes and New Directions

MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood and Public Policy, October 2004, Issue 1.

Ages 18-21 are milestones in a young person's life. In the eyes of the law and society, they have crossed the threshold of adulthood. In reality, however, by age 21, few young people today would actually be considered "adult" based on traditional markers-leaving home, finishing school, starting a job, getting married, and having children. More youth are extending education, living at home longer, and moving haltingly, or stopping altogether, along the stepping stones of adulthood. A new period of life is emerging in which young people are no longer adolescents but not yet adults.

Entry into adulthood is longer, more ambiguous, and generally occurs in a more complex and less uniform fashion than in the past. Young people, however, are not necessarily unwilling to take on adult roles. If anything, the opposite is occurring, as young people now seem more aware of what it takes to be autonomous and are disinclined to take on commitments they cannot honour.

Once, youth moved nearly in lockstep through the stages that mark adulthood. Now, they alternate or simultaneously pursue education and work, cycle between periods living at home and living independently, and delay marriage and parenting. Women, especially, have seen their options broaden. As a result, fewer young people at age 22, much less someone in their teens, know what they are going to do in the next 10 years than they did even a few decades ago.

"Youth Scan" is a service provided by the National Youth Council, a division of the People's Association. We hope you find the service useful and seek your feedback to help us improve it. Please send your feedback or queries to Email: yrn@nyc.gov.sg.

**Past issues of Youth Scan can be accessed via the Youth Research Network.
Thank you for using this service.**

The information in Youth Scan is provided as a service to the community. NYC tries to provide quality information, but makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of the information contained in or linked to Youth Scan. Readers should respect the Intellectual Property Rights of the authors. The views and opinions of authors expressed in Youth Scan do not necessarily state or reflect those of NYC, and their publication here does not constitute an endorsement by NYC. Individuals concerned with the correctness or accuracy of information are advised to seek independent verification of such data.