

GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE

Francophone Africa Report

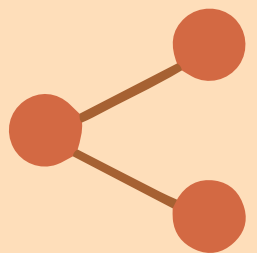
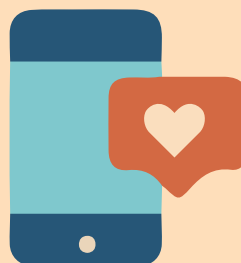


Table of Contents

3 INTRODUCTION

6 RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

18 INFLUENCES AND GUIDING VOICES

27 PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND STRUGGLES

38 IDENTITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

46 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

49 ABOUT ONEHOPE

49 ABOUT THE RESEARCH

50 DEFINITIONS

INTRODUCTION

Each new generation is unique in its own way, and research can help us understand how the world looks through different eyes. The world's current generation of teens and young adults is sometimes called Generation Z. Across Africa, there are 48 million Generation Z teens ages 13-19 comprising about 15% of the population.¹

This research reveals the beliefs, habits, influences, and struggles of the teens across French-speaking Africa. The research also reveals their views of God, Jesus, the Bible, and the church. Data was collected in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Senegal. This project was a follow-up from a larger global study that surveyed teens across 20 countries, including the African nations of Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.²

Throughout this report, these three countries (Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa) are grouped together as English-speaking Africa and some comparison data is included. Global averages are sometimes included to help explain how teens in French-speaking Africa are similar or different from global trends. Please note that the global study collected data online via a panel survey company while this Francophone study gathered data in-person through schools, churches, community centers, and neighborhoods. These differences in methodology should be considered when examining data comparisons.



477 teens surveyed



5 countries

BURKINA FASO: 100 teens surveyed

COTE D'IVOIRE: 100 teens surveyed

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: 92 teens surveyed

SENEGAL: 81 teens surveyed

CHAD: 104 teens surveyed

¹ United Nations Population Division, Total Population Database, <https://population.un.org/wpp/DataQuery/> Accessed August 2020.

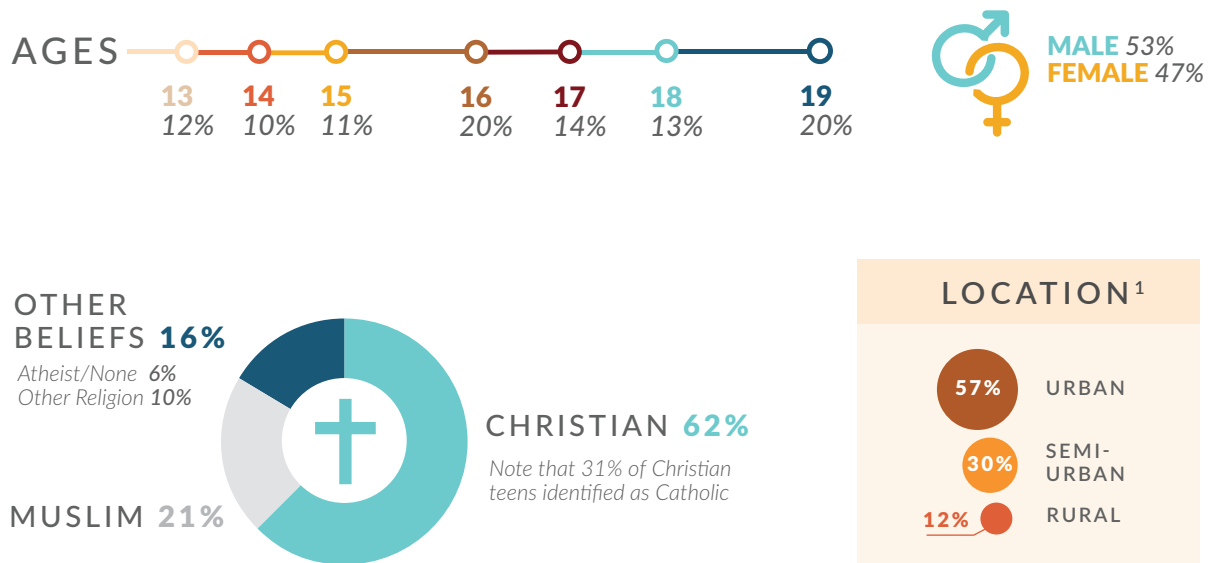
² For the global study, data was collected in 20 countries between February-March 2020. Data was collected in the five Francophone nations in September-October 2021

Though part of the same continent, these five African countries have their own history, culture, beliefs, and opinions that have shaped the current generation. Each country's young people are obviously distinct and this research highlights some of those differences.

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 many individual teens with their own sets of hopes, fears, and daily challenges. Each of those teens 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.

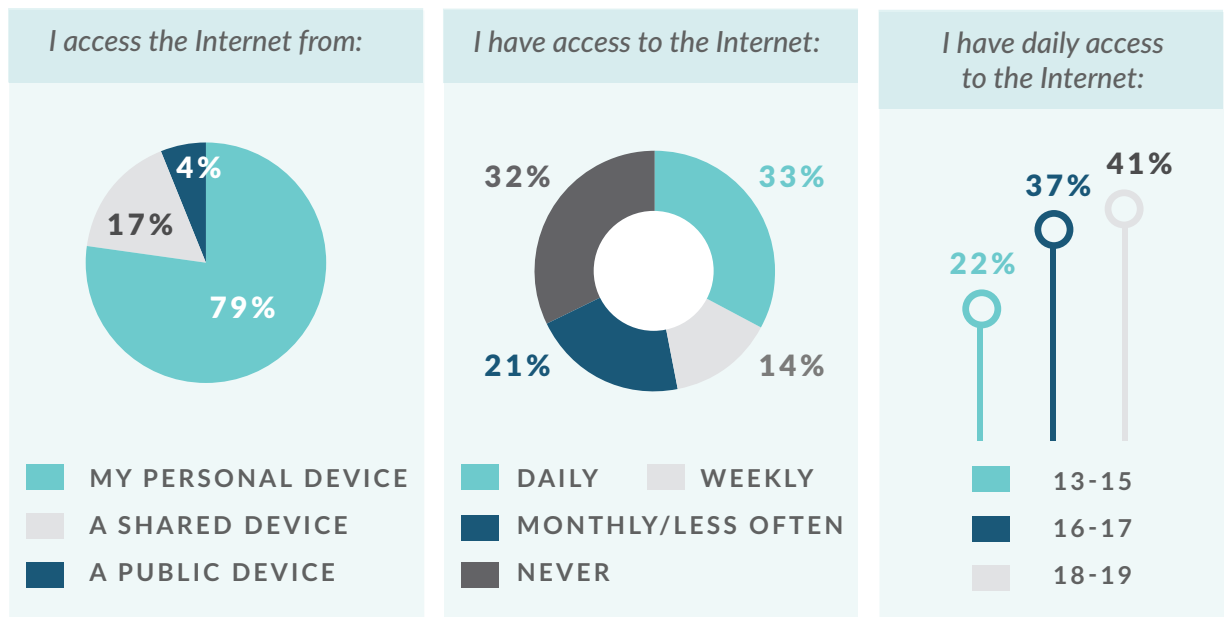
ABOUT THE TEENS



¹ For purposes of this research study a rural area was defined as having a population of fewer than 2,500 people, semi-urban as 2,500-50,000, and an urban area as having a population of 50,000 or more.

INTERNET ACCESS AND USAGE

Teens in French-speaking Africa appear to differ from their global peers in their level of digital connectedness. Most teens surveyed in these five countries (79%) do say they have a personal device such as a mobile phone, tablet, or computer. But just 33% of the teens said they have access to the Internet daily. Daily internet access and device ownership trend up with age.



It is important to note that teens in French-speaking Africa appear to be less digitally connected than those in English-speaking Africa and teens globally. This is a factor likely impacted by the difference in data collection methodology between the two studies that should be considered when looking at the comparison data between Francophone and other regions.

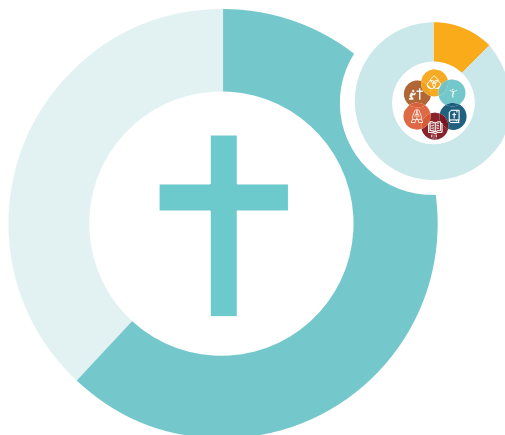
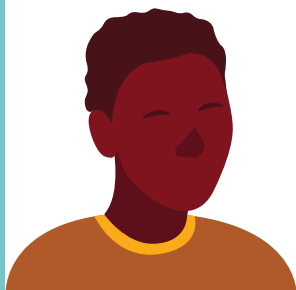
A primary objective of the Global Youth Culture research study was to understand the influence of internet access and social media usage on the beliefs and behaviors of young people. Although teens in Francophone appear to be less digitally connected, it is interesting to see that they share many of the viewpoints and struggles of their more connected global generation.

RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

FRANCOPHONE
AFRICA REPORT

What We Discovered

62% of Francophone teens identified as **Christian**.



Only 19% were discovered to be **Committed Christians**.

See definition on page 9.



The number of Christians as well as a **teen's committedness to their Christian faith** varies greatly by country.



75% of Christian teens **pray regularly**, but only **53%** read **their Bibles** at least weekly and **56%** **attend church** at least weekly.

50% of teens who don't go to church say they are **open to attending if invited**, with an additional **35%** **saying they might be open**.



Non-Christian teens say that a **conversation with their parents** would be most likely to change their mind about a religious belief.



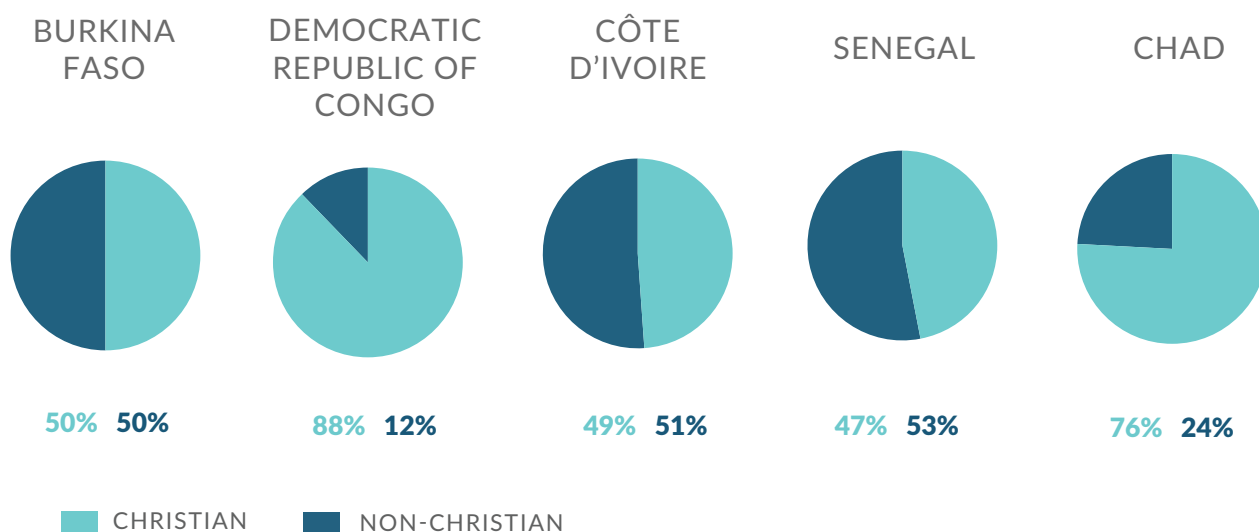
57% of Francophone teens have a **Scriptural view of God, Jesus, and the Bible**.

But **40%** also say all religions teach **equally valid truths**.

Religious Attitudes and Behaviors

This research study was uniquely comprehensive in examining the role faith and religion play in the lives of the teens in Francophone Africa. What do they believe? How are they putting their beliefs into practice? We explored the religious attitudes and behaviors of these teens and the impact of those on other areas of their lives.

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY



The majority of the teen study participants in the Francophone region (62%) identified themselves as Christian, but there were considerable differences between countries. The Democratic Republic of Congo was the most Christian and Senegal the least. Note that these percentages do not necessarily reflect the proportion of Christians in these country's populations but rather those who participated in this study. But what does it truly mean to be a Christian? We looked at the core beliefs and key spiritual disciplines that would reveal a teen is a Committed Christian.

62% OF THE TEEN PARTICIPANTS IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA IDENTIFIED AS CHRISTIAN.

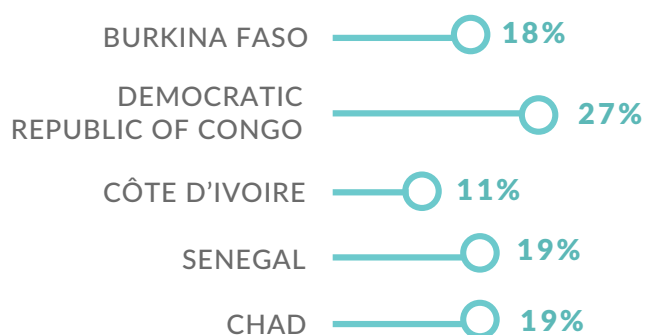
6 TRAITS OF COMMITTED CHRISTIAN TEENS



**Note that these teens self-identified as Christian, but not as Jehovah's Witness or Mormon. Committed Christians may be Catholic.*

When we re-examined teens according to this definition of committed faith, we immediately saw a big difference. Across the Francophone region, many fewer teens who identified as Christian were seen to be Committed Christians. The gap varied by country. 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.

COMMITTED CHRISTIANS BY COUNTRY



19% OF THE TEENS IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA ARE COMMITTED CHRISTIANS.

While this might seem discouraging, it's important to know that Africa had the most Committed Christian teens of any region in our global study. Looking globally, a mere 7% of the teens surveyed were Committed Christians as compared with 19% in French-speaking and 28% in English-speaking Africa.¹

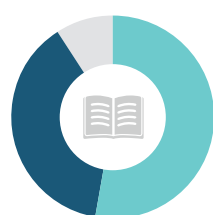
¹ Throughout this report, English-speaking Africa refers to the teens surveyed in Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa. Data was collected in these countries in February-March 2020.

How Teens Practice Their Faith

Engaging in spiritual disciplines is how we grow our faith. Encouragingly, Christian teens in Africa reported praying regularly. However, only a little more than half are reading their Bibles at least weekly, and few are regularly having spiritual conversations with those who do not share their faith.

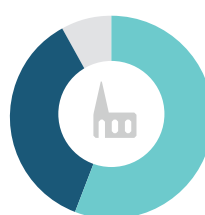
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES AMONG CHRISTIAN TEENS

READING THE BIBLE
ON THEIR OWN



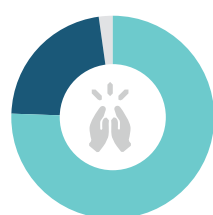
53% 38% 9%

ATTENDING
CHURCH



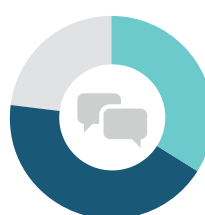
56% 36% 8%

PRAYING

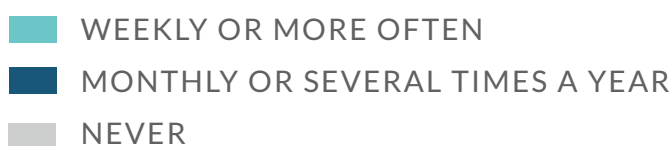


75% 22% 2%

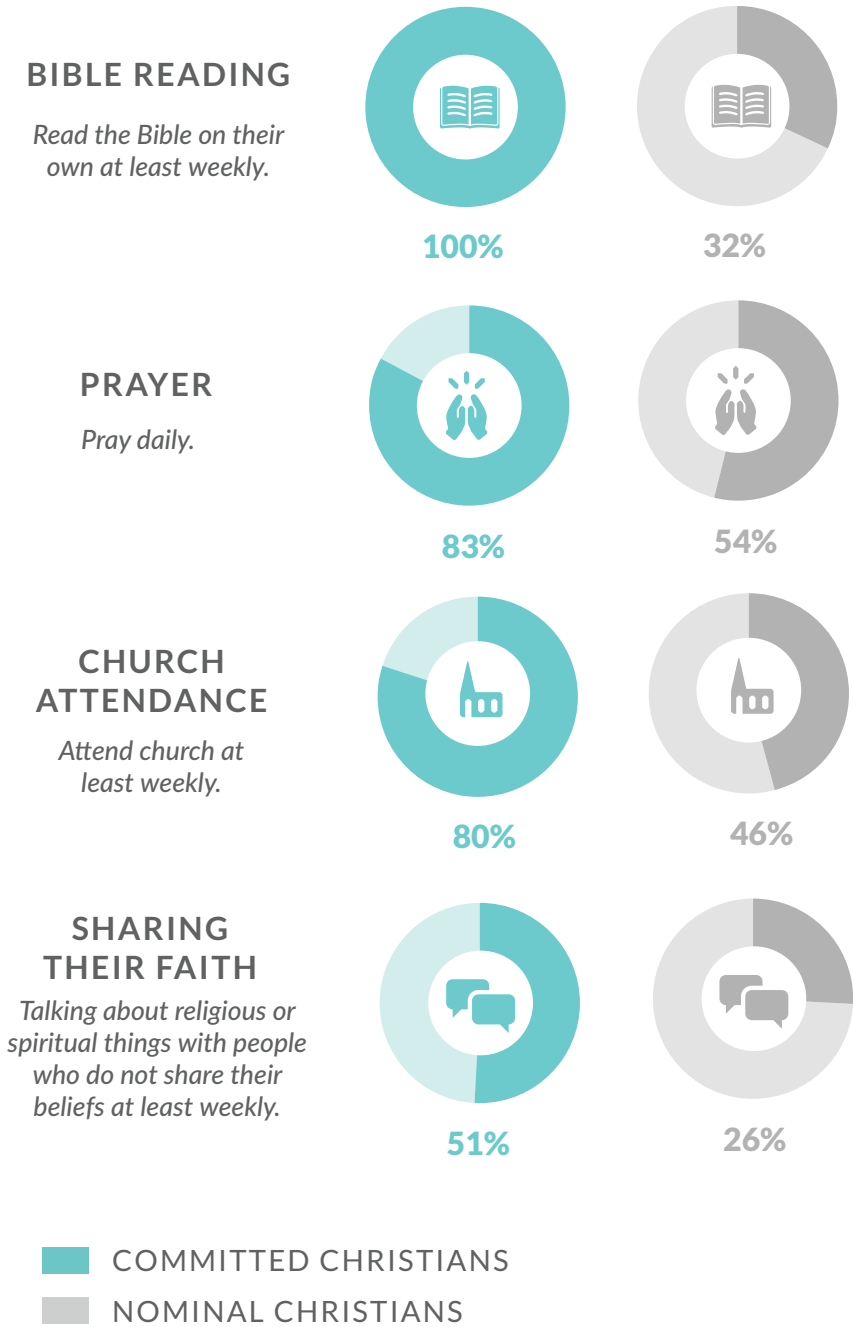
HAVING SPIRITUAL
CONVERSATIONS



34% 43% 23%



Encouragingly, the picture is a bit different among Committed Christian teens. These teens are prioritizing key behaviors such as Scripture reading, prayer, attending church, and sharing their faith with others.



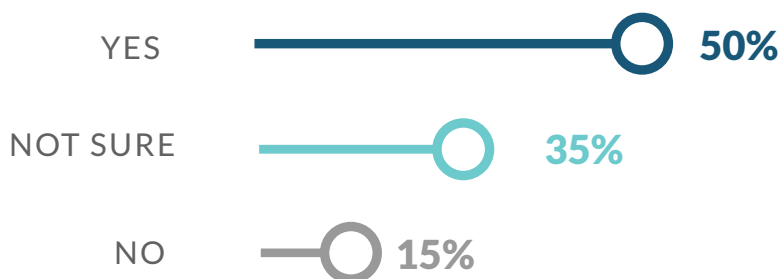
JUST **32%** OF NOMINAL CHRISTIANS SAY THEY READ THEIR BIBLE WEEKLY.

Teens and the Church

A church community can play a critical role in a young person's life and continue to be a place of support and encouragement as they grow. This research revealed that teens may simply need an invitation. Most teens who do not attend church say they would be open to coming if someone invited them. Very few said they would not be open.

OPEN TO ATTENDING CHURCH

I would be open to attending a Christian church service if invited.

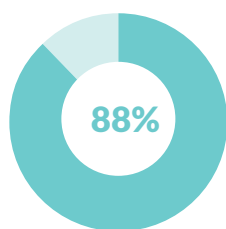


Spiritual Viewpoints

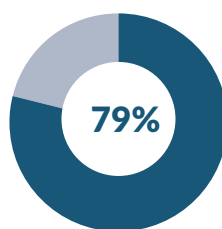
Francophone teens in general say spirituality is very important to them, regardless of which religion they follow. The vast majority of non-Christians surveyed do have a religion, with 60% following Islam.

IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUALITY

My faith beliefs or spiritual journey are an important part of my identity.



CHRISTIANS



NON-CHRISTIANS

In addition, more than half of the teens in Francophone have a scriptural view of God, Jesus, and the Bible. Fifty-seven percent of the teens surveyed agree that God exists and they can have a personal relationship with Him, that Jesus is the Son of God, and that the Bible is the Word of God.

57% OF THE TEENS SURVEYED HAVE A SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF GOD, JESUS AND THE BIBLE.

SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF GOD, JESUS AND THE BIBLE



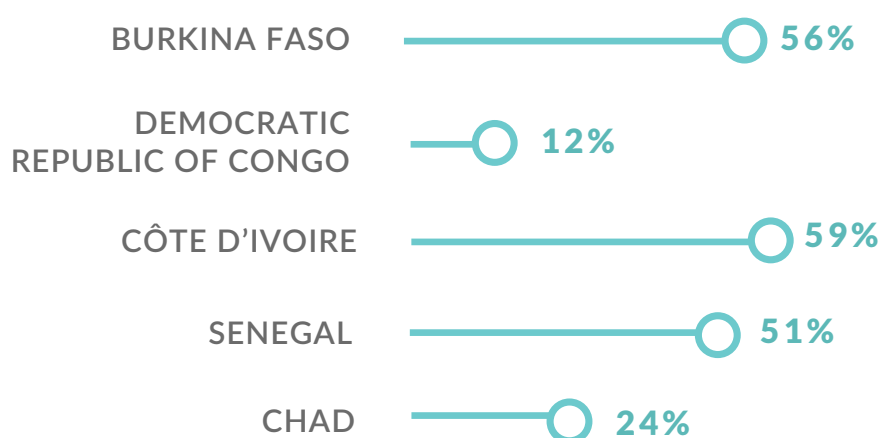
FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA



ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICA

Despite general viewpoints that align with Scripture, Francophone teens still exhibit some confusion on the topic of truth. Many teens, including some Christians, say all religions teach equally valid truths. Responses varied greatly by country, however.

ALL RELIGIONS TEACH EQUALLY VALID TRUTHS



CHRISTIANS



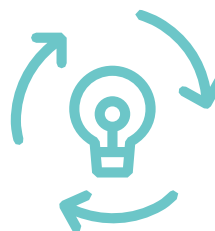
NON-CHRISTIANS

What Changes their Mind

We wanted to discover what would make teens change their mind about a religious belief they already hold. The most popular answer was personal experiences, such as an answer to prayer. This matched the global trend.

However, in comparison with their peers in English-speaking Africa, Francophone teens were observed to place less value on individual experiences or investigation. Instead, these teens were more socially oriented, saying they would listen to parents, religious leaders, or even friends. At the end of the day, Francophone teens are open to a variety of influences, which can even change depending on where they live.

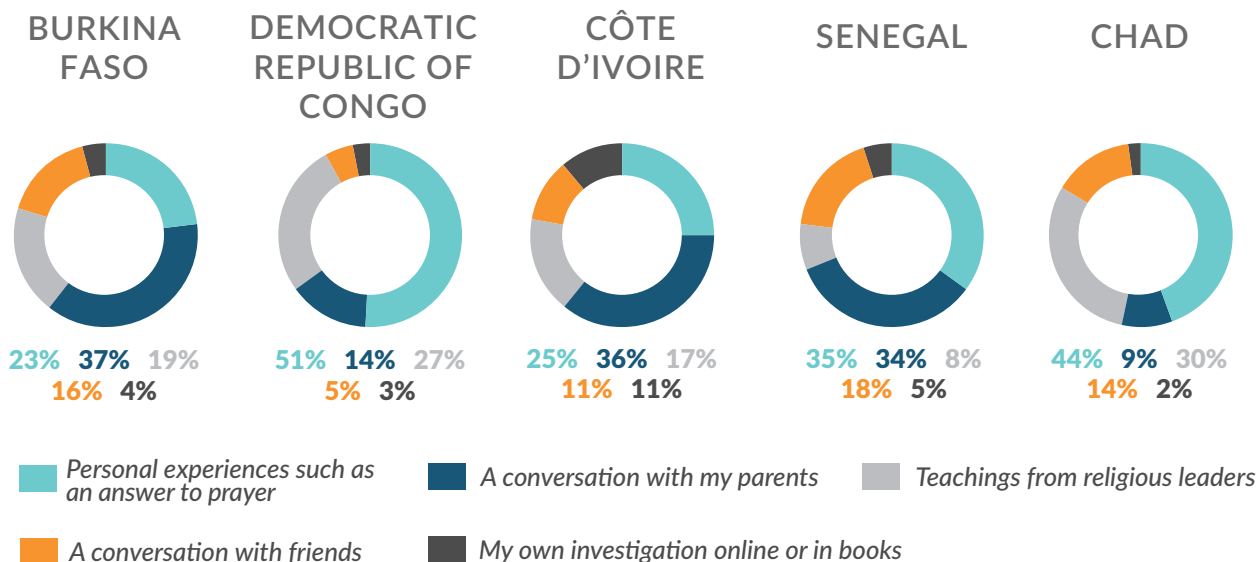
WHAT WOULD BE MOST
LIKELY TO CHANGE YOUR
MIND ABOUT A RELIGIOUS
BELIEF?



- 1 PERSONAL EXPERIENCES SUCH AS AN ANSWER TO PRAYER**
French-speaking Africa: **36%** • English-speaking Africa: **48%**
- 2 A CONVERSATION WITH MY PARENTS**
French-speaking Africa: **25%** • English-speaking Africa: **10%**
- 3 TEACHINGS FROM RELIGIOUS LEADERS**
French-speaking Africa: **21%** • English-speaking Africa: **16%**
- 4 A CONVERSATION WITH FRIENDS**
French-speaking Africa: **13%** • English-speaking Africa: **4%**
- 5 MY OWN INVESTIGATION ONLINE OR IN BOOKS**
French-speaking Africa: **5%** • English-speaking Africa: **23%**

INFLUENCES BY COUNTRY

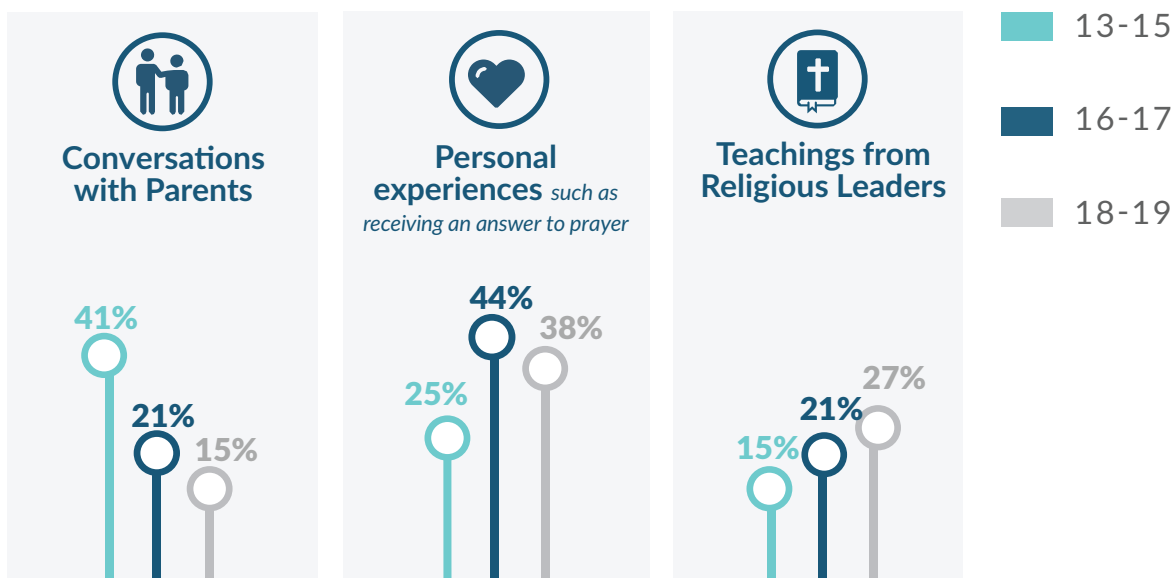
Most likely to change my mind about a religious belief:



A young person's religion and age can also play a role in who influences their beliefs. Non-Christian teens are much more likely to be influenced by their parents. Younger teens (ages 13-15) were also twice as likely as other age groups to say a conversation with their parents would be highly influential for them. Older teens were much more likely to prefer a personal experience or teachings from religious leaders.

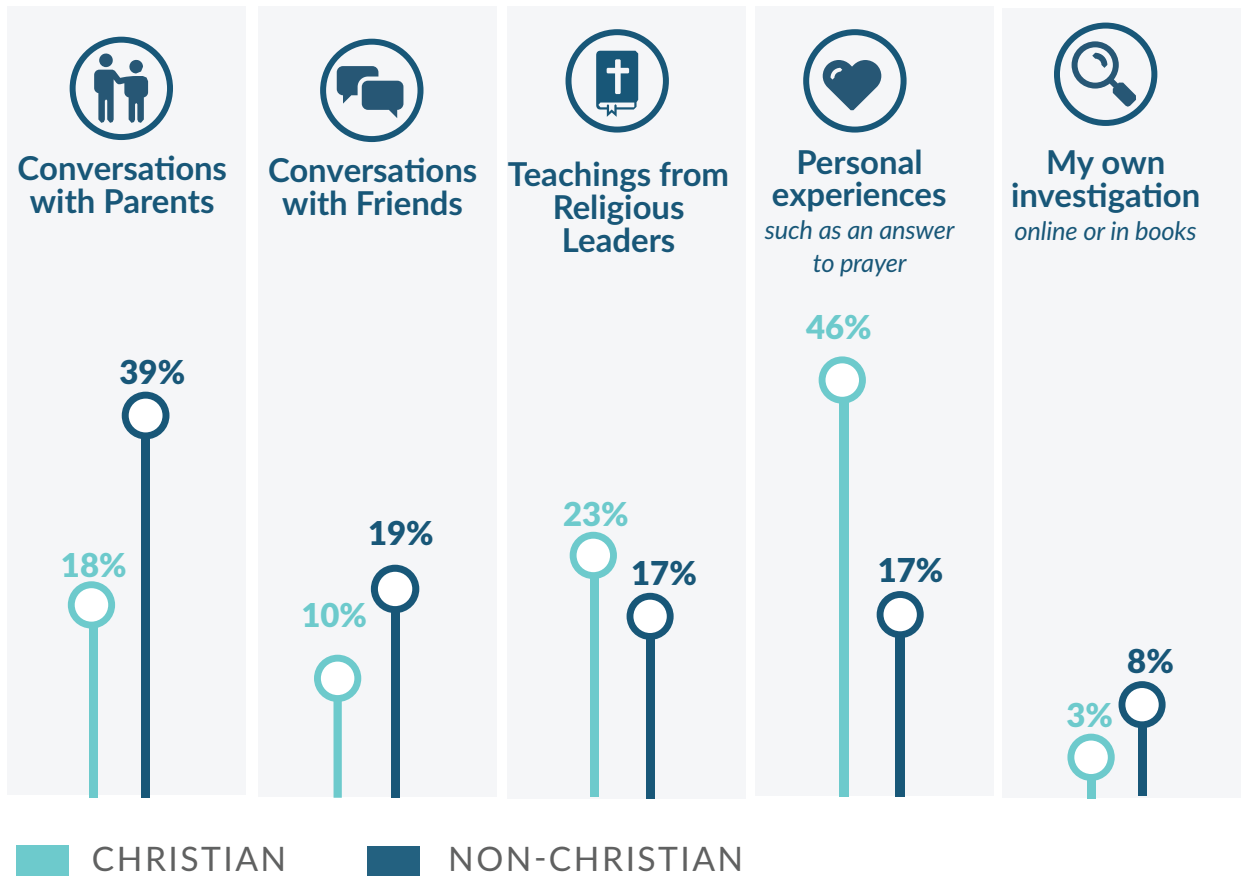
INFLUENCES BY AGE

Most likely to change my mind about a religious belief:



INFLUENCES BY RELIGION

Most likely to change my mind about a religious belief:



Conclusion

This data shows where teens 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 teens to maturity in faith.

- **THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL.** Young people in Francophone say faith is important to them, and the continent of Africa is home to the most Christian teens in our global study. However, this does not mean the church should grow complacent. Our research revealed that many of these believers have a nominal faith and need continued discipleship. How can we help these young people develop scriptural beliefs and spiritual disciplines that will move them from being nominal believers to mature, thriving Christians?
- **INSTILL A LOVE OF THE BIBLE.** Scripture engagement needs to be strengthened in the lives of young people. Only half of Christian teens say they read their Bible at least weekly. How can we help this generation engage the Bible regularly, allowing it to speak to the real needs and challenges they face in their lives?
- **INVITE TEENS TO CHURCH.** The data shows that this generation is open and willing to visit church. They may just lack an invitation. In addition, relatively few young people regularly talk to others who do not share their religious beliefs. How can we reach out to those who are outside the church and equip young people to share the hope they have in Christ?
- **HELP THIS GENERATION EXPERIENCE FAITH.** When it comes to what would change their mind about religion, young people are open to a diverse range of experiences. Many rely on their parents to help them know what to believe, while others look for personal faith experiences. How can we use this understanding to create environments and opportunities for teens to encounter Christ?

INFLUENCES AND GUIDING VOICES

FRANCOPHONE
AFRICA REPORT

What We Discovered

Teens say their **parents** are the people who have the most **influence on their ambitions in life.**



Teens trust family for guidance on life's important topics such as right and wrong and the meaning of life.



87% of the teens say their **family experience** has been good overall.



76% of the teens have **close friends who know them well.** But in DRC, only **51%** of the teens report this.



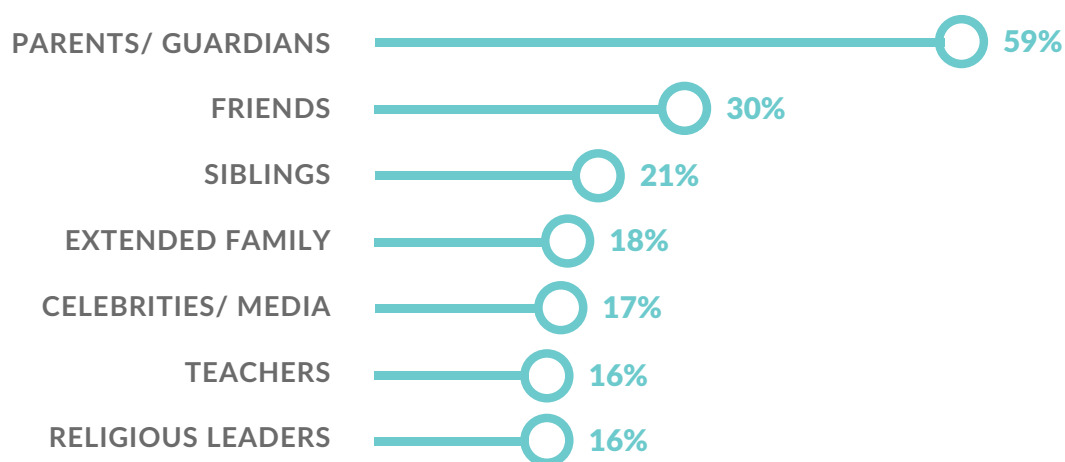
Christian teens report **family members** are their **number one influence.** In second place are their **pastors or Bible.**

Friend and Family Relationships

When we asked teens who primarily influences their ambitions in life, parents were by far the most popular option, followed by friends. We wanted to know a little more about those relationships and how they are going.

INFLUENCES ON LIFE AMBITION

Who influences my ambitions in life:

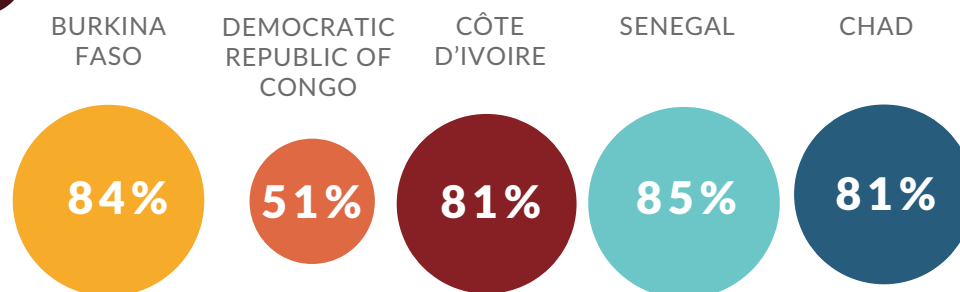


Encouragingly, the majority of teens in Francophone (76%) indicated they have strong friendships in their lives. The notable exception was the Democratic Republic of Congo, where only half of the teens reported having close friends. This was by far the lowest response of any of the 20 countries surveyed globally.

FRIENDSHIP SATISFACTION



I have close friends who know me well



When it comes to their family relationships, the vast majority of Francophone teens (87%) say their experience has been positive.

Of the countries surveyed, teens in Burkina Faso were the most satisfied and teens in DRC were the least satisfied. It was concerning to see that teens in DRC report the lowest rates of both close friendships and positive family experiences.

87% OF THE TEENS SURVEYED SAY THEIR FAMILY EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN GOOD.

FAMILY SATISFACTION



Overall, my family experience has been good

BURKINA
FASO

95%

DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
CONGO

81%

CÔTE
D'IVOIRE

87%

SENEGAL

90%

CHAD

82%



Teens Trust Family

Teens tell us they turn to family more often than any other source for guidance on some of life's most important topics such as what is right and wrong. Family also remains the primary source of guidance for teens when they wonder about the meaning of life.

RIGHT AND WRONG

CONVERSATIONS

Where I go most often for information or guidance about right and wrong

- 1 FAMILY **40%**
- 2 RELIGIOUS LEADERS/ TEXTS **19%**
- 3 FRIENDS/PEERS **18%**
- 4 ONLINE/ SOCIAL MEDIA **13%**
- 5 TEACHERS/ COUNSELORS **5%**
- 6 OFFLINE MEDIA¹ **5%**

MEANING OF LIFE

CONVERSATIONS

Where I go most often for information or guidance about meaning of life

- 1 FAMILY **45%**
- 2 RELIGIOUS LEADERS/ TEXTS **18%**
- 3 FRIENDS/PEERS **17%**
- 4 ONLINE/ SOCIAL MEDIA **7%**
- 5 OFFLINE MEDIA **7%**
- 6 TEACHERS/ COUNSELORS **6%**

GENDER & SEXUALITY

CONVERSATIONS

Where I go most often for information or guidance about gender, sexuality and sexual issues

- 1 FAMILY **29%**
- 2 FRIENDS/PEERS **26%**
- 3 ONLINE/ SOCIAL MEDIA **16%**
- 4 TEACHERS/ COUNSELORS **14%**
- 5 RELIGIOUS LEADERS/ TEXTS **10%**
- 6 OFFLINE MEDIA **4%**

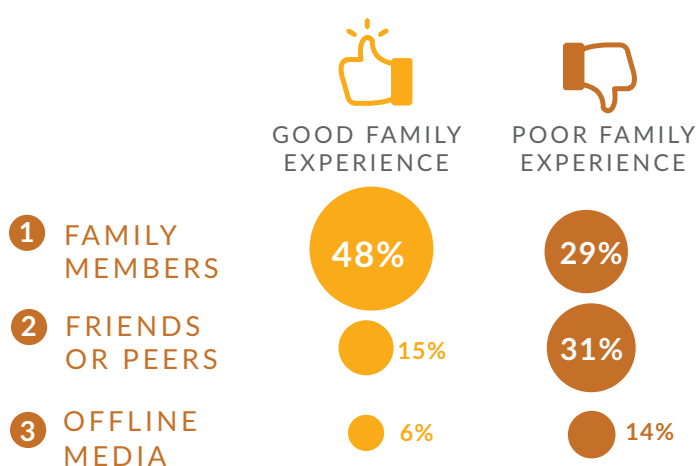
¹ Includes books, magazines, television, radio, or newspaper.

The Impact of Family Relationships

The influence of family as a guide decreases for teens who report negative family experiences. These teens consult their parents much less for guidance on morality or the meaning of life and turn more to friends or consult offline media (like books, magazines, television, radio, or newspaper).

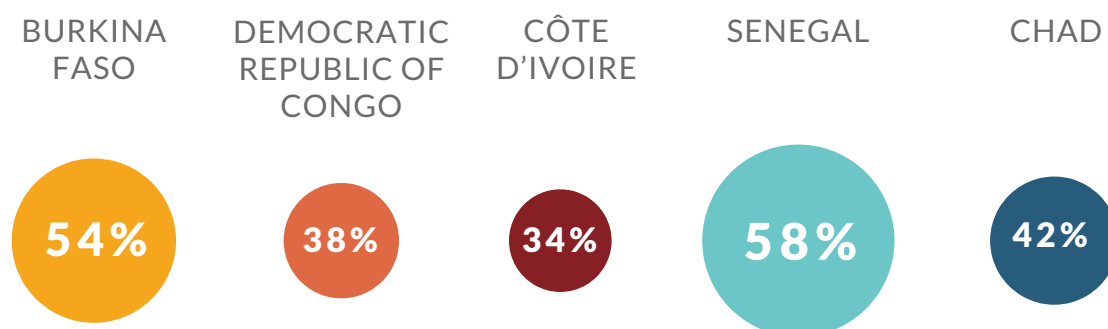
INFLUENCE BY FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Where I go most often for information or guidance about the meaning of life:



FAMILY INFLUENCE BY COUNTRY

I go to family members for guidance about the meaning of life:



INFLUENTIAL TOPICS

I would be most interested in reading about:



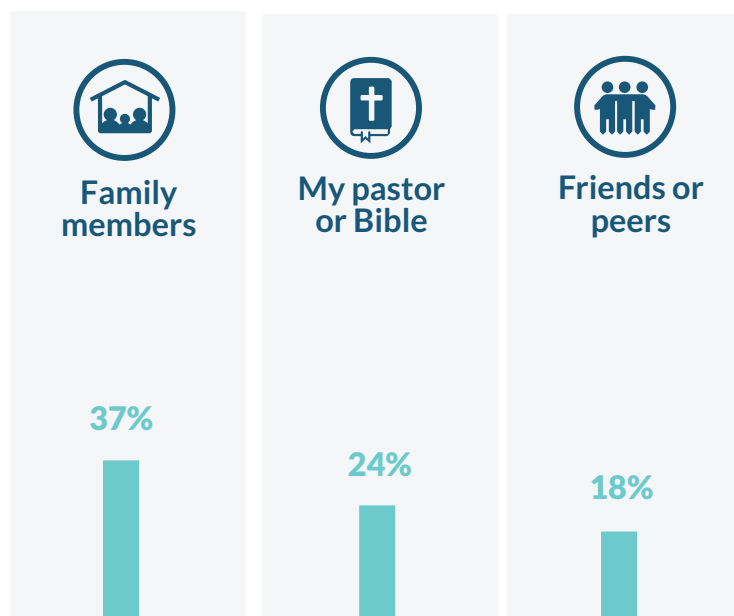
When we asked teens what they would be most interested in learning more about, the subject of forgiveness was the most requested topic. Friendship and family relationships was also a highly ranked topic and was selected more often by older teens.

The Influence of Religion

Encouragingly, Christian teens say their pastors or Bible are their second highest influence after family members. Committed Christians are even more likely to use Scripture as their primary guide as compared with Nominal Christians.

INFLUENCES FOR CHRISTIAN TEENS

Where I go most often for information or guidance about right and wrong:

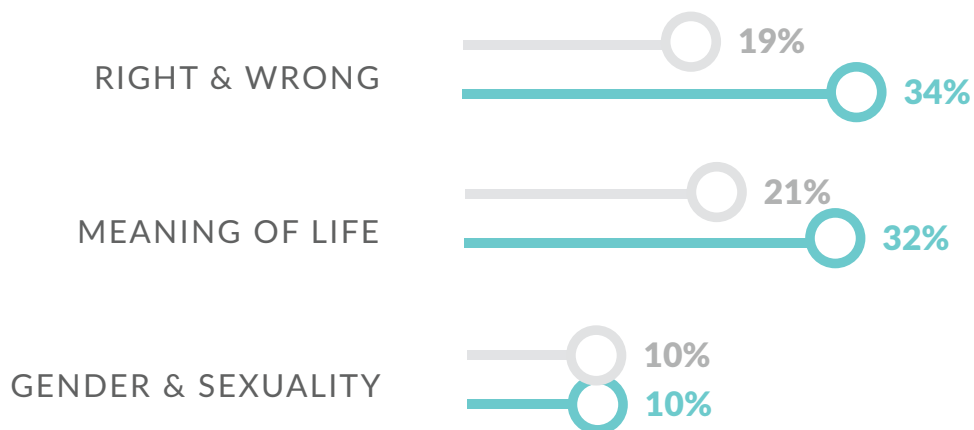


INFLUENCES FOR COMMITTED CHRISTIANS

Turn to pastors or Bibles for information or guidance about:

■ NOMINAL CHRISTIAN

■ COMMITTED CHRISTIAN



Conclusion

As today's teens navigate life's complex issues and questions, the voices they are listening to are critical. The sources teens trust and turn to shed insight on what they will believe. And what you believe has profound implications for how you will behave.

- **FAMILY HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE.** Encouragingly, teens report parents are a primary influence on their lives and young people trust their family members as guides for life's most important questions. Parents should not take lightly the privilege they have of speaking into their child's life. How can we equip parents to step into this important role of discipling their children and teens within the home?
- **STRONG COMMUNITY IS ESSENTIAL.** It is encouraging to see that most teens say they have close friends in addition to positive family relationships. However, this was not true in all countries. Some teens are lacking people who know them well and can support them as they face challenges. How can we encourage teens to connect and share authentically with trusted people in their lives?
- **AFFIRM SCRIPTURE AS A GUIDE.** We were glad to see that Christian teens rank their pastors and Bibles as important influences right after their family members. It is so important for young people to have God's truth as they navigate an increasingly confusing world. How can we continue to help young believers set Scripture as their guide and understand how to apply God's Word to their lives in practical and transformative ways?

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND STRUGGLES

FRANCOPHONE
AFRICA REPORT

What We Discovered



42% of the teens in Francophone Africa report **loneliness** and **33%** report **high anxiety or depression**.

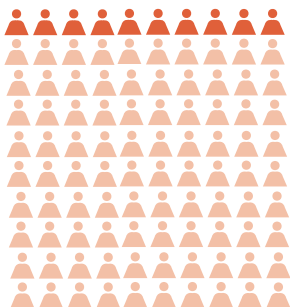
30% of the teens say they have **viewed pornography recently**. Boys are more likely to struggle with this than girls.



Older teens are struggling with their mental health more than younger teens.



33% of Francophone teens report **recently using drugs** other than those required for medical reasons. This is the **highest rate of any region in our global study**.



10% of the teens report that they **attempted to take their own life** within the last three months.



Prayer and Scripture engagement are two spiritual disciplines that are observed to **make a positive difference** in the extent to which young people struggle.

Mental Health

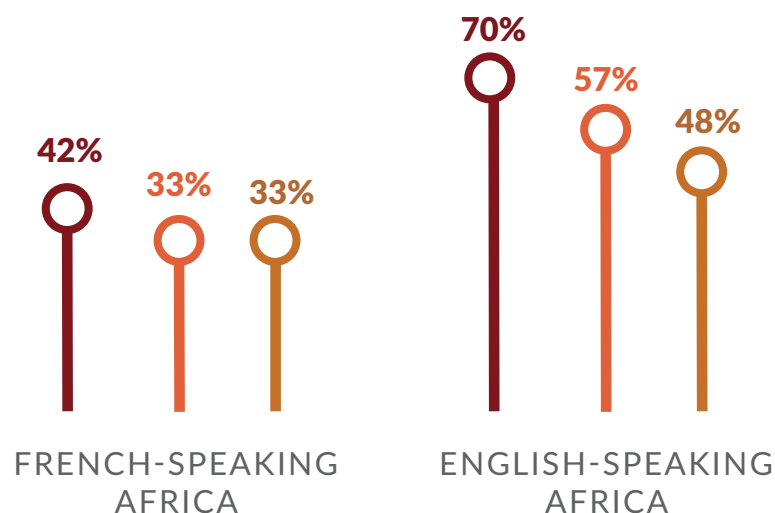
We asked teens to tell us about their personal experiences and struggles within the past three months of their lives.¹ Some teens report loneliness, high anxiety, or depression.² However, teens in Francophone Africa are struggling with their mental health much less than their African peers.

A connection was observed between more time spent online and higher rates of personal struggles for teens in English-speaking Africa. Given that the Francophone teens surveyed are much less digitally connected than their African peers, the lower rates of personal struggles may be related to this. However, further research would be needed to verify.

MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

Within the past three months, I have experienced:

■ LONELINESS ■ HIGH ANXIETY ■ DEPRESSION



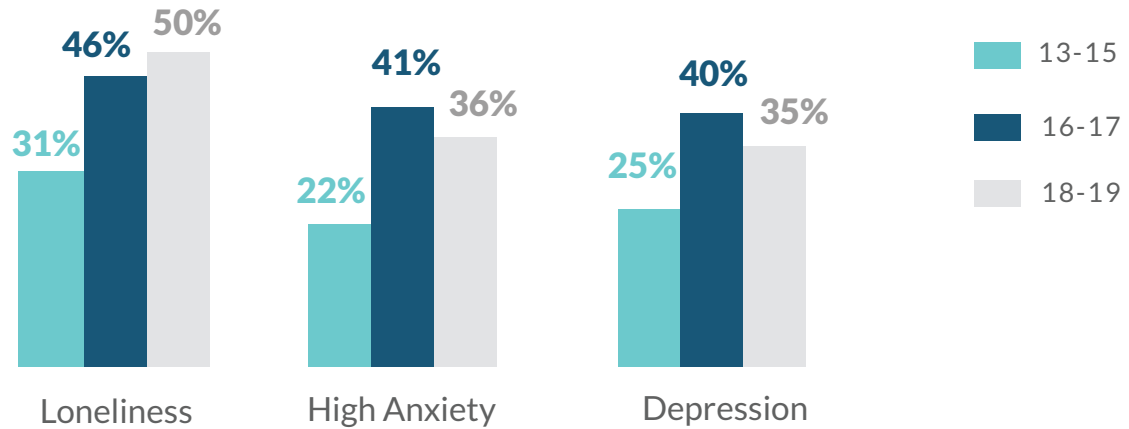
Differences emerged when looking at the data by age. Older teens in Francophone are struggling much more than younger teens in these three areas of mental health.

¹ Data was collected in French-speaking Africa in September-October 2021 and in English-speaking Africa in February-March 2020.

² Note that these are not necessarily clinical levels of depression or anxiety. Teens interpreted for themselves the terms provided and self-reported if they felt they had experienced them.

OLDER TEENS STRUGGLE MORE

Within the past three months, I have experienced:



Suicide

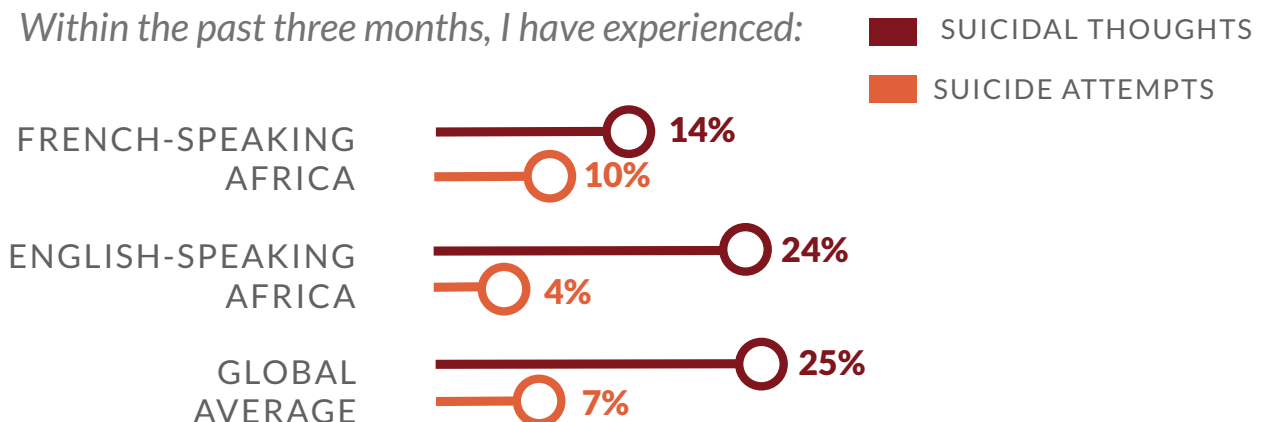
We asked teens to self-report if they had, within the last three months, experienced suicidal thoughts or made a suicide attempt.

Compared to the rest of Africa, Francophone teens experienced less suicidal ideation, but were more likely to have made an attempt.

10% OF THE TEENS SURVEYED HAVE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE RECENTLY.

SUICIDE RISK

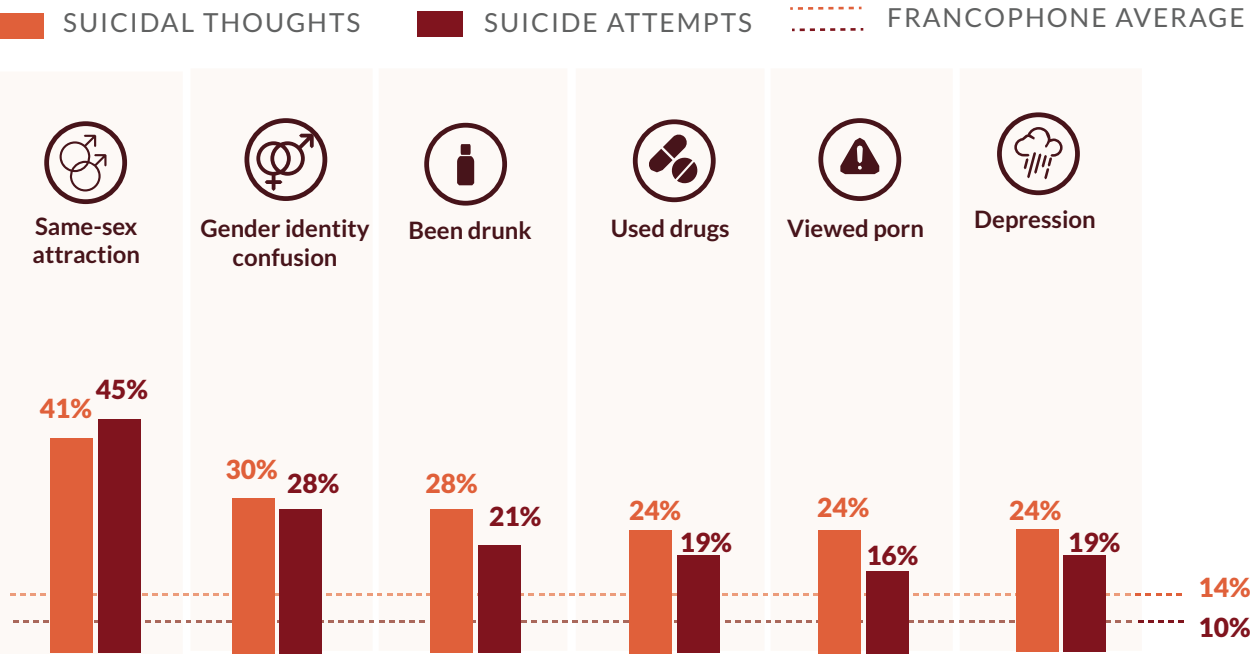
Within the past three months, I have experienced:



Research literature on this topic points to many factors that can increase a young person’s risk for suicide including gender identity issues, substance abuse, and anxiety.¹

Our research revealed similar areas of vulnerability for Francophone teens. Teens who report same-sex attraction or gender identity confusion were more than twice as likely to have recently experienced suicidal thoughts or made an attempt. Other factors that were observed to accompany higher suicide risk included drug use, viewing pornography, and depression.

6 FACTORS THAT CORRELATE WITH HIGHER SUICIDE RISK



It is not necessarily one event or experience that triggers teens 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 teens are in seriously dark places that are driving them towards desperate action. We should be heartbroken for young people who feel meaningless enough about life to want to end it. 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.

¹ CDC WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death, Multiple Cause of Death files 2015-2017. AmericasHealthRankings.org, Accessed 2020.

Sexuality

SEXUALLY ACTIVE BY COUNTRY

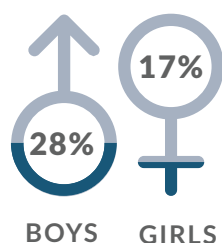
FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA

23%

ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICA

45%

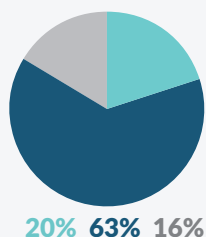
SEXUALLY ACTIVE BY GENDER



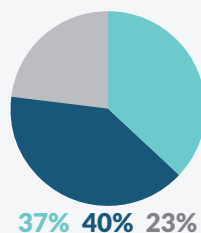
Is it ok to have sex before marriage?

● YES ● NO ● MAYBE

FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA



ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICA



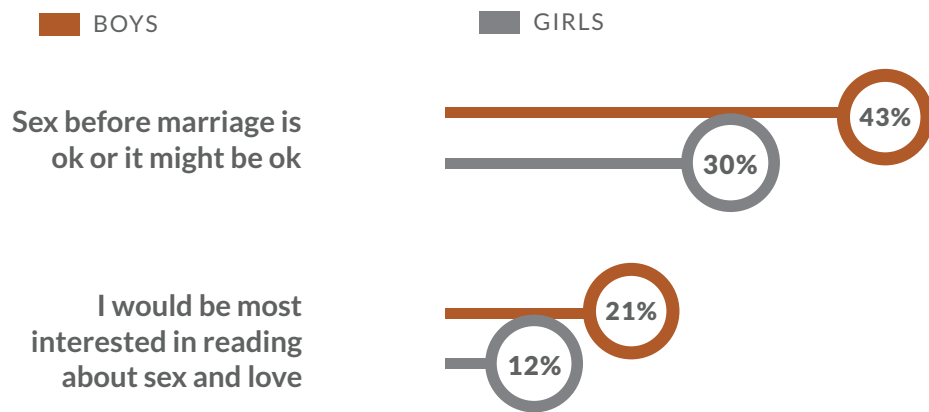
The teenage years can be a time of experimentation and include an evolving understanding of one's sexuality and attractions. These were topics we specifically asked teens to share about. Teens in French-speaking Africa are half as likely as those in English-speaking Africa to have recently been sexually active. Sexual activity was higher among boys, which matches global trends.

This may represent a broad spectrum of behaviors, but in answering this question teens defined for themselves what it means to be sexually active. Any teens who also reported being married were excluded to ensure this statistic represented only sex outside the context of marriage.

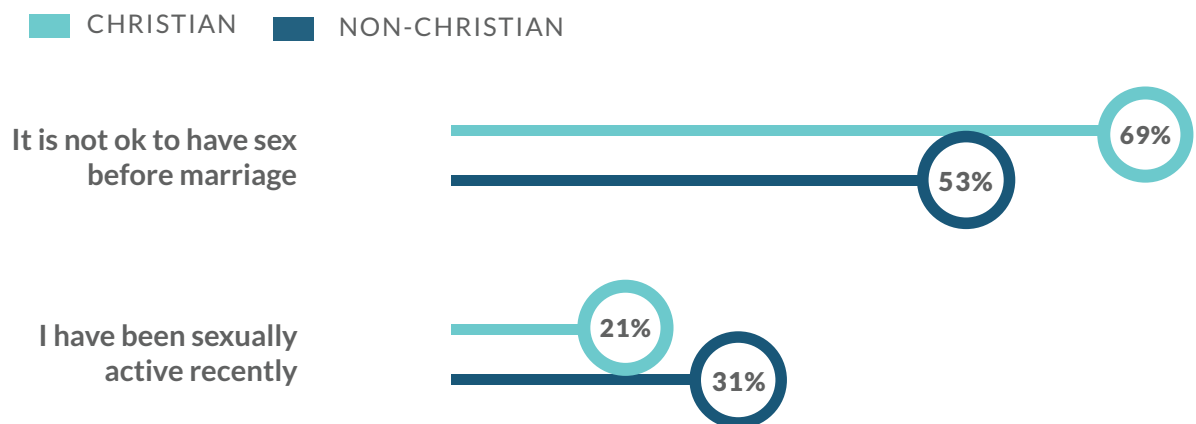
We also asked teens to share their viewpoint on whether having sex before marriage is acceptable. Most of the teens in the Francophone region did not support pre-marital sex.

However, some teens did while others displayed uncertainty on the topic. Boys were more likely than girls to say sex before marriage might be acceptable. They were also more likely than girls to say they would be interested in learning more about sex and love.

VIEWPOINTS BY GENDER



VIEWPOINTS BY RELIGION

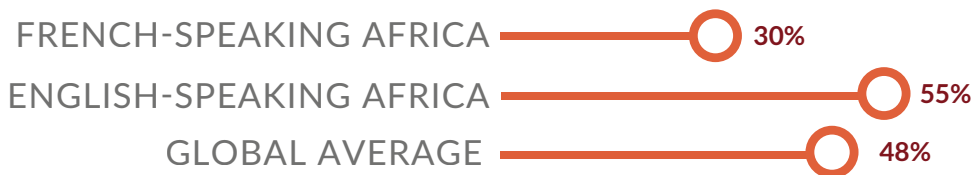


Perhaps unsurprisingly, teens' views on sexuality are different based on their religion. Christian teens are the most opposed to sex before marriage as compared with Non-Christians, and their actions align with this belief.

Pornography

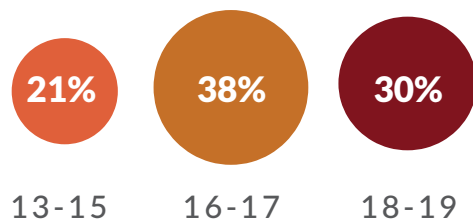
Pornography usage is a pervasive issue among this generation worldwide. Thirty percent of the Francophone teens surveyed said they have recently looked at pornography. Although this is much less than their peers, it is still concerning and will likely be a growing issue as teens gain access to the Internet and use it more frequently. A clear connection was seen globally between higher time spent online and viewing pornography.

PORNOGRAPHY USAGE

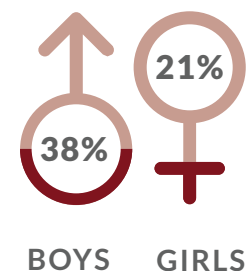


Pornography usage was seen to be elevated in the lives of older teens versus younger teens, with 16-17-year-olds struggling the most. More boys than girls recently looked at porn, which also matches global trends. Pornography was seen to be less of a problem among Committed Christians, but among Nominal Christians it was actually slightly higher than the average.

PORNOGRAPHY USAGE BY AGE



PORNOGRAPHY USAGE BY GENDER



PORNOGRAPHY USAGE AMONG CHRISTIANS

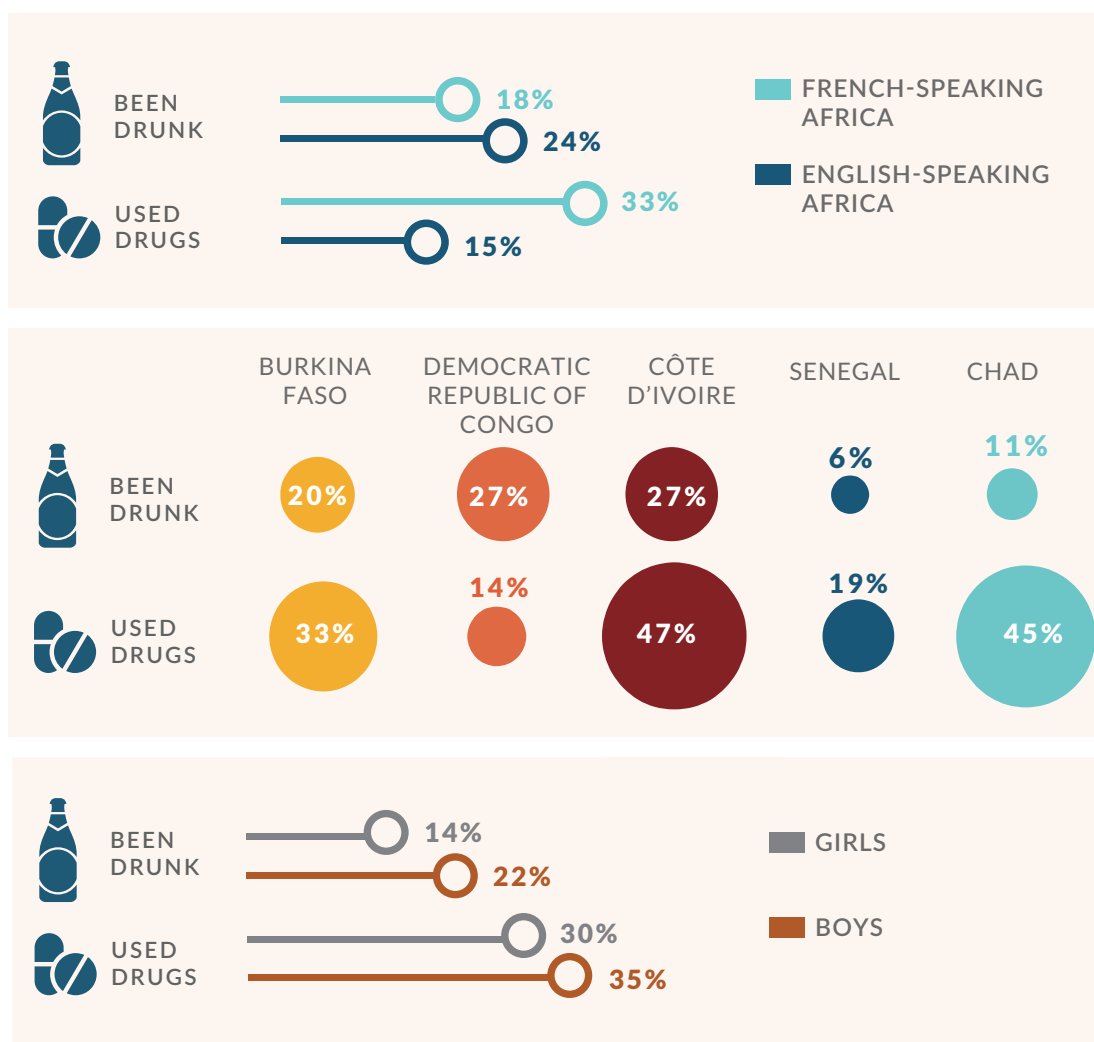


Other Struggles

Our research revealed several other challenges teens in Africa are facing. Kenya is the top country globally for teens to report recently having used recreational drugs. South Africa is in the top three countries globally for young people to report having recently been drunk. In contrast, Nigerian teens were half as likely as the global average to report either of these behaviors.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USAGE

Within the past three months I have...



Despite these numbers, only 7% of teens said they would be interested in learning more about the topic of addiction.

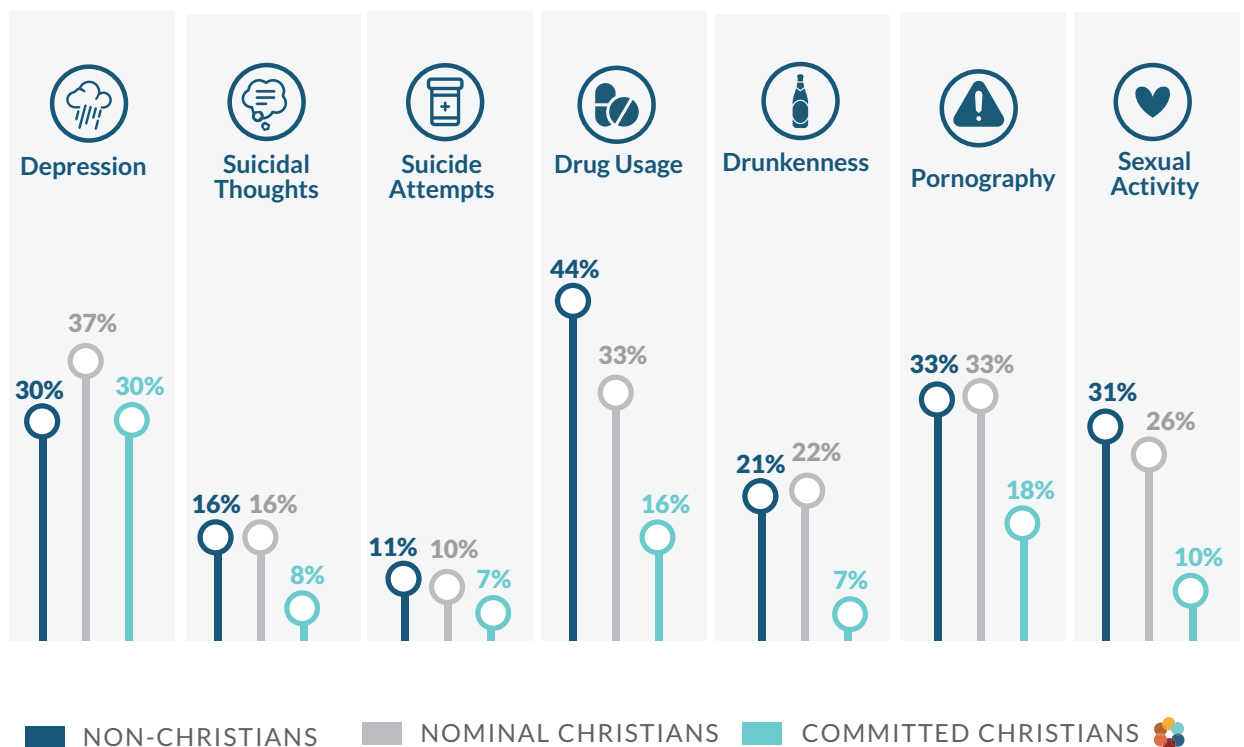
The Power of Prayer and Scripture Engagement

Teens in Francophone are clearly struggling in many areas. However, the data reveals that there is real hope to be found. When we narrowed our view to Christian teens who are committed to their faith—the picture looked quite different.

Teens who hold to the core beliefs of Christianity and display the spiritual disciplines of regular Bible reading and prayer have very different experiences. Committed Christian teens are less likely to be engaged in drinking, drug use, pornography, or sexual activity. This points to the power of Scripture engagement and prayer in the lives of teens to help them combat their temptations and struggles.

COMMITTED CHRISTIANS STRUGGLE LESS

Within the past three months, I have experienced:



Conclusion

This data can be a sad picture of how life looks when seeing from the eyes of young people. The daily experiences and struggles teens face can seem overwhelming, but it is important to start by listening and understanding before we turn to action. Here are some things to consider:

- **GOD'S WORD MAKES A DIFFERENCE.** Teens who are reading the Bible and drawing near to God through prayer are experiencing life differently than those who are not as committed to their faith. How can we help teens develop these spiritual disciplines for themselves and allow Scripture to guide their actions and choices?
- **SUICIDE IS A SERIOUS ISSUE.** Too many teens are feeling alone and hopeless and some are coming to the point of desperate action. This research should be a wake-up call about the struggles teens are facing and how those work together to bring them down. How can we help young people feel seen, supported, and encouraged with the hope the Gospel holds for their lives?
- **PORNOGRAPHY IS A PROBLEM.** This is a significant issue for today's teens around the world and Francophone is no exception. Although the rates are currently lower than the rest of their global generation, we can anticipate access to pornography will grow as teens continue to gain Internet access. How can we build strength in teens today to face this temptation in their future and avoid being ensnared by it?
- **BOYS MAY NEED INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP.** Teen boys in Francophone are more tempted than girls to view pornography, engage in sex before marriage, and use drugs. Many boys also do not maintain a Scriptural view of sex, with almost half saying they are that sex outside the context of marriage might be ok. How can we equip young men to apply a biblical viewpoint on this topic to their daily choices?

IDENTITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

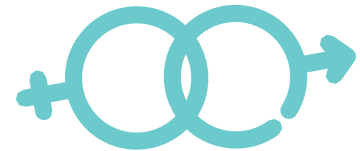
FRANCOPHONE
AFRICA REPORT

What We Discovered

55% of the teens believe gender is primarily **based on sex at birth**. However, the topic is also confusing to them.



Francophone teens are more than **twice as likely** as their African peers to have recently experienced **gender identity confusion**.



Teens go primarily to their **families** for guidance on **gender, sexuality, and sexual issues**.



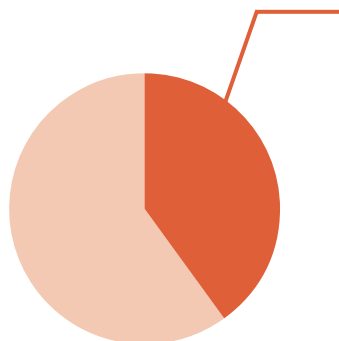
Most teens believe **marriage should be a lifelong commitment** and exclusively between a **man and a woman**.

Most teens **do not believe** it is acceptable to change your body to become a different gender.



Francophone teens are **half as likely** as other African teens to have recently experienced **same-sex attraction**.

Burkina Faso, however, matches global averages.



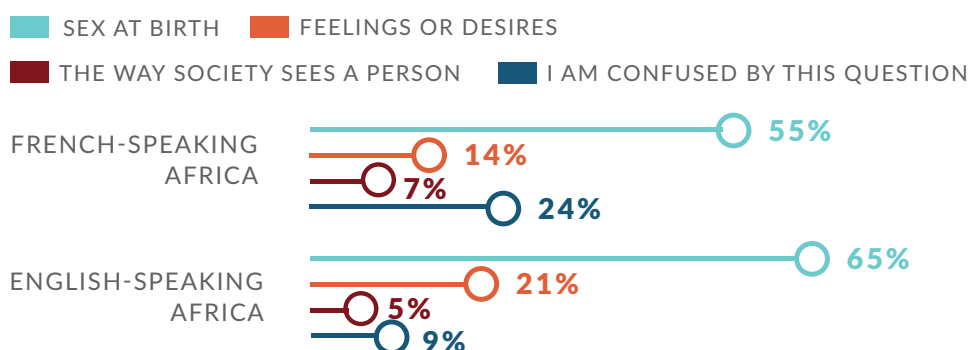
40% of the teens who have recently **attempted suicide** also report **same-sex attraction**.

Gender Identity

African teens in general are more traditional in their viewpoints on gender identity than the rest of their global generation. But we saw that teens in Francophone Africa are less certain of what they believe as compared to their African peers. The majority say that gender is primarily based on a person's sex at birth. But the second most popular answer was that the question confused them.

VIEW OF GENDER

Gender is primarily based on:

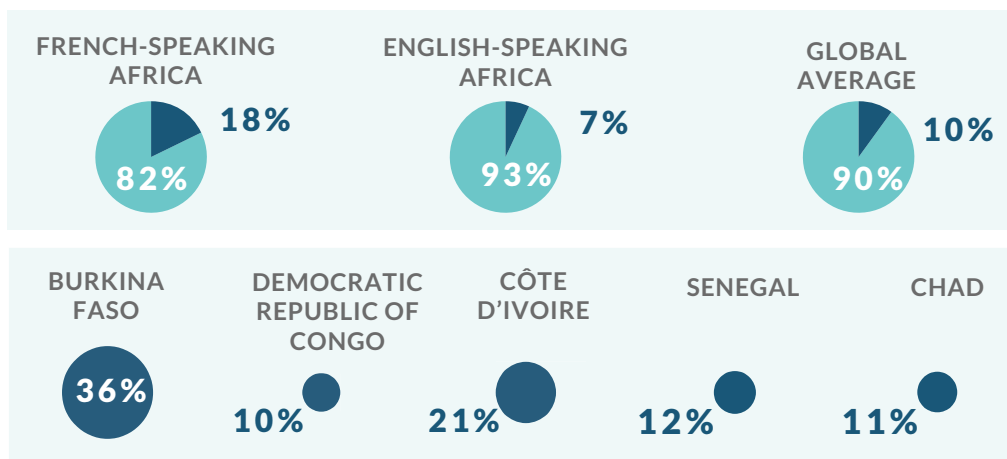


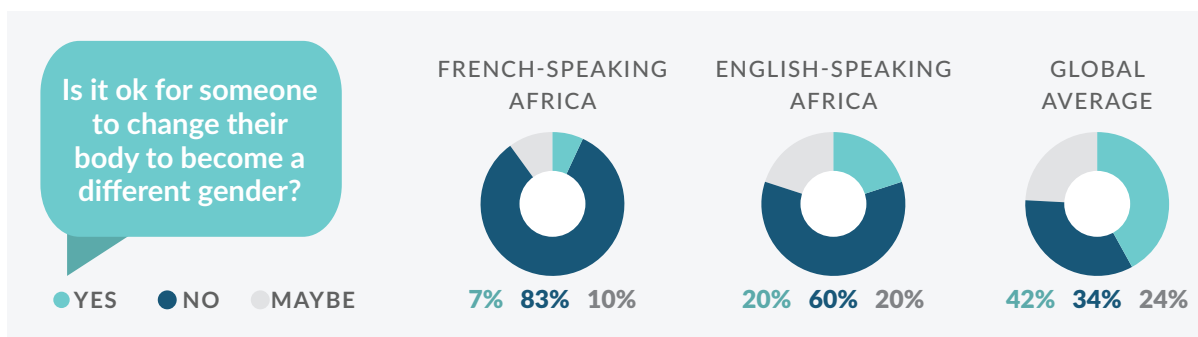
We also asked teens about their personal experience of gender identity. Surprisingly, Francophone teens greatly exceeded the average of other African teens in saying they have recently experienced gender identity confusion. Responses were similar from both girls and boys, but very different by country. Teens in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire led the way in saying they have experienced gender identity confusion within the past 3 months.

GENDER IDENTITY CONFUSION

Experienced gender identity confusion within the past three months:

■ YES (dark blue) ■ NO (light blue)





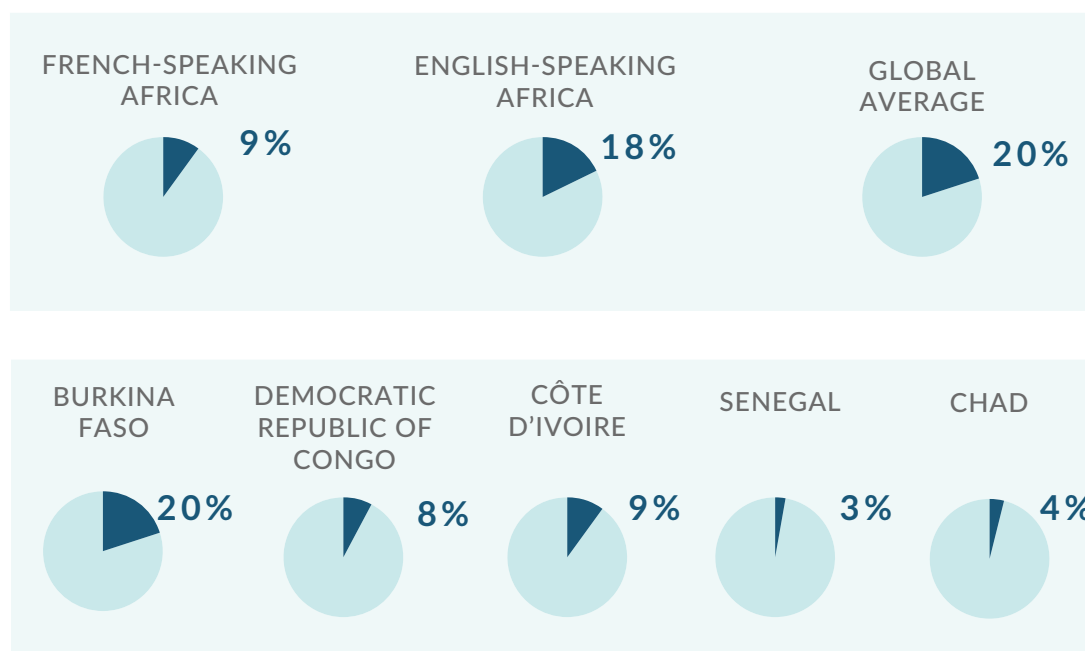
Despite having these personal experiences, teens in Francophone Africa strongly believe that it is not ok for a person to change their body to become a different gender.

Same-Sex Attraction

Some young people globally are struggling with their sexual attractions, but this doesn't appear to be the case in Francophone Africa. Teens in Francophone are half as likely as their African peers to say they have recently experienced same-sex attraction. Burkina Faso is the notable exception, with rates matching the global average.

SAME-SEX ATTRACTION

Within the past three months, I have experienced same-sex attraction:

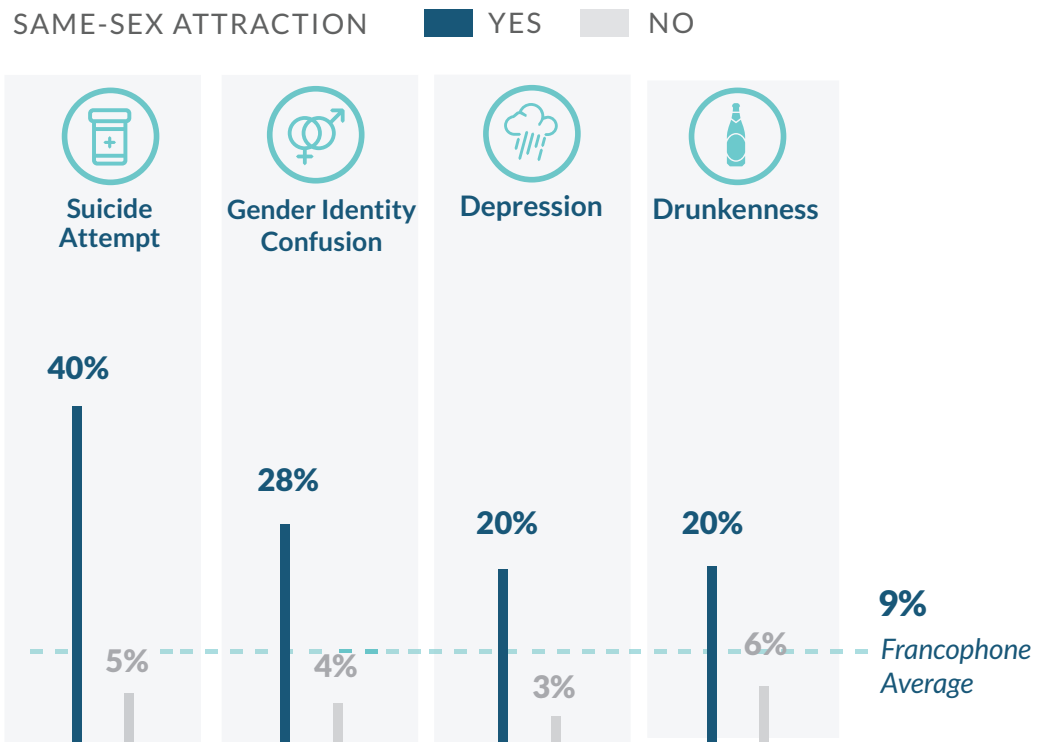


Christian teens in Francophone Africa are half as likely as non-Christians to be experiencing same-sex attraction.

- Christians: 7%
- Non-Christians: 13%

Our research revealed that same-sex attraction appears to cluster with other experiences. Many teens who have recently experienced same-sex attraction also report experiencing gender identity confusion, drunkenness, or depression. Sadly, a large number also report a recent suicide attempt.

4 CONNECTIONS WITH SAME-SEX ATTRACTION



Influences on the Conversation

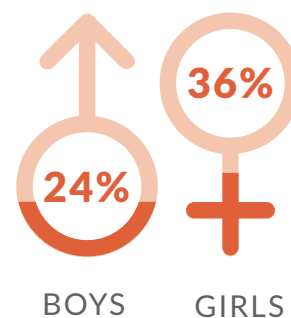
We wanted to understand these issues better and find out who is influencing teens in these areas. We specifically asked teens to share with us where they go for guidance about the complex topics of gender, sexuality, and sexual issues.

Teens say they look to family or friends most often, which was similar to responses in other African countries. A primary difference was that teens in English-speaking Africa were more likely to consult the internet and social media (28%).¹ Girls in Francophone Africa were much more likely than boys to say they rely on their family for guidance in these matters.



Where I go most often for information or guidance about gender, sexuality & sexual issues.

I go to family most often for information on gender and sexuality:



- 1 FAMILY **29%**
- 2 FRIENDS/PEERS **26%**
- 3 SOCIAL MEDIA/
ONLINE **16%**
- 4 TEACHERS/COUNSELORS **14%**
- 5 RELIGIOUS LEADERS/TEXTS **10%**
- 6 OFFLINE MEDIA **4%**

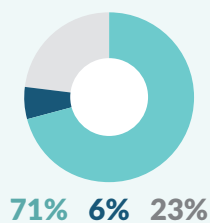
¹ Note that teens in English-speaking African nations had frequent access to the Internet and used it more regularly as compared to teens in French-speaking Africa. This is due at least in part to the different sampling methodology between the two studies.

Attitudes Towards Marriage

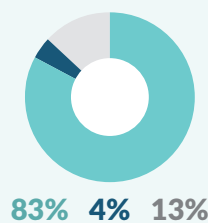
● YES ● NO ● MAYBE

Should marriage be a lifelong commitment?

FRENCH-SPEAKING
AFRICA

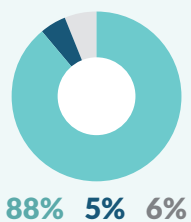


ENGLISH-SPEAKING
AFRICA

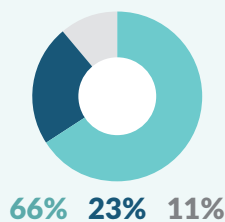


Should marriage be exclusively between a man and a woman?

FRENCH-SPEAKING
AFRICA

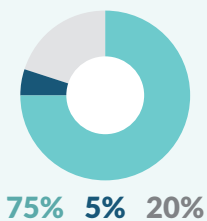


ENGLISH-SPEAKING
AFRICA

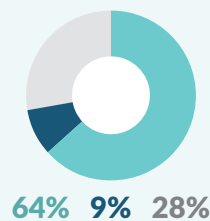


Marriage should be a lifelong commitment.

CHRISTIAN



NON-CHRISTIAN



We also investigated teens' beliefs about marriage.

When asked if they believe marriage should be a lifelong commitment, teens across Africa responded with a strong yes—much more so than teens around the world.

When asked if marriage should be exclusively between a man and a woman, Francophone teens were even more certain, but teens in English-speaking Africa were less certain.

Christian teens in Francophone were more supportive of marriage as a lifelong commitment than non-Christians, but many also showed uncertainty on the question.

Conclusion

A person's opinions do not stay the same forever, but for now we have a good view of what teens in Francophone Africa believe on the important topics of gender identity, sexuality, and marriage. In addition, we know where they are turning to for guidance and advice on these matters.

- **STRENGTHEN FAMILIES FOR THESE CONVERSATIONS.** It's encouraging to know that family is still the primary place teens are going for guidance on gender and sexuality. These are becoming increasingly complex topics and teens need people to speak into their lives who know them well and can meet their questions with truth and grace. How can we equip parents for these conversations so they can confidently share about our created identity and the beauty of God's design in these areas?
- **DISCIPLE TEENS ON THE TOPICS OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY.** It is critically important to understand and embrace our God-given identity, which includes our gender and sexuality. Some teens said these topics confused them and are unsure what to believe. Other teens are already dealing with feelings of same-sex attraction or gender identity confusion. Although these topics may feel uncomfortable or disorienting, we need to be prepared to have these conversations and meet teens with God's truth.
- **MODEL MARRIAGE THAT LASTS.** While teens do affirm that marriage should last, their answers reveal some uncertainty. Even Christian teens are not entirely sure marriage should be a lifelong commitment. How can we model loving relationships so they have examples to admire and aspire to?

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

FRANCOPHONE
AFRICA REPORT

Education

Teens are looking to their future with certainty and hope. This African generation broadly sees education as a pathway to success and is convinced it will have future career opportunities. In addition, an overwhelming number of young people are ready to create their own opportunity with their entrepreneurial spirit.

The vast majority of Francophone teens agree that education is the primary thing that will guarantee them a better future. Responses were similar across all five countries surveyed and from both boys and girls. Interestingly, Francophone teens value education as key to their future even more than their peers who participated in the 2020 research.

Many Francophone teens do not anticipate anything that would stop them from going to university. Among those who did identify a barrier, cost was the most frequently mentioned. Thirty-eight percent of the teens said this, with 20% saying they have another plan that does not require university.

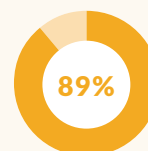
Teens were also very interested in learning more about what future success looks like. It was the second most popular topic selected after the topic of forgiveness. An additional 27% of teens said they would also be interested in learning more about personal development.

89% OF THE TEENS SURVEYED IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA AGREE THAT EDUCATION WILL GUARANTEE THEM A BETTER FUTURE.

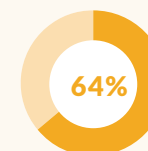


Education is the primary thing that will guarantee me a better future.

FRENCH-
SPEAKING
AFRICA



ENGLISH-
SPEAKING
AFRICA

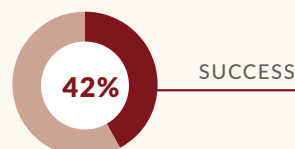


I am going or planning to go to university.

41%



I would be most interested in reading about:



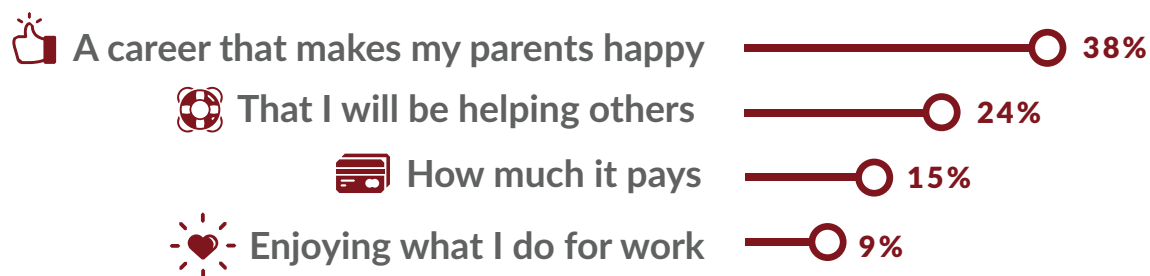
Career

African teens are hopeful about their future. Nearly all Francophone teens surveyed believe they will have a career opportunity. Responses were similar from teens of all ages, and both boys and girls were equally optimistic.

Although they may not yet know what their career will be, teens do have an idea of what they want from their future employment. Their top priority is family satisfaction with their job followed by a desire to help others. This is an interesting departure from teens in English-speaking Africa, who said their top priority is enjoying what they do for work (48%).¹ In comparison, Francophone teens are more socially oriented in their career goals.

95% OF THE TEENS IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA BELIEVE THEY WILL HAVE A FUTURE CAREER OPPORTUNITY.

TOP CAREER PRIORITIES



Finally, teens in Africa are some of the most ambitious of their global generation with a strong desire to be entrepreneurs.

Nearly all Francophone teens surveyed said they would like to start a business or own their own company in the future, which is similar to the response of their peers in English-speaking African nations (92%).

95% OF THE TEENS IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA HAVE ENTREPRENEURIAL GOALS.

¹ Note that the answer option “a career that makes my parents happy” was added to the 2021 study and not available for teens surveyed in 2020.

About OneHope

In partnership with local churches, ministries, and governments around the world, OneHope has reached more than 1.7 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 teens ages 13-19 in 20 countries. The global study was conducted in February-March of 2020. Research was conducted for this project in 5 countries in Francophone Africa in September-October 2021.

Teens were surveyed in-person primarily at schools and churches, but also at community centers and other locations. Note that this represents a different sampling method than the global study, which was conducted through a panel company using online surveys.

Comparison data is included throughout this report showing both global averages as well as responses from the three English-speaking African nations surveyed in 2020 (Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa). These comparisons provide helpful context for understanding the Francophone data, but should be considered in light of the differences in sampling and timing of data collection between the two studies.

Note that Francophone teens differ from teens surveyed in other countries in terms of their internet access and frequency of usage. Digital connectedness is a primary difference between the studies and should be a consideration when comparing viewpoints and behaviors.

COUNTRY	SAMPLE SIZE
Burkina Faso	100
Cote d'Ivoire	100
Democratic Republic of Congo	92
Senegal	81
Chad	104

Definitions

FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA

Includes the five countries where data was collected in October 2021: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, and Chad.

ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICA

Includes the three countries where data was collected in February-March 2020: Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

CHRISTIAN

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

COMMITTED CHRISTIAN

Teens 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.

Note that Committed Christian teens may be Catholic.

NOMINAL CHRISTIANS

Teens 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.

Copyright © 2022 by OneHope, Inc.

Suggested citation:

OneHope. (January 2022). Global Youth Culture, Francophone Africa Report.
www.globalyouthculture.net



GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE