

Kuwait

School Classes

In Kuwait, students are mainly evaluated on homework, quizzes and midterm and final exams. Class participation does not count in the public school system, but in private schools it does. In Arabic public and private schools, students are divided into classes and they stay in the same class while teachers rotate. In non-Arabic private schools, students usually take each subject in a different classroom. In Kuwait, some private schools are co-ed while others are not.

School Relationships

In Kuwait, students usually use the title “Mr.” or “Ms.” with the teacher’s first name. Their relationship is friendly, but still formal.

Extracurricular Activities

In Kuwait, students can do extracurricular activities only in institutes or sports clubs; public and Arabic Private schools do not have extracurricular activities. Schools focus mainly on education and do not offer extracurricular activities. Parents in Kuwait are not involved in their kids’ extracurricular activities.

School Rules

The punishment for cell phone usage is not severe, however cell phones are prohibited from classrooms. All schools in Kuwait have uniforms.

Return

Students from public schools find it hard to go back and study their main subjects in Arabic as they used to before they traveled to the U.S. Many students end up transferring to another school.

Family Life

Usually in Kuwait, the household consists of parents, their children, and sometimes grandparents. Sometimes the household is very big and includes uncles and extended family. Kids do not leave the house after college, they leave when they have found a job or get married.

In many Kuwaiti families mothers do not work. However, if she does, the father is still considered to hold primary financial responsibility. Both parents may expect to be seen as equal authority figures in all household decisions, but in some families most of the authority goes to the father. In Kuwait, meals are often eaten all together as a family. Family members are expected to have time to pursue to their own interests. Family members must respect each other’s desires and wishes.

Teen Life

In Kuwait, if a child needs to borrow something from his or her sibling they must ask first. In Kuwait, teenagers are expected to interact respectfully with their parents at all times. However, it is fine to be informal with their siblings.

Responsibilities

In Kuwait, it is very common for a family to have a housekeeper. Usually boys and girls are not asked to do household chores. Teenagers in Kuwait rarely cook for themselves and they tend to be rather dependent. Most Kuwaiti teenagers do not have part-time jobs because the concept of working while studying does not exist in Kuwait. Their parents are expected to give monthly allowances. Kuwaiti teens are mainly expected to be responsible for themselves in school and in their academics.

Parental Involvement

In Kuwait, it is difficult to monitor what each student does online because most kids have their own laptops and they use them in their own rooms or when they go out to cafes with their friends. Parents are in direct contact with schools and monitor their kids’ academic progress regularly. Most teenagers are dependent upon their parents.

Pets

It is very uncommon for a family in Kuwait to have pets in the home. Kuwaiti students may initially feel uncomfortable if pets are given “free reign” of the house.



COUNTRY FACTS:

Capital: Kuwait City

Population: 2,789,132

Area, sq. mi.: 6,880

Real GDP per capita: 51,200

Adult literacy rate: 94% (male); 91% (female)

Ethnic make-up: Kuwaiti 45%, other Arab 35%, South Asian 9%, Iranian 4%, other 7%

Religion: Muslim 85% (Sunni 70%, Shia 30%), other (includes Christian, Hindu, Parsi) 15%

Personal Interactions

Mixed Gender Socializing

Having friends of the opposite sex is not typically acceptable in Kuwaiti society.

Friendships

The idea of friendship and what defines a friend varies from one person to the other. Kuwaiti teenagers sometimes socialize in groups, and sometimes one-on-one. Both ways are considered appropriate, and the choice is left up to the individual. Teenagers make most of their friends through common activities, and not necessarily from family or neighborhood connections. Amongst good friends, it is common and normal to share money. However, this does not exist in weaker relationships.

Eye Contact

As a sign of respect, kids do not make direct eye-contact with adults. Instead, they tend to look towards the ground at some points when they are spoken to by adults.

Cultural Norms

Kuwaiti teenagers tend to show negative emotions quite freely amongst their peers and family. Personal space varies across Kuwaiti culture and depends on how the student was raised, as well as the environment.

Personal Hygiene

Kuwaiti teenagers generally take a quick shower once a day and sometimes twice if they are involved in physical activities. It is generally thought to be unclean in Kuwait to wear the same clothes two days in a row. In Kuwait, different clothes are worn every day, but jeans may be worn many times before a wash. Kuwaiti teenagers are expected to keep their bathrooms clean after using them (towels are hung up, and hygiene products are put away). Keeping the bathroom dry is not something they give consideration to. Here in Kuwait, everyone has their own towel to use. In Kuwait most teenagers do not change clothes upon entering the house, except if they are changing out of their school uniform.

Religion

Most families encourage their kids to attend religious services. Usually boys go to the mosques with their fathers every Friday to pray. During Ramadan, students fast from dawn until sunset. Eid is a religious and family event where parents give money to their children.

Holidays

Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha and national holidays. Some of these observances are the same as the U.S. holidays Labor Day, Independence Day, and etc.