

Thailand



COUNTRY FACTS:

Capital: Bangkok

Population: 67,089,500

Area, sq. mi.: 198,116

Real GDP per capita: 8,100

Adult literacy rate: 95% (male);
91% (female)

Ethnic make-up: Thai 75%,
Chinese 14%, other 11%

Religion: Buddhist 94.6%,
Muslim 4.6%, Christian 0.7%,
other 0.1%

School Classes

In Thai schools, there are typically about 50 students or more in each classroom. Thai students remain in one classroom throughout the school day while teachers rotate. Boys and girls sit apart in different rows. In Thailand, student grades are evaluated on attendance, class participation, and performance on tests and exams. Homework assignments are varied according to the contents and learning objectives and are not included in the final grades. Students tend to study hard for good grades.

School Relationships

In Thailand, students must show respect for their teachers both in verbal expressions and in manner, addressing them by their last name with a title.

Extracurricular Activities

Most Thai students join clubs or sport activities at school. On the weekend they may have music or other kinds of sports activities in private clubs.

School Rules

In Thai schools there is a zero tolerance policy regarding cell phone use in school and fighting is prohibited. There are severe penalties for breaking either rule.

Return

Upon return to their country, Thai students need to secure transcripts from their U.S. school to present in to their home school. If they do not have the U.S. transcript, they may have to repeat the school year in Thailand.

Family Life

Many Thai families consist of parents and children, as well as grandparents, aunts and cousins in the same house. It is common in Thailand to have both parents work and be responsible for the family. It is very rare that mothers remain at home as a homemaker.

In Thailand most fathers tend to make decisions on major issues and mothers are responsible for house chores and take care of the members of the family. Thai families make every effort to eat meals together and it is an important time of the day for sharing information.

Teen Life

It is unusual for a Thai teen to be employed; most time outside of regular school hours is spent with supplementary classes after school or on weekends. Many parents give a daily allowance. Students can ask for extra money for their social activities or buying personal items. Some Thai siblings share clothes and accessories if they are the same gender and size and usually they ask for permission first.

Responsibilities

In Thailand, children are given some house chores and they tend to follow gender lines; boys do not cook, do the laundry, or sew as they are regarded as tasks women engage in. Men are regarded as stronger and may get more difficult physical jobs than women. Some families have household help to do house chores. Most male teenagers cannot cook beyond simple dishes or heating pre-packaged meals.

Parental Involvement

Thai parents monitor their student's internet usage to a certain extent. Some parents may set time limits for students to spend online, but many Thai students use the internet as a resource for studying. Mostly Thai parents have a great influence on their children's activities or plans. Some parents may allow family members to pursue their own activities but will watch and advise often. Many Thai teens are attached to their parents and ask for advice or approval.

Thai parents will contact their teen's school in cases where their student is showing low performance or misbehavior. There are open house sessions once a semester that allow parents to meet with the teachers.

Pets

Some Thai families have dogs, cats or fish as a pet. Muslim families will not have dogs in the home.

Personal Interactions

Mixed Gender Socializing

Girls and boys can socialize in a group but not individually in Thailand.

Friendships

Most Thai students socialize in groups and a few socialize one-on-one and they tend to socialize with the same sex. Most friends are from family and neighborhood connections and some are from school. Friends are important for Thai teens and they take the role seriously and become like family with their friends.

Communication Styles

Communication is mostly indirect in Thailand. Thai people communicate indirectly to avoid irritating each other or being impolite. Expressing negative emotion is regarded as rude in Thailand so they try to hide their feelings or emotions. Some Thai students smile when they are uncomfortable and this often happens when they are being disciplined.

Eye Contact

Eye contact in Thailand is regarded as rude and disrespectful when children talk to adults.

Cultural Norms

Thai teens are mostly dependent on their parents for their daily plans. In Thai culture, timeliness and punctuality is not taken as seriously as in the U.S.

Personal Hygiene

Thai change clothes every day and it is considered unclean to wear the same clothes two days in a row.

Thai shower twice a day and maybe more it is a hot day. YES Thai students may be uncomfortable if they do not shower before going out and before going to bed. In Thailand water is not wiped up in bathrooms but it left to dry naturally because bathrooms are well ventilated. Towels are hung up outside the bathroom.

Food and Culture

Diet

In the areas with a large Muslim community, halal meat is available in fresh markets and preserved halal food is available on the supermarket shelves.

Gifts

It is not Thai tradition to give gifts on the New Year or for birthdays but many families have adopted this western practice.

Religion

Nearly all Thai families prepare meals from scratch. In big cities where life is rushed people may serve packaged meal and often only for breakfast.

Holidays

Muslims take time for prayers five times a day but often are flexible with prayer times. Thai Muslims fast during daylight hours in Ramadan, eating meals only before sunrise and after sunset.

In Thailand, Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are not nationally celebrated but many people know about these celebrations from the media. However Thai Muslims celebrate the Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha holidays.