



**LIFEBANK
FOUNDATION**



PANGABUHI SA DALAN

The Streetchildren of Iloilo City

January 2020

Based on a survey conducted by Social Weather Stations in June 2019 for
Lifebank Microfinance Foundation, Inc.

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Foreword

This monograph presents the socio-demographic profile and other relevant information of Iloilo City's Children in Street Situations (CiSS), also known as Street Children. The report is part of a larger initiative undertaken by Lifebank Microfinance Foundation, Inc. (LBF) in collaboration with Social Weather Stations (SWS) to gather current and accurate information on the number, profile and condition of street children in Iloilo City and other major cities in the Philippines.

Lifebank Microfinance Foundation, Inc. is a non-stock, non-profit organization based in Iloilo City engaged in delivering microfinance services to enterprising poor women and social programs to its members, their families and communities, and to society in general to achieve the mission of "breaking the chains of poverty". LBF's Street Children Project, launched in 2018, aims to establish a Network of Street Children NGOs in the Visayas and Mindanao, gather more accurate information on the number and profile of these children, provide financial support for NGOs needing technical assistance, and offering microfinance services to deserving families of street children.

With this monograph, LBF wishes to contribute to the activities and plan of the Iloilo City government for its street children. Hopefully, the report can also encourage policy action and mobilize resources from the private group that will result in multi-sectoral services for this vulnerable sector.

Let us all join hands in addressing the plight of street children, rebuilding their lives and giving them the dignity that they deserve.

Vicente P. Perlas M.D.

President

Lifebank Microfinance Foundation, Inc.

Message

Social Weather Stations (SWS) is very pleased that it was part of this endeavor (pioneering to SWS!) to do research on children in street situations (CiSS); and doubly glad that Lifebank Foundation decided to immediately share the findings with the public.

SWS in designing the methodology was cognizant of the oft-repeated limitations of this kind of research: (a) sample is not representative as there was no observational headcount done; (b) many of the children may not be covered since many of them move from place to place continuously; (c) getting reliable information on some activities (e.g. illegal or disreputable activities) may not be possible; and (d) data might not be collected in places with threats of violence.

In developing the questionnaire, SWS reviewed previous studies done by Filipino colleagues on Filipino children and literature on research done on street children in many other countries.

In both pre-survey activities, SWS recognized importantly that the research would not be successful unless backed up with first-hand knowledge of “doers” themselves, i.e. those who go out of their way and have mandated themselves to protect and care for children whether in the streets or not. Initially, SWS tested its ideas with the Social Services Development Department of the local government of Quezon City and the Commission of Human Rights-Child Rights Center (especially on the consent/ assent forms).

In order to have others critique its methodology and generate the kinds of questions that can be asked of children, SWS then proceeded to conduct an FGD with the Subcommittee for the Protection and Welfare of Children in Street Situations of the Council for the Welfare of Children. Armed with more resolve, SWS conducted an FGD with members of the City Council for the Protection of Children respectively of Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro. It was such a tremendous help that the Mayor and City Administrator/ CSWDO Head of both cities took a direct hand in organizing and inviting participants to the FGDs; and subsequently providing support (most importantly security and safety) during the interviews itself, a good number of which took place in the wee hours of the morning.

Over a 1000 interviews in each of the cities of Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro were completed.

The project was indeed a challenge to undertake but the work of SWS was definitely made easier by collaborating with people and organizations who made it their goal to protect and care for children in street situations.

We have so much to thank Lifebank Foundation for piloting this visionary corporate social responsibility.

Linda Luz Guerrero

Vice-President/COO and Project Team Leader
Social Weather Stations

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Acknowledgement

We thank our partners, especially Social Weather Stations, the City Government of Iloilo City, the Council for the Welfare of Children, ASMAE Foundation, , relevant government agencies and various civil society organizations working for street children in Iloilo City, and all who are united with us in pursuing a vision of giving Filipino children a better future.

List of Acronyms

CISS	Children in Street Situations
CWC	Council for the Welfare of Children
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
FLEMMS	Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey
ILO	International Labor Organization
LBF	Lifebank Microfinance Foundation, Inc.
NGO	Non-government Organization
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
SWS	Social Weather Stations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Highlights

CHILDREN IN STREET SITUATIONS



Children 5-17y aspire for a good education, to have stable jobs, and meet basic health needs



are in school

93%

of 5-17y are currently studying

84%

of 5-17y completed last schoolyear 2018-19



have homes

78%

of 5-17y are street-working but not street-living



earn money for themselves

46%

of 5-17y who work don't give earnings to anyone

Of 5-17y who share earnings, 73% gave only half or less than half (usually to family members)

Of money kept by 5-17y, 57% spent it on food and other necessities, 18% on internet/ computer rental, 14% on school-related expenses

HOWEVER, MANY



don't know of government assistance programs

22%

of 0-17y cited no assistance received

44%

of 5-17y avoid authorities like DSWD and police



are functionally illiterate

39%

of 10-17y are functionally literate



work more than play

have no safe spaces for play

In the past 7 days, 5-17y spent an average of 17 hours playing and 21 hours working in the streets

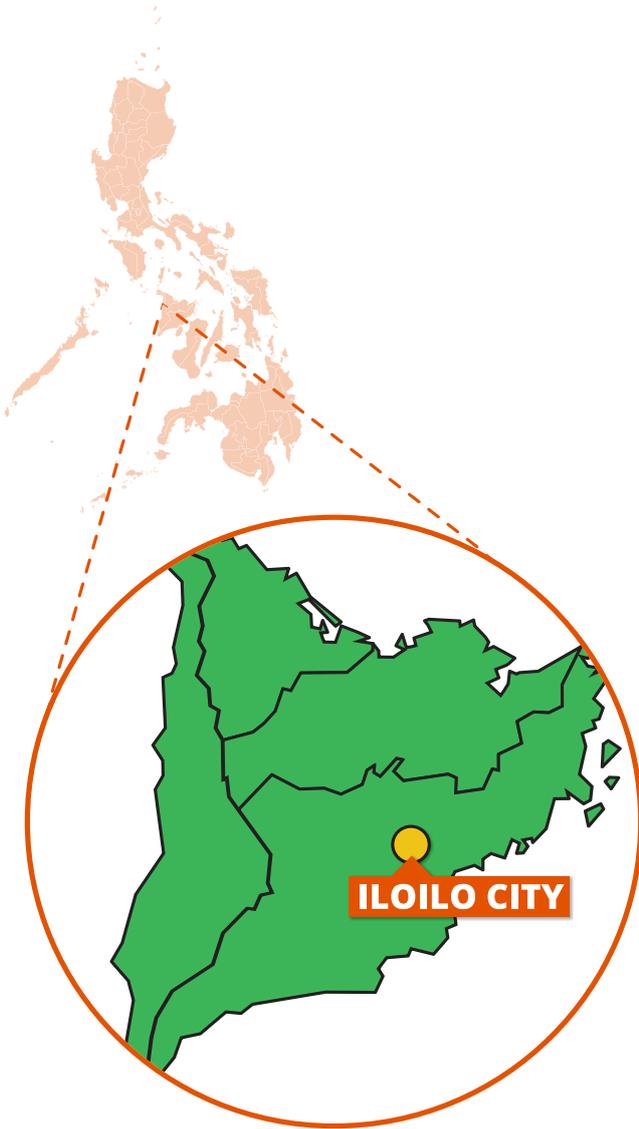


started working at an early age

63%

of 5-17y started working before they were 10y

71% of 5-9y, 92% of 10-14y, and 94% of 15-17y have experienced working (paid or unpaid)



Introduction

As of 2015, the Philippines has a population of 101 million, of which 36.6 million belong to the 0 to 17 years age group. Nearly a third (31%) of children belong to poor families (PSA, 2015). In the Western Visayas (Region VI), which includes Iloilo City, 34% of the region's 2.7 million children belong to poor families.

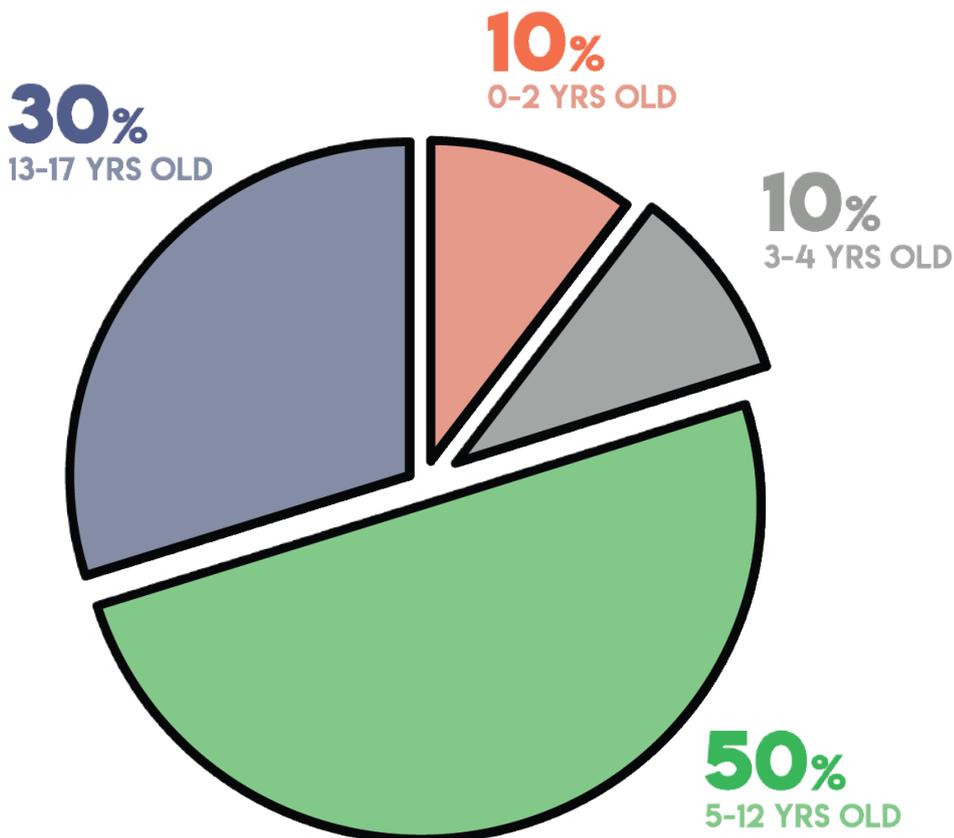
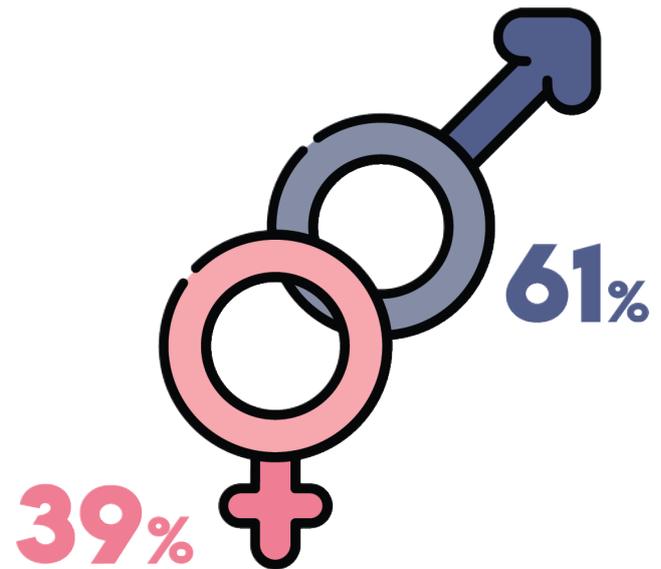
Iloilo City is a first-class highly-urbanized city located in Iloilo Province in the Visayas. It is the 22nd most populous city in the country and is the largest city in Western Visayas. Iloilo City has an area of 78.34 square kilometers. It has a population of 447,992 and is home to 144,040 children aged 0 to 17 years (PSA, 2015), of whom 13,241 belong to poor households. SWS estimates that there are potentially 1,878 streetchildren in Iloilo City. (SWS, 2019)

Scope and Methods

Lifebank Foundation commissioned Social Weather Stations (SWS) to conduct a study on Children in Street Situations (CiSS) in the cities of Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro. Surveys were conducted from June 16 to July 1, 2019 in Iloilo City. Respondents were spotted on the streets and asked if they may be interviewed. Children 5-17 years old responded for themselves and carers or guardians responded for children 0-4 years old. The survey questions covered socio-demographics, migration history and living arrangements, health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and food intake, maternal and child health and nutrition, access to services, education, functional literacy, aspirations, quality of life, work activities, time use, hazards of street life, risk behaviors, and experience of any form of violence.

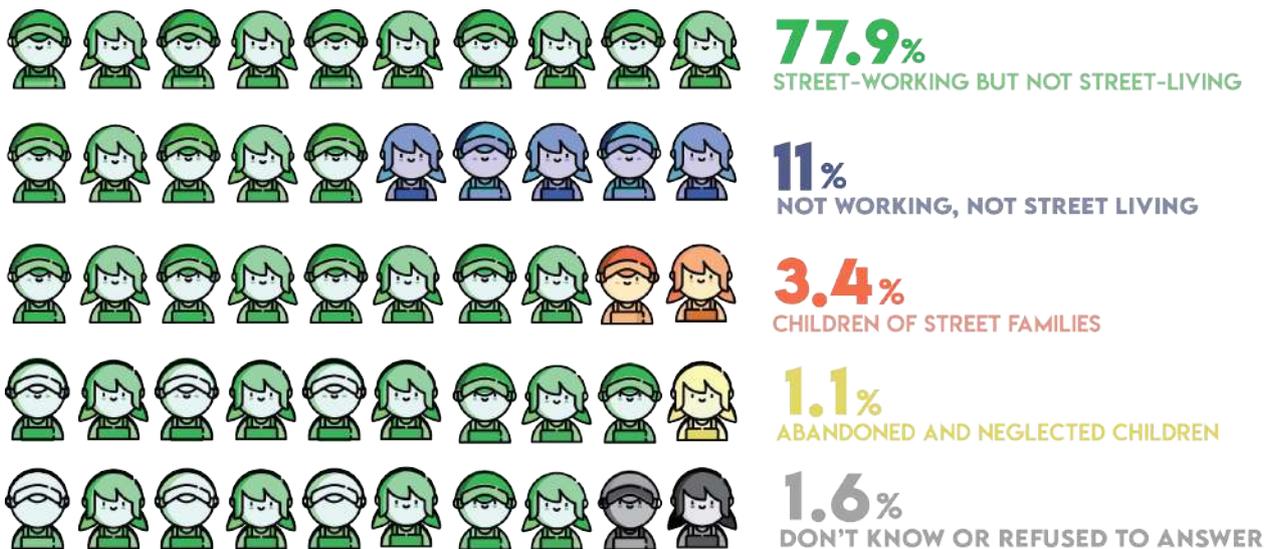
Profile of Respondents

The survey covered a total of 1,169 CiSS in Iloilo City, of whom 718 (61%) were males, 451 (39%) were females. Half (50%) were 5-12 years old and 30% were 13-17 years old. To gather information on CiSS less than 5 years old, their guardians were interviewed and they comprised 20% of all children profiled.



CiSS 5-17 years old by Category

Contrary to popular perception, most CiSS have homes to return to when they are not in the streets. Rather, CiSS see the streets as source of their livelihood and recreation areas as only on the streets can they earn money and play with others.



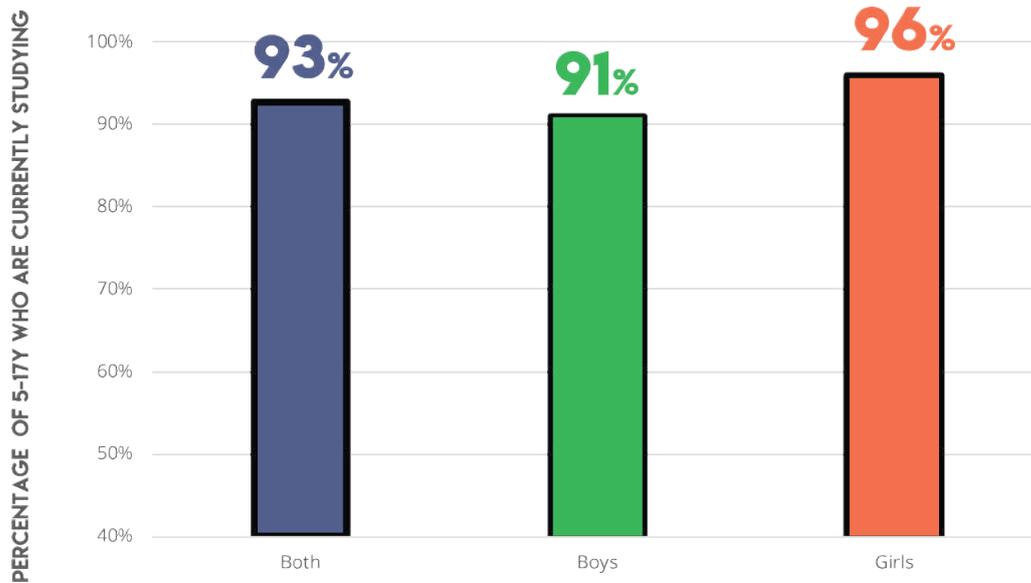
The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) defines two categories of CiSS

1. "Children on the streets" work on the streets but do not live there. They return to their families or communities on a regular basis. They are often in school.
2. "Children of the streets" can be children of street families or abandoned children
 - a. Children of street families live with their family, who have long been itinerant
 - b. abandoned children have no connection with their families. They are often out of school.

Education and Literacy

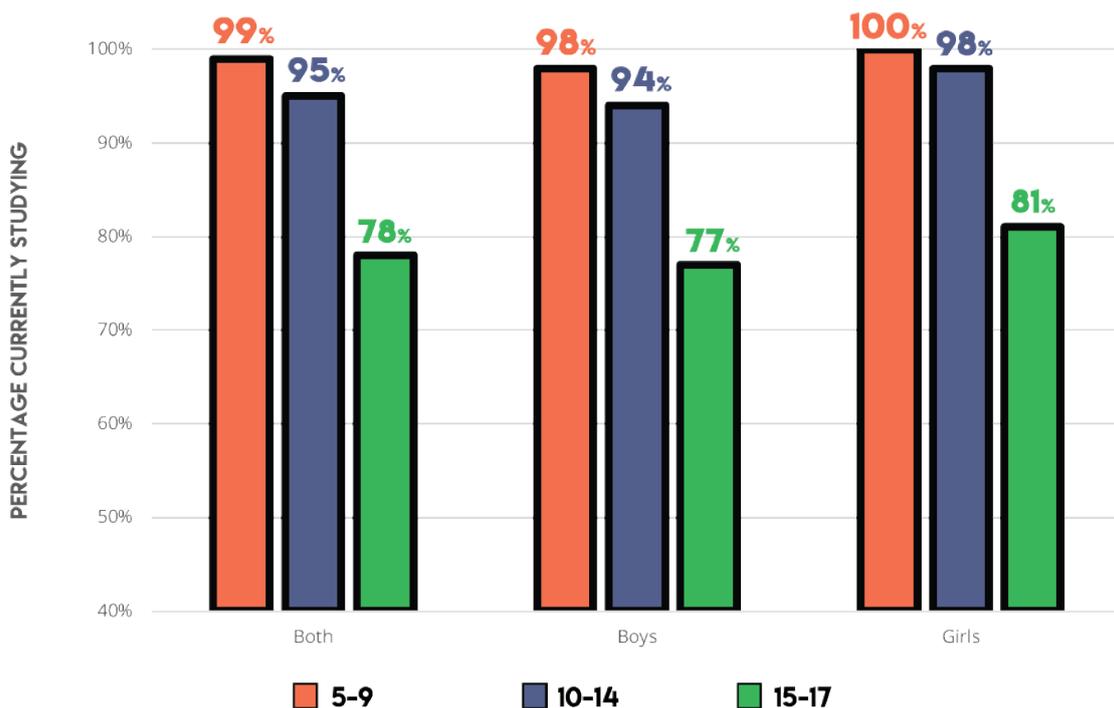
Majority (93%) of 5-17 year-old CiSS interviewed are currently in school. A larger proportion among girls (96%) than among boys (91%) are currently enrolled.

MOST GIRLS ARE CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL



When respondents' ages are taken into account, a smaller percentage of 15-17 year-olds are currently in-school compared to their younger counterparts.

FEWER OLDER CHILDREN ARE IN SCHOOL



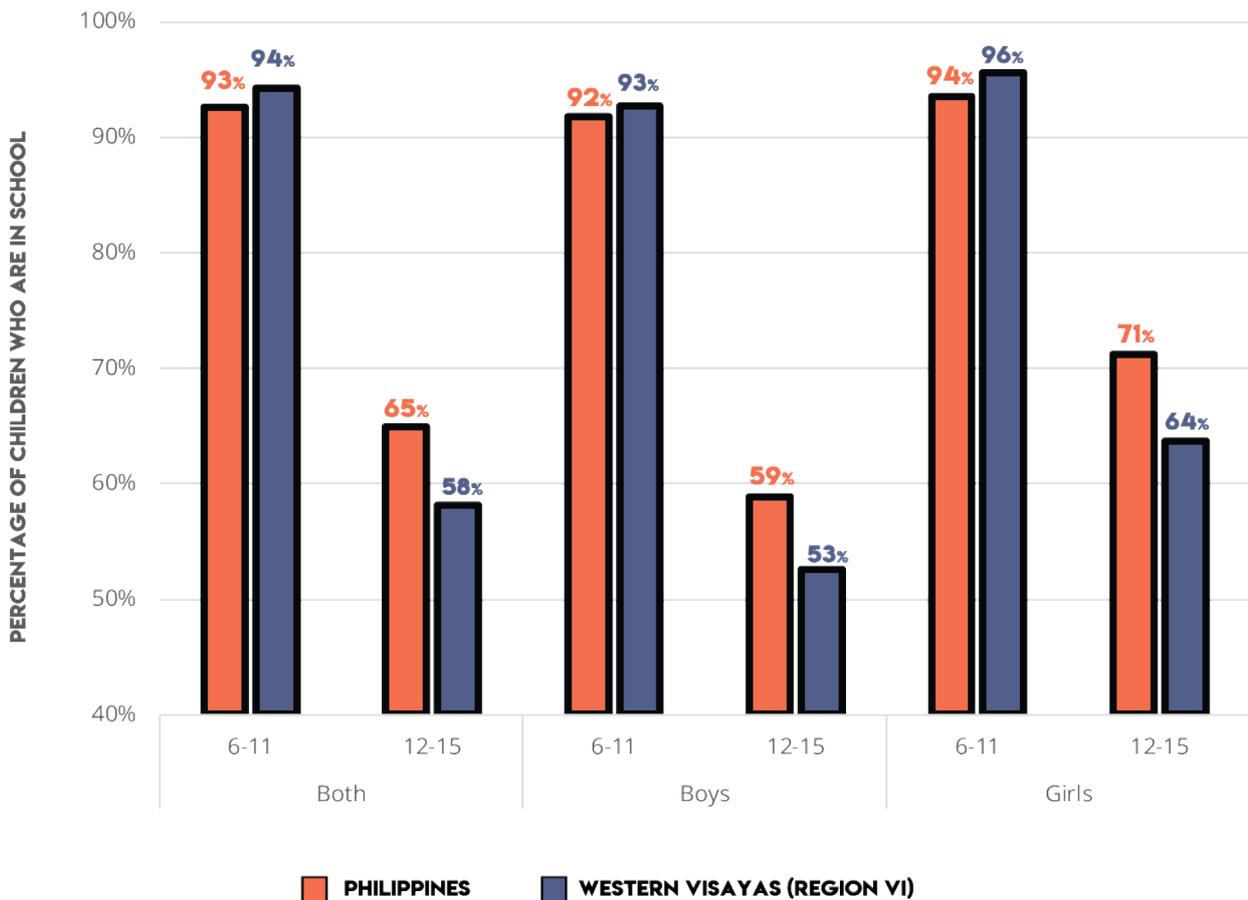
The national Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey shows that 92.6% of children 6-11 years old and 64.9% of children 12-15 years old are enrolled in school. (PSA, 2013)

Net enrollment ratio (%)

	Both		Boys		Girls	
	6-11	12-15	6-11	12-15	6-11	12-15
Philippines	92.6	64.9	91.8	58.9	93.5	71.2
Western Visayas (Region VI)	94.2	58.1	92.7	52.6	95.6	63.7

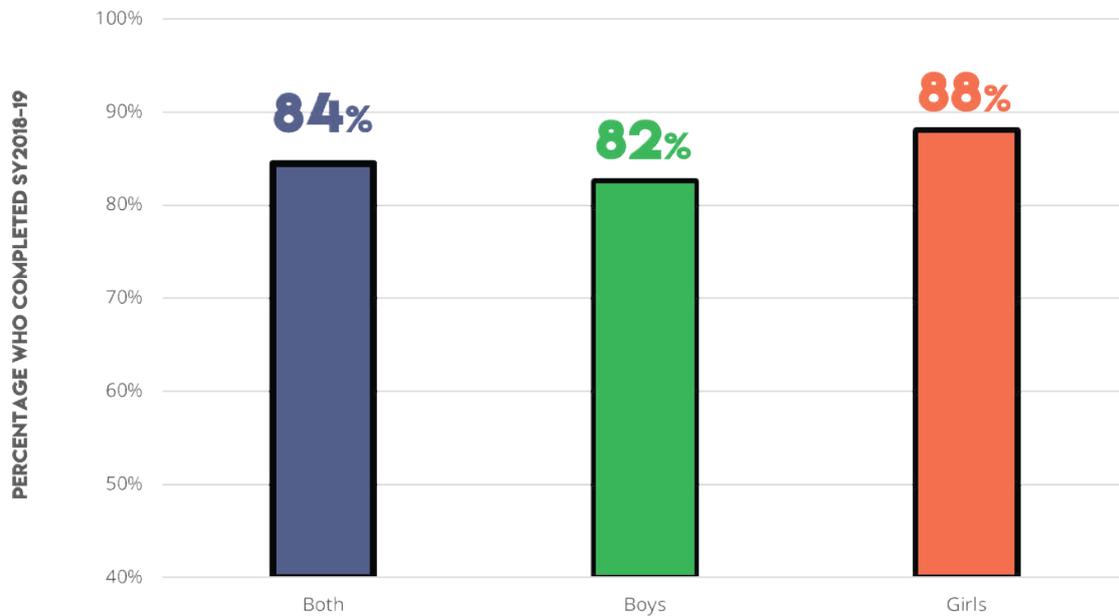
Source: Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) 2013

**PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN SCHOOL
NATIONAL AND WESTERN VISAYAS**



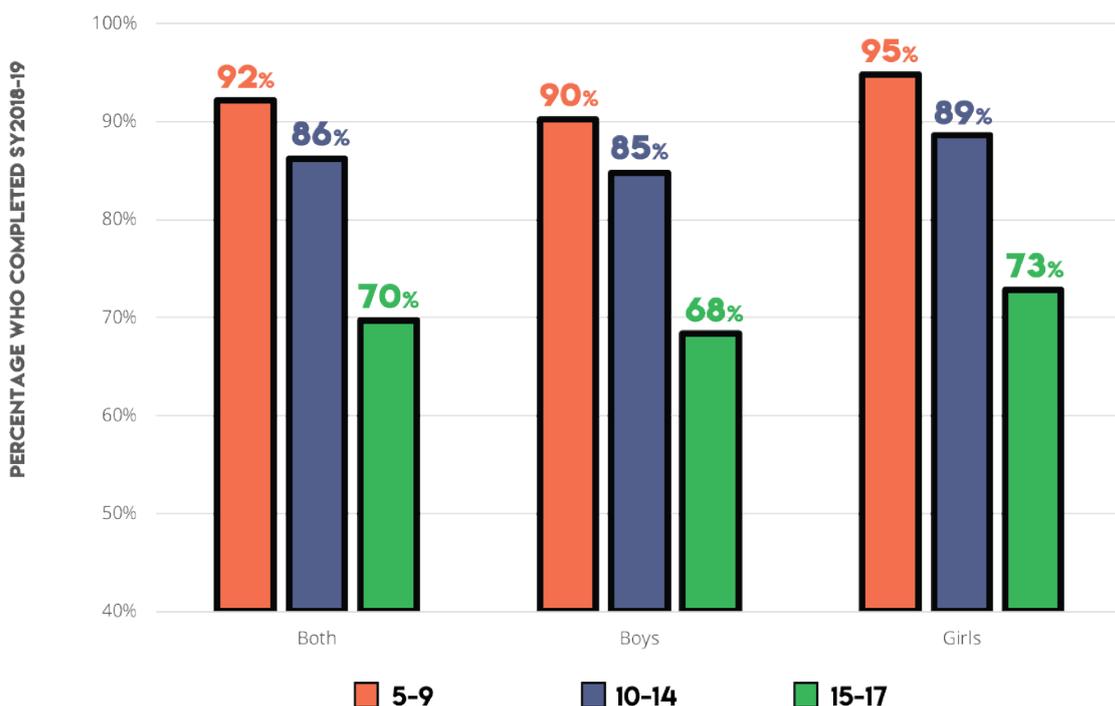
Not all children enrolled at the start of the schoolyear complete the year. Majority (84%) of 5-17 year-old CiSS interviewed completed the last schoolyear (SY 2018-19). A larger percentage of girls (88%) than boys (82%) completed the previous schoolyear.

MORE GIRLS COMPLETED LAST SCHOOLYEAR



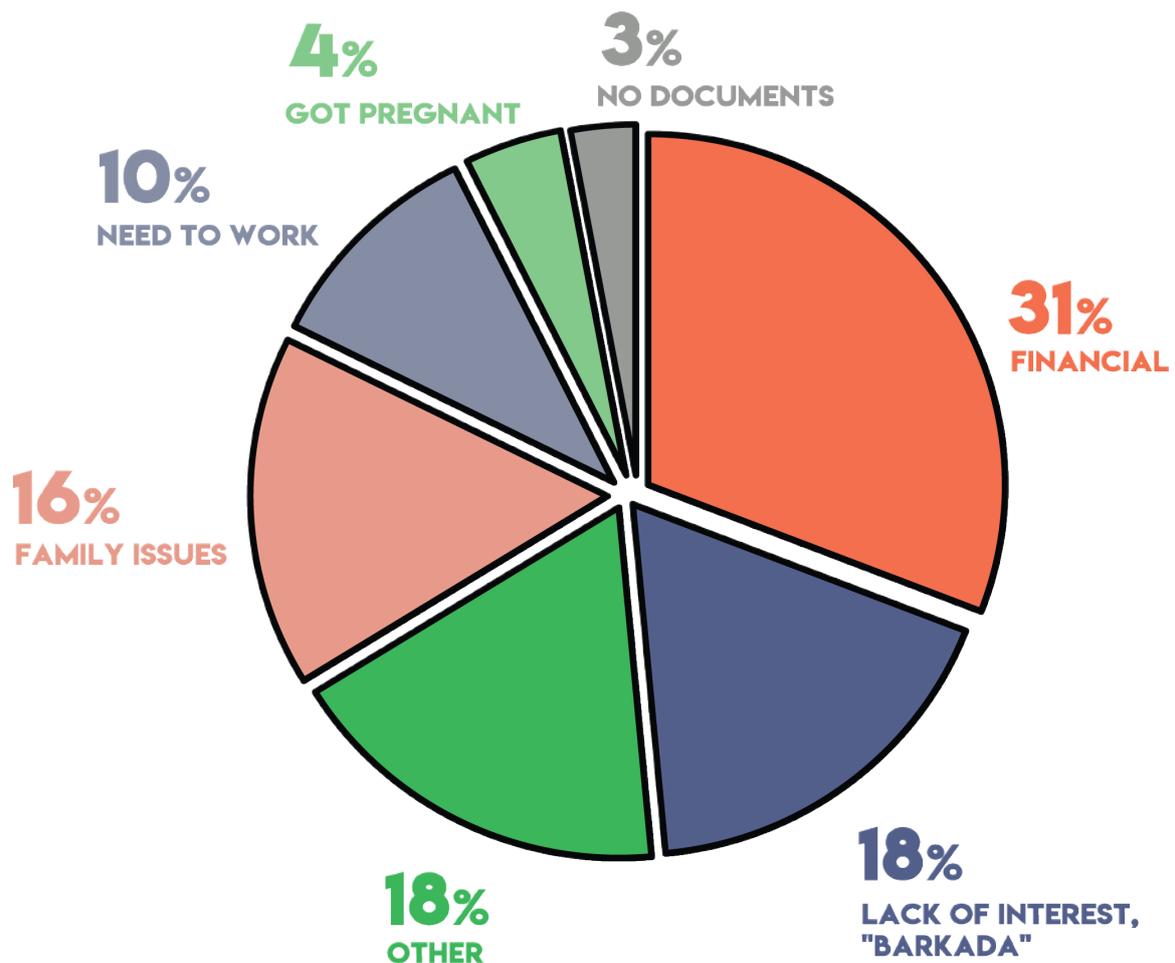
School completion drops during high school among both girls and boys. Eighty-six percent (86%) of 10-14 year-olds, but only 70% of 15-17 year-olds, completed last schoolyear.

FEWER OLDER CHILDREN COMPLETED LAST SCHOOLYEAR

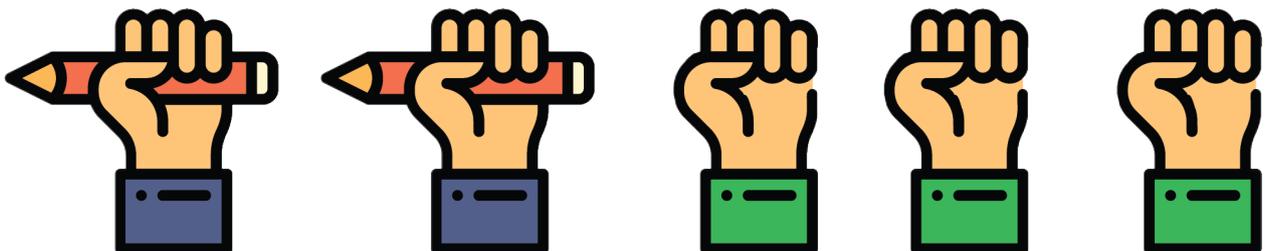


Only 7% of 5-17 year-old CiSS are out-of-school or have never been in school. Financial difficulties are most commonly cited as the primary reason for not being in school. Most (84%) out-of-school CiSS are still interested in studying. However, few of those out-of-school have accessed government or NGO alternative learning services (12%), learning activities held in churches or mosques (25%), street classes (19%), or community (9%) or mobile (1%) libraries.

FINANCES ARE THE MOST COMMON REASON FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO GO TO SCHOOL

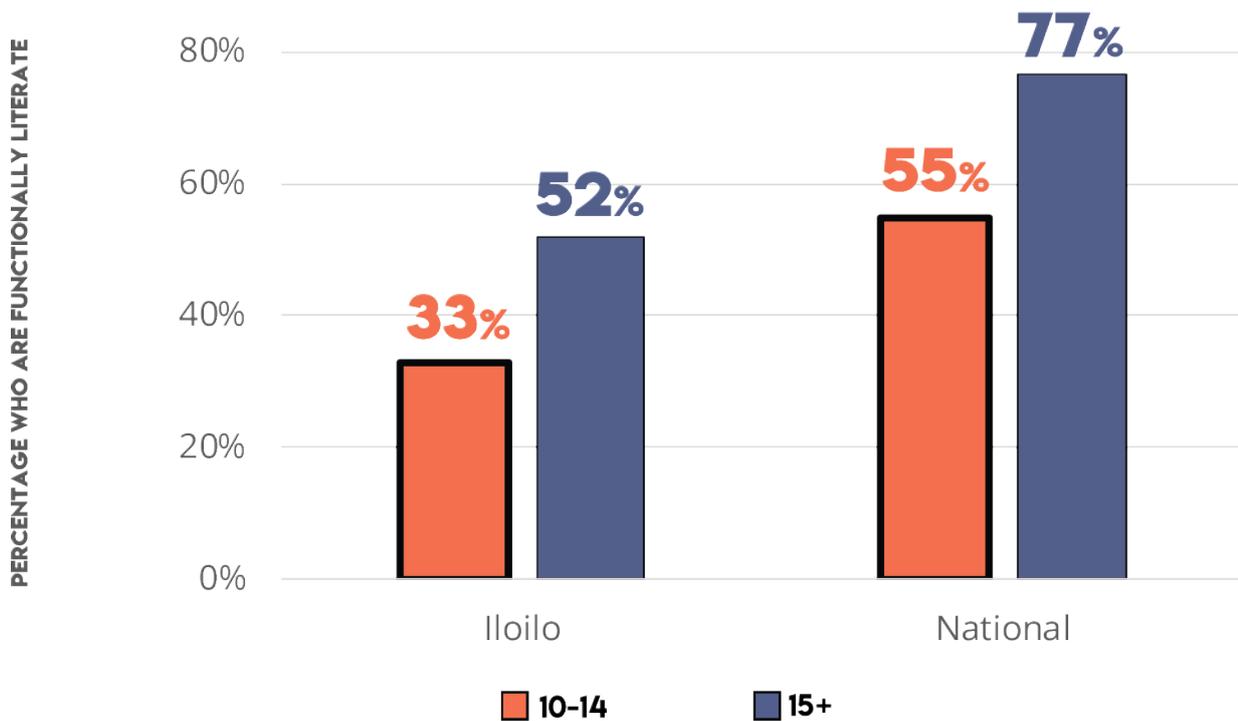


Although most (90%) of 10-17 year-old CiSS are in school and 75% are able to read and 70% are able to write numbers and words, *only 2 out of 5 (39%) are functionally literate.*



National figures place basic literacy rate at 97.4% among 10-14 year-olds and 98.3% among 15-19 year-olds. Functional literacy rate is 83.2% among 10-14 year-olds and 93.7% among 15-19 year-olds. (FLEMMS 2013)

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AMONG CISS IS LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE



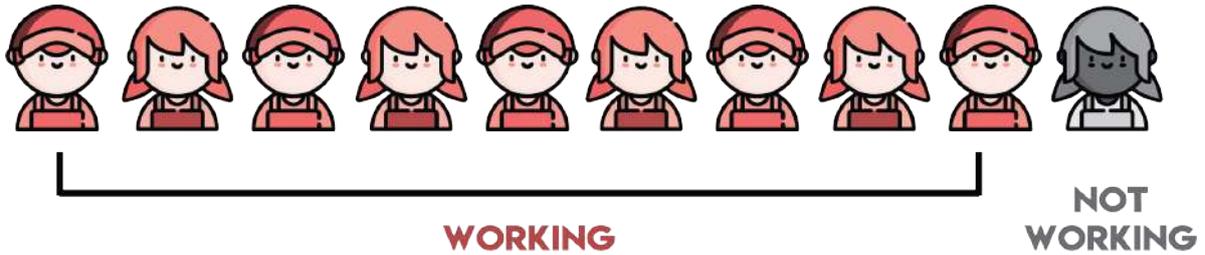
Note: Iloilo figures are for 15-17 year-olds while national figures are for 15-19 year-olds

Functional literacy is a significantly higher level of literacy which includes not only reading and writing but also numeracy skills. The skills must be sufficiently advanced to enable the individual to participate fully and efficiently in activities commonly occurring in his life situation that require a reasonable capability of communicating by written language. A functional literate person is one who can at least read, write, compute and/or comprehend. Also, persons who graduated from high school or completed higher level of education are classified as functionally literate. (PSA, 2013)

Basic or simple literacy is the ability of a person to read and write with understanding a simple message in any language or dialect. The basic literacy status of an individual can be determined based on respondent's answer to the question "Can ___ read and write a simple message in any language or dialect?"

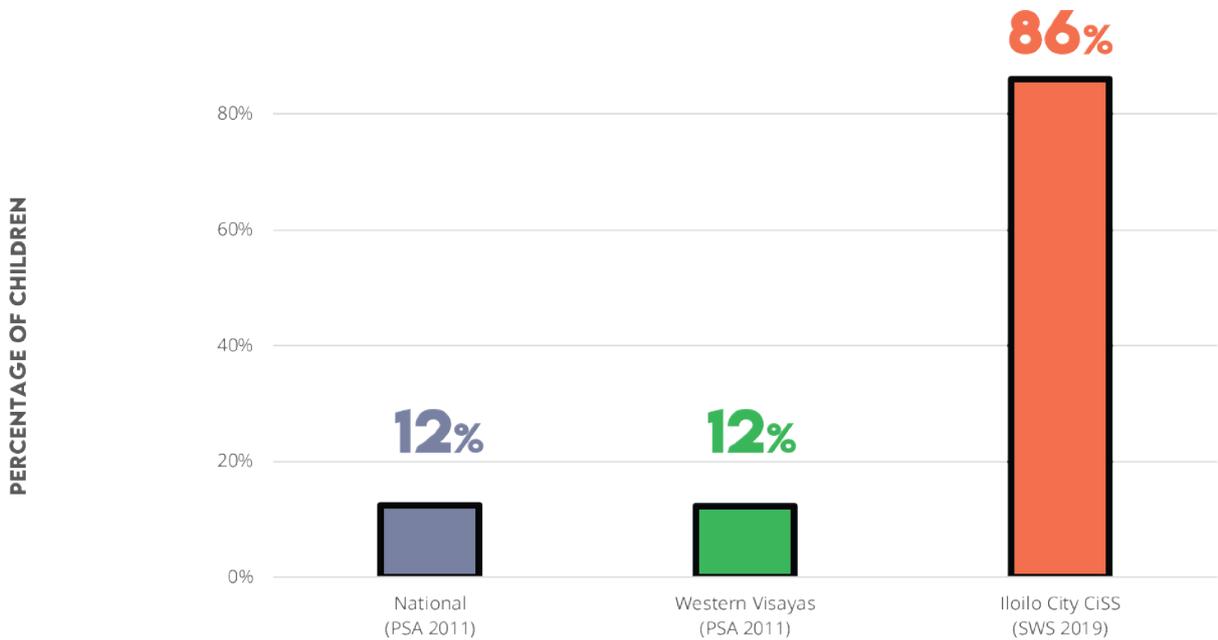
Work Activities

Nine out of 10 CiSS ages 5-17 years old have experienced working, paid or unpaid, or have ever done something to earn a living. Seventy-one percent (71%) of all 5-9 year-olds, 92% of 10-14 year-olds, and 94% of 15-17 year-olds have experienced working.

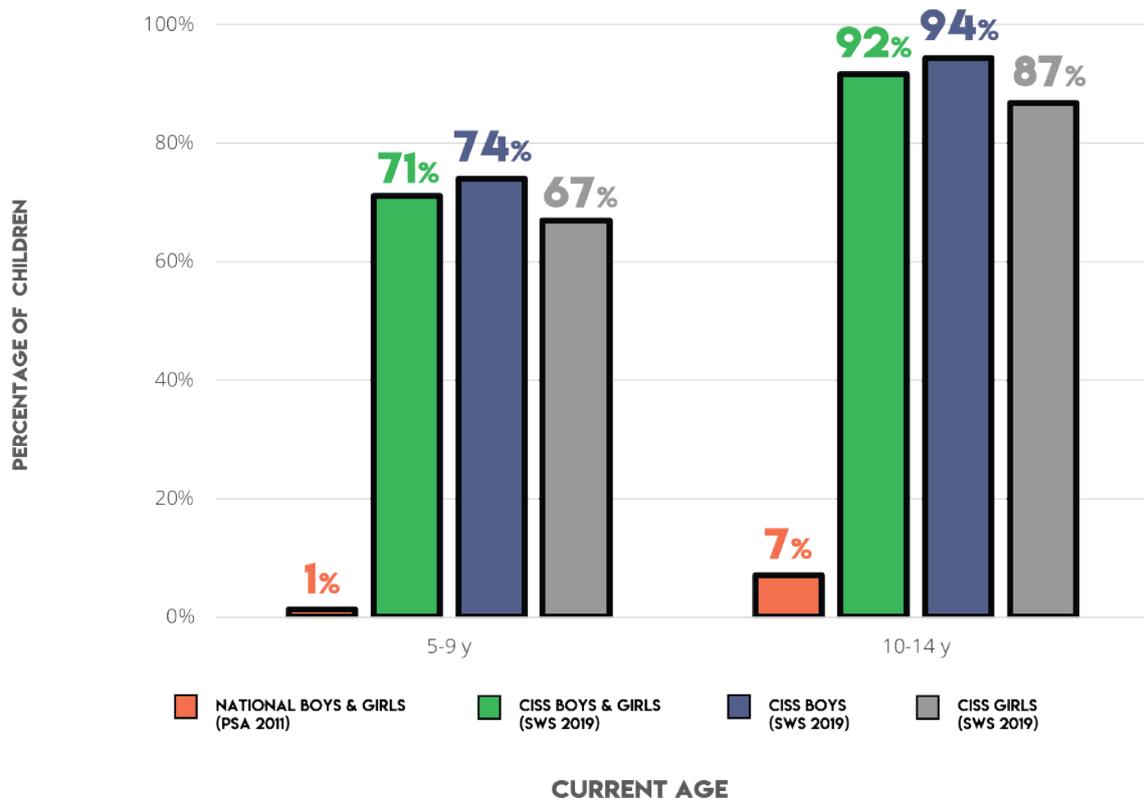


The national Survey on Children found 12.4% of 5-17 year-olds worked for at least one hour during the past week. In Western Visayas (Region VI), 12.3% of children are working. (PSA & ILO-IPEC, 2011)

MORE CISS ARE WORKING COMPARED TO CHILDREN IN GENERAL



UNDERAGE LABOR (<15 YEARS OLD) IS MORE PREVALENT AMONG ILOILO CITY'S CISS COMPARED TO CHILDREN IN GENERAL



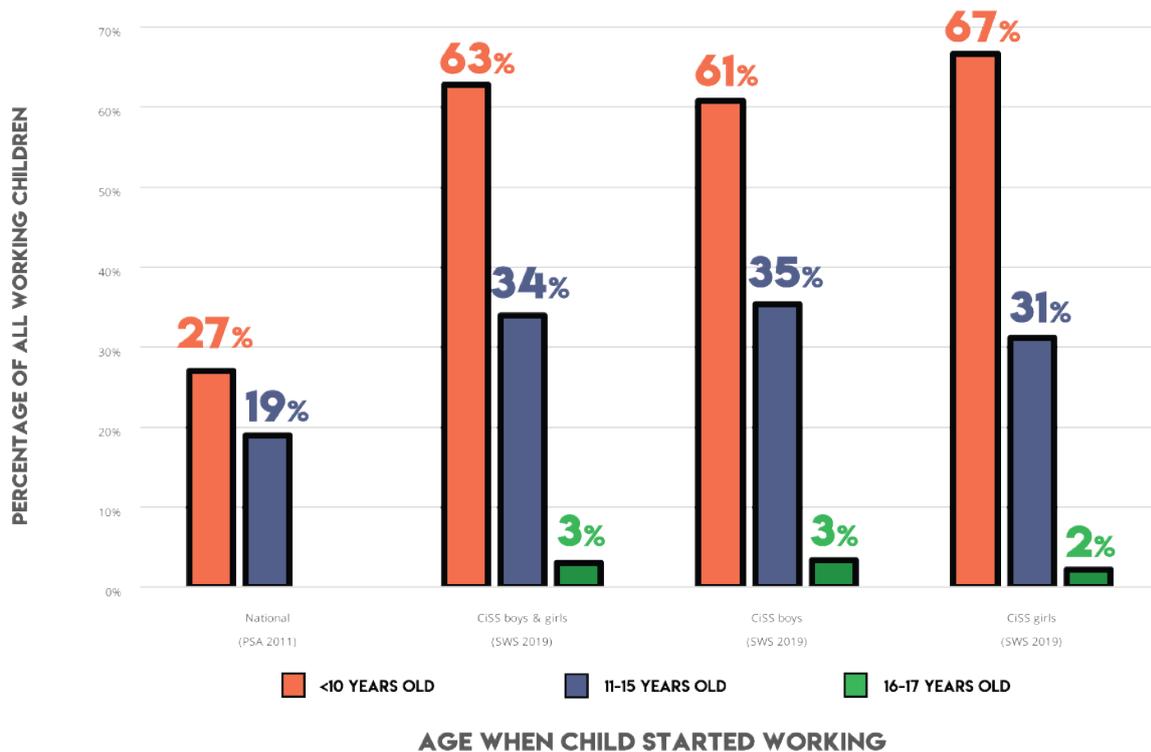
Child Labor

“Child labor” refers to any work or economic activity performed by a child that subjects him/her to any form of exploitation or is harmful to his/her health and safety or physical, mental or psychosocial development.

Children aged 15 to below 18 years of age are permitted to work in any economic activity not considered child labor, but not more than eight (8) hours a day and in no case beyond forty (40) hours a week. They shall not be allowed to work between 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. of the following day, and employer should provide the child with access to at least elementary and secondary education. (DOLE, 2012)

Two out of three (63%) 5-17 year-old working streetchildren started working before they were 10 years old. National figures say one of four (26.8%) of the working children started working before age 10 and 18.8% started working at age 10 or older. (PSA 2011)

MOST WORKING CISS IN ILOILO CITY BEGAN WORKING BEFORE THEY WERE 10 YEARS OLD



The most common types of work among 5-17 year-olds are selling (45%) and scavenging (30%).

Children worked an average of 4 days during the past 7 days. One of three (37%) working children – 31% of all 5-17 year-olds – worked every day during the past week. Half (49%) of working children – 41% of all 5-17 year-olds – stopped working between 6 pm and midnight.

Table 1. Work done by CiSS 5-17 years old during the past seven days

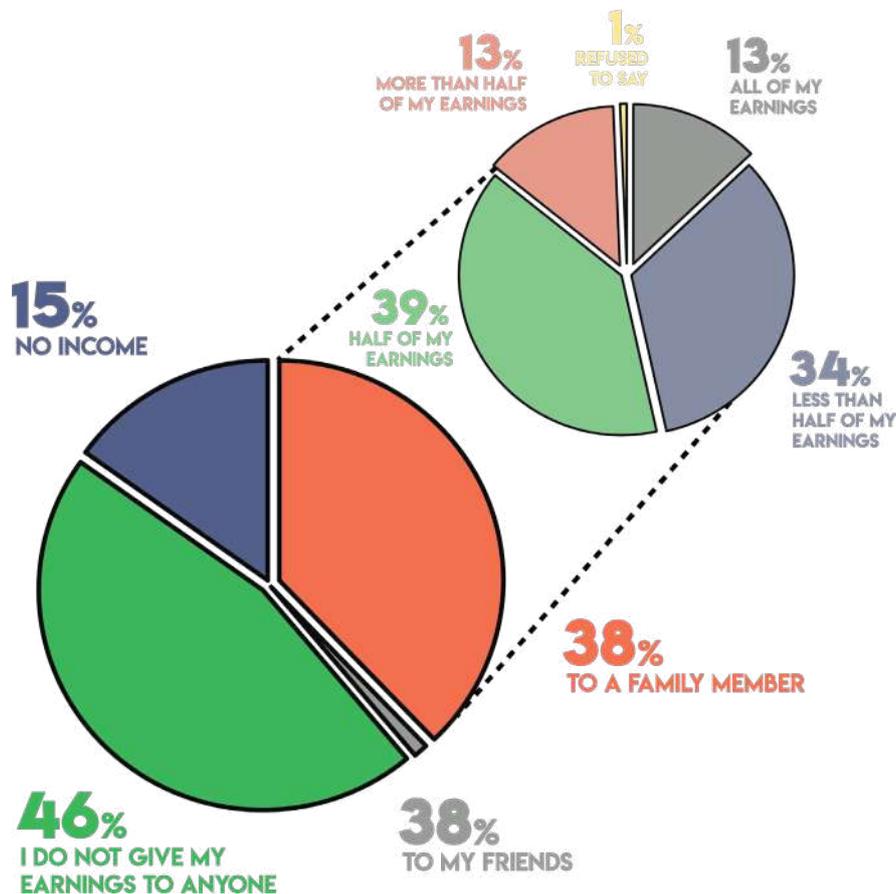
Type of Work	Number	% of children who worked in the past 7 days
Selling, helping in shop or eatery	354	45%
Scavenging, collecting garbage	237	30%
Portering, delivery, construction, errands, collector	111	14%
Pedicab/tricycle driver	39	5%

Type of Work	Number	% of children who worked in the past 7 days
Washing clothes, cleaning	30	4%
Packing fish, vegetables, molo wrappers	22	3%
Watching/washing cars	20	3%
Jeepney barker, dispatcher	18	2%
Other	15	2%
Begging	15	2%
Babysitting	7	1%
Selling sex or pimping	4	1%

Half (49%) of 5-17 year-olds who worked in the past seven days earned less than 100 pesos a day, 30% earned between 100 and 300 pesos a day, and 15% didn't earn any money.

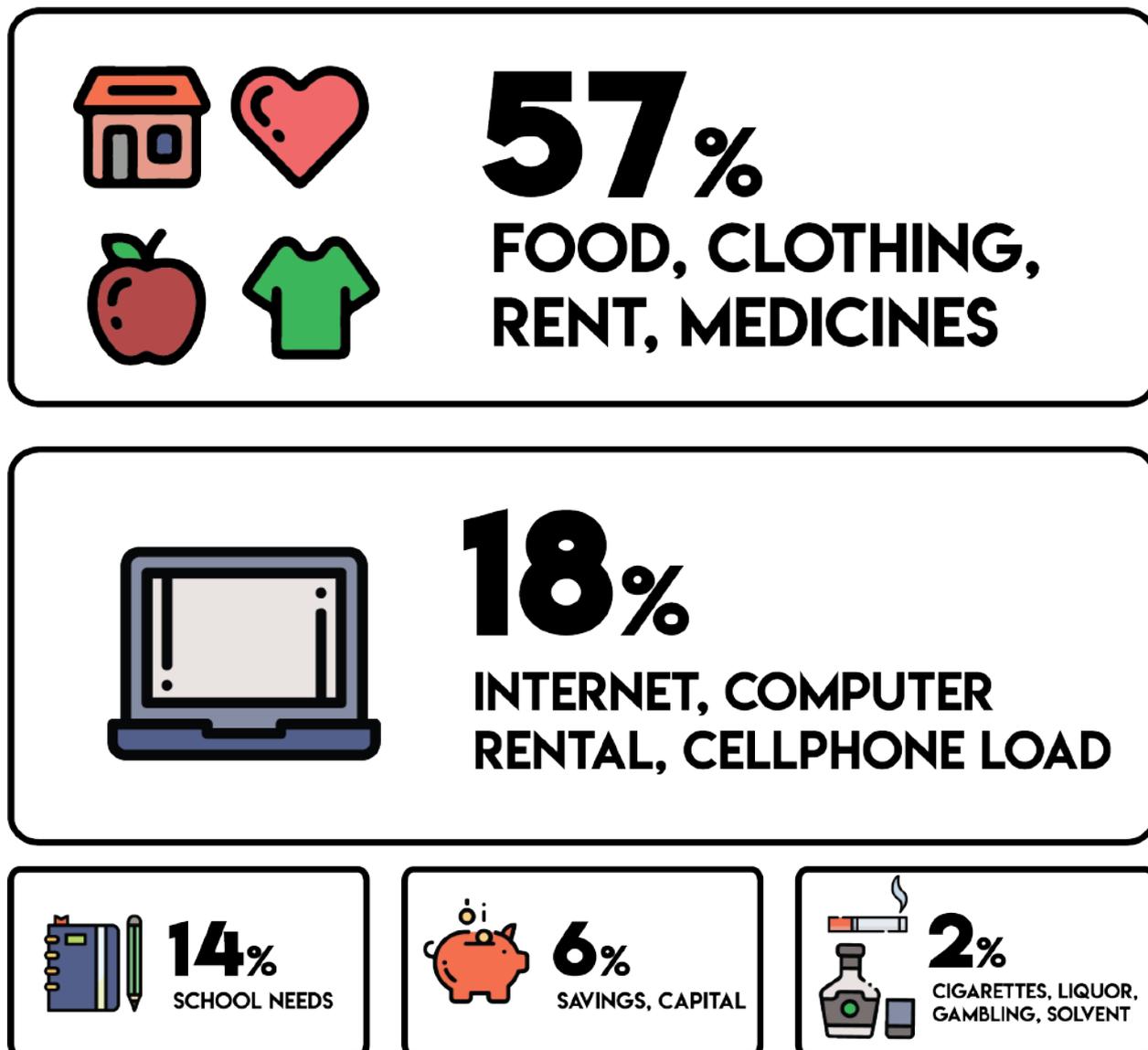
One third (38%) gave earnings to a family member and 1% to friends. Of those who share earnings, 71% gave only half or less than half to others.

Fifteen percent (15%) didn't earn any income or didn't consider the goods they received as income.



Almost half (46%) of 5-17 year-olds who work don't give earnings to anyone. Among these, 57% spent it on food and basic necessities, 14% on school-related expenses, 18% on internet, computer, or cellphone load, 6% on savings, and 2% on cigarettes, alcohol, gambling, or solvent.

WHERE WORKING 5-17 YEAR-OLDS SPENT THE MONEY THEY KEPT FOR THEMSELVES



The national Survey on Children showed 41.7% of working children give all or part of earnings to parents or guardians, 15.7% buy things for school needs, 22.7% buy things for himself/ herself. (PSA 2011)

Time Use

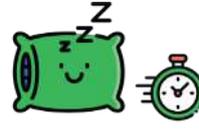
In the past 7 days, 5-17 year-olds spent an average of 80 hours (48%) of their time in the streets or public spaces.



21HRS
WORKING



17HRS
PLAYING



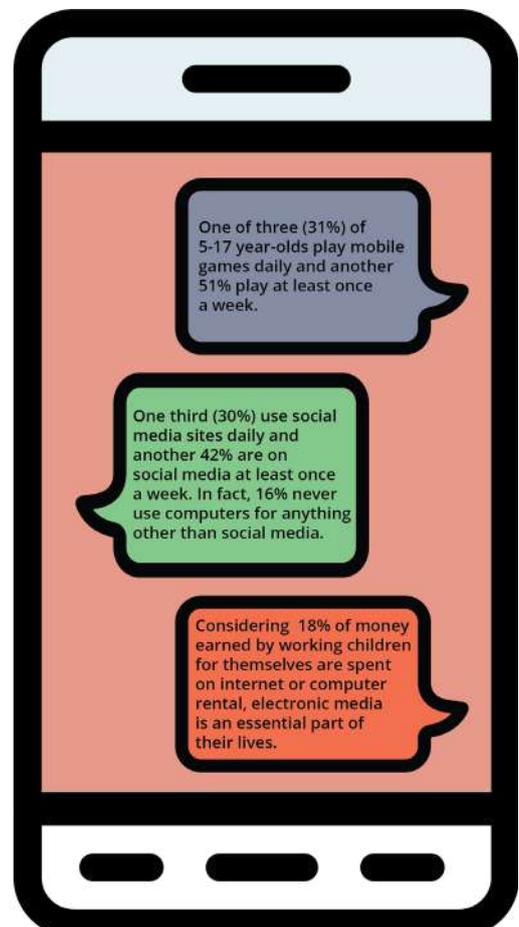
42HRS
SLEEPING

In the past seven days, in a typical day, 14% moved around the city just to kill time.

Among other non-work activities, 57% of 5-17 year-olds watch TV daily, another 39% at least once a week. Two of three (61%) visit the mall at least once a week. Half (53%) attend religious services or activities at least once a week.

If given a choice, 45% of 5-17 year-olds would want to stay in the streets for the same number of hours or even longer. A third (30%) do not want to stay in the streets at all.

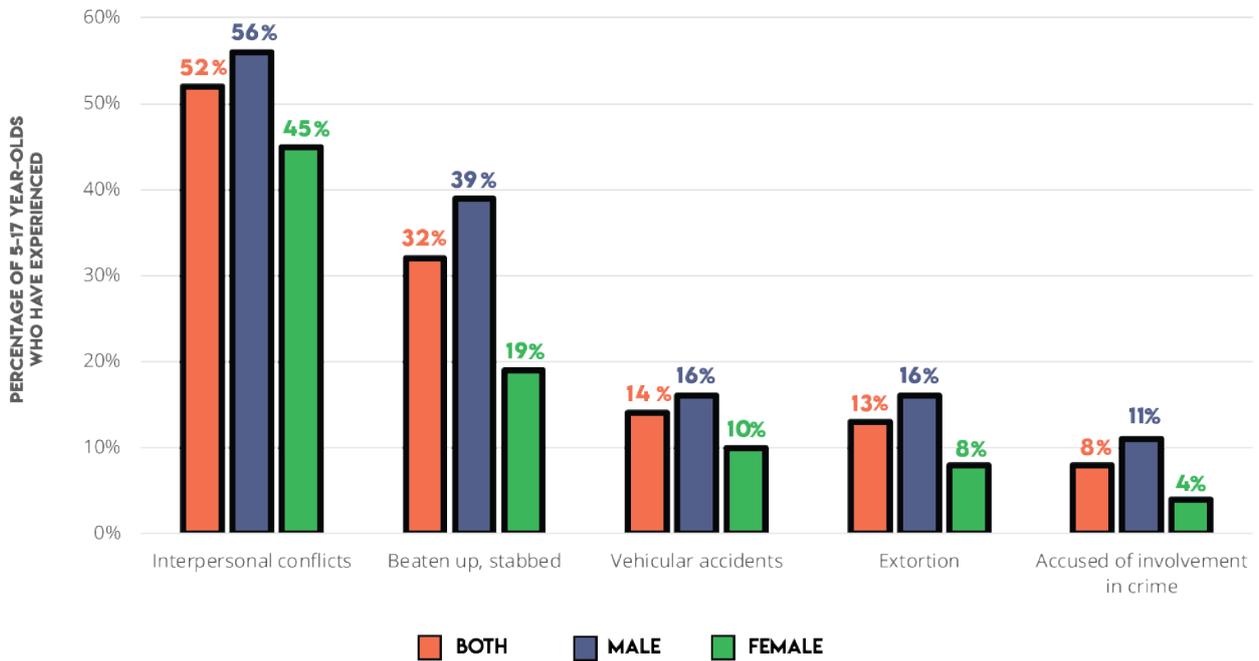
Electronic Media is Pervasive among CISS 5-17 Years Old



Hazards of Street Life

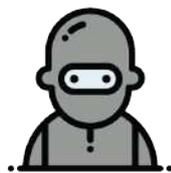
More than half (52%) of 5-17 year-olds have faced conflicts or quarrels with other children or people. One third (32%) have been physically injured, beaten up, or stabbed. More boys than girls experience these hazards.

CISS HAVE EXPERIENCED VARIOUS HAZARDS



CISS have learned to avoid certain persons in the streets.

PERSONS TO AVOID



59%
KIDNAPPERS



53%
SYNDICATES



44%
AUTHORITIES

More than half (59%) of 5-17 year-olds said they avoid kidnappers and 53% avoid syndicates. The third type of person they avoid are authorities like DSWD and police (44%).

Violence

CiSS 5-17 years old disclosed that they have experienced physical, emotional, and sexual violence, usually at home from family members.



- **65%** of 5-17y have experienced physical violence
- **96%** of whom experienced it at home by a family member(s); **81%** didn't ask for help from anyone



- **39%** of 5-17y have experienced verbal / emotional / psychological violence
- **81%** of whom experienced it at home from a family member(s); **80%** didn't ask for help from anyone
- **18%** experienced it in the community; **65%** didn't ask for help



- **2%** of 5-17y have experienced sexual violence
- **32%** of whom experienced it at home from a family member(s); **14%** at home from a non-family member; **70%** didn't ask for help, **30%** asked for help from a relative
- **55%** of whom experienced it in the community; **92%** didn't ask for help
- **5%** of whom experienced in in school; no one asked for help

Definitions of Violence used by SWS

Types of Violence	Definitions
Physical	Spanking, slapping, pinching, tying, putting inside a sack, etc.
Psychological	Cursing, use of hurtful words, threats and intimidations, discrimination/ favoritism, rejection, etc.
Sexual	Voyeurism, touched in one's private parts, asked to take off clothes to be taken a video or photo of, rape, gang rape, etc.

Access to services

The common forms of assistance that 0-17 year-old CiSS received from the government or private organizations are health center services (45%), Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (34%), and feeding program (35%). However, about a third (22%) indicated that the child not receive any assistance.

Comparing with a study of CiSS in the City of Manila

In 2018, Association Soeur Emmanuelle or ASMAE, with project funding support from Agence Francaise De Developement (AFD), conducted a Baseline Study on Children in street situations in the City of Manila, particularly in Districts 1, 3 and 5. They found a greater proportion of children “of the street” or street-working but not street-living (55%) compared to children “on the street” or street-living (43%) and children in shelters (2%). This is similar to the findings of this SWS study in Iloilo City and Cagayan de Oro, where most CiSS have homes to return to after they work or play in the streets.

Majority of CiSS in Manila were currently enrolled in school (68%), but this is a smaller proportion than in Iloilo City (93%) and Cagayan de Oro (83%).

More children in Manila earned a living by begging (13%) than other activities. In Iloilo City and Cagayan de Oro, very few (2%) went begging. In Manila, 15% were vendors, while it was 45% of CiSS in Iloilo City and 69% in Cagayan de Oro. More often, working children in Manila gave their earnings to a family member (68%). Less than half of children in Iloilo City (38%) and Cagayan de Oro (39%) gave their earnings to a family member.

Streetchildren in Manila frequently used computers and cellphones recreationally (80% played video games) like their counterparts in Iloilo City (81% play at least once a week) and Cagayan de Oro (41% play at least once a week).

The most striking finding running across the three surveys is the primacy of hope. Like all children, children in street situations have aspirations of completing their education, having a stable job, and being able to provide for themselves and their family.

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Lifebank Foundation, Inc.'s mission is to be a catalyst in poverty reduction through provision of financial solutions to micro-entrepreneurs coupled with social services for their family members. **The Streetchildren NGO Support Project (SNSP)** aims to strengthen the capacity of the network of non- profit groups and local government units in creating a better future for Children in Street Situations

For futher information, contact



Ms. Dinah G. Bohol

*Vice President - Social and Sustainable Development Department (SSDD)
Lifebank Microfinance Foundation, Inc.*



Ms. Norma Chan-Pongan

*Project Coordinator
Streetchildren NGO Support Project (SNSP)*



Gov. Fermin Caram Street
Barangay Maria Clara, Iloilo City, Philippines



2nd floor Fernandez Building, McArthur Highway, Tagbac, Jaro, Iloilo City



+63 33 333 3951



+63 33 323 4390



lbfcare@gmail.com



www.lbfstreetchildren.org/streetchildren/



@lifebankfoundation



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Social Weather Stations (www.sws.org.ph), established in 1985 as a non-stock, non-profit, and non-partisan social research organization, is a byword in Philippine survey research. SWS aims to generate pertinent, accurate, timely and credible data on social, political and economic issues of contemporary importance. The SWS surveys regularly cover the quality of life, poverty and hunger, governance, corruption, elections, crime victimization, and the state of democracy. In most of these matters, SWS is the Philippine survey pioneer. On the subjects of poverty and hunger, SWS is the de facto quarterly provider of national survey data, since governmental statistics are produced not oftener than every three years.

For futher information, contact



Linda Luz Guerrero

*Vice-President and COO
Social Weather Stations (SWS)*



guerrero@sws.org.ph



52 Malingap St., Sikatuna Village,
Quezon City 1101 Philippines



www.sws.org.ph



+63 2 8924-4465; 8926-4308;
8924-4458; (fax) 8920-2181