The Liberian household consists of members of the immediate and extended family. The number of people living in a typical household varies according to the family's income. There is an average of four to five children per family and in some rural areas, where it is common for men to take on more than one wife, there will be significantly more. Children live with their parents until they are financially independent and move out when they get married. In rural areas, it is common for women to marry as young as 14 or 15, in urban areas it is illegal before the age of 18. Family roles are quite traditional in Liberia. Men are expected to be the main financial providers and maintain primary authority over the household and family. Women are expected to handle all childcare and household duties. The kitchen is solely the domain of the women. In urban areas, it is becoming more common to have a woman work outside of the home. Rural women are often encouraged to engage in farming and become a housewife early on in life.

**Teen Life:** Sibling do share everything in common accept for under clothes. Teenagers do not normally ask for permission to use family member items if the item is available. The younger brother can use his older brother's item without asking for permission if the older brother is not using it at a given time and vice versa.

**Responsibilities:** Teenagers are responsible for managing their time between school, activities, jobs, social activities including transportation to any of these functions.

**Parental Involvement:** Parents are not in frequent contact with their children's teachers but may do so when they have concerns. In most cases, the parent's first line of contact is the school principal or vice principal. A student may have more than 10 teachers teaching different subjects for a given class. The parents only have the opportunity to meet with school staff at the end of every period/semester to receive the child's progress report. Report cards are hand delivered to the parent or guardian during the Parent-Teacher Association meetings, which are normally held at the end of each semester.

**Pets:** Most families do not have pets. However, dogs are the typical pets as opposed to cats, which many people hate because of the belief that it is an easy conduit for witchcraft. On the average, most dog owners keep their dogs outdoors to keep watch for intruders during the night.

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**School**

Formal state education begins at age four to five. Generally, students graduate at age 18, but in post war Liberia there is no age limit. Adult education was included for people above 25 to attend night school. In rural areas, boys are likely to attend a more informal 'poro society' school that teaches essential community skills such as typical farming methods and local remedies. Similarly, many young women attend 'Sande Society' schools where they will be taught basic childcare, cooking and household duties. In many cases, knowledge is passed on informally by parents to their children. There are nine government recognized universities that confer Bachelor's and Master's degrees. In addition, there are 14 government recognized community colleges that confer associate degrees and other certificate or diploma programs. Candidates are required to pass the West African Examination Council Exam to graduate from secondary school and to sit for the entrance exams for college admissions.

**Classes:** Students in Liberia study subjects that are assigned to their grade level and cannot choose their own subject. Depending on the grade level, they take between 8-12 subjects during a year.

**Extracurricular Activities:** Schools have different clubs that students are encouraged to join. For sports, students with exceptional skills in soccer, kickball, and basketball are vetted to join the teams. Academic team, music, drama, soccer, kickball and basketball are the major extra curriculum activities common among schools in Liberia. Other clubs include Journalism club and Health club. Extracurricular activities are not mandatory but attract students who have interests in specific activities.
Religion: As Christianity and Islam are the dominant religions, Liberia celebrates holidays like Easter, Christmas, Ramadan and Eid. Many rural dwellers are Africanists who believe in nature and superstitions.

Guest Culture: Guests are often welcomed with food, drinks or Cola nuts depending on the local tradition. A guest may decline food and drinks but will not decline Cola nuts in regions where the offering of Cola nuts to guests is widely practiced. In most instances, a guest is welcomed with only water and it is not a big deal if the guest declines the offer.

Lunch and Diets: Rice is the staple food in Liberia. A typical is rice with fish or meat, and a sauce, often spicy. A typical Liberian is accustomed to one meal per day, specifically around the afternoon period (12-3pm). Most parents will provide a snack of bread for their children before the regular meal. In both rural and urban areas, food is often cooked on top of charcoal or firewood. Only a minority of people from urban areas may have experience using gas or electric cookers. Most fish and meat is smoked, as there are no refrigerators. Most Liberians do not have experience with modern domestic appliances such as microwaves, toasters, stoves, and fridges.

Personal Hygiene: People take baths regularly and brush their teeth daily. Deodorant use is normal. In rural areas, non-Muslims use leaves with deodorizing properties and Muslims tend to use water. Most Liberians may not be accustomed to western modern bathrooms. Clothes are washed by hand or by using a washtub. In villages, clothes are taken to the rivers and washed by hand. Young Liberians are very proud of their appearance. Clothes in good condition and that fit well are highly valued.

School Relationships: Students in Liberia refer to their teacher as Mr., Ms. or Mrs. They regard teachers as role models and guardians outside of the home. They hold teachers in high esteem and show great respect, especially when having conversation or during instructional period.

School Rules and Attire: Liberian schools have a zero tolerance policy regarding fighting, bullying, and sexual harassment. The repercussions include suspension and expulsion. Students caught cheating are punished with an F grade in the course. In rare cases, students are expelled. Students wear uniforms. Boys wear shirts and pants with matching socks that match the uniform. Boys must tuck their shirt in, wear belts on their pants at all time and wear dress shoes at all time. Similarly, girls wear skirts and blouses, dress shoes and socks that match the uniform.

Returning from Exchange: Liberian school system is similar to the school system in the United States. The students do not have to repeat a year after the exchange year.