

## **DISCUSSION GUIDE**

### **YOUTH AND THE GLOBAL VILLAGE**

Do teens in the 1990's have something in common regardless of where they come from? Is there such a thing as a global teenager? Technology and travel have connected people around the globe, turning a disparate populace into a global village. And while undeniable differences exist among us, the similarities are often numerous and surprising. Teens throughout the world can listen to the same music, watch the same videos and idolize the same pop stars. But do teens hold similar views on issues such as culture, education, family, marriage, religion and sex?

TURNING 16 presents a unique forum for discussion and debate on issues that concern all people. Here are some questions to make the most of your viewing.

#### **BEFORE THE FILM:**

The TURNING 16 crew travels to Asia, Africa and Latin America. What do viewers know about each of these places and their people? Are the assumptions we have about other countries correct? Does the thought of Africa and Egypt bring forth only images of jungle and desert? Some might be surprised to find an amusement park in Egypt and a teen talk show in Jamaica.

In this first segment of the series, teens list their role models. Who are the role models in America: parents, sports figures, movie and rock stars? What about civic and religious leaders? Why choose these role models? Will role models be the same the world over? Add to the list of role models a list of priorities in your life. The list might include family, religion and education. It might also include fame, power and money. State the reasons behind your choices. Will this list be the same for teens in other countries?

If you could change something in your life, what change would you make? For example, would you give up school to pursue a sports or acting career? Would you rather live in a different country? What changes do you imagine your counterpart from another country might wish for?

Consider whether the answers to the questions above are dependent upon where you live. Suppose you lived in a country where drinking water was in scarce supply. How would that change your answers?

#### **AFTER THE FILM:**

What similarities did you see among teens around the globe? Why do these similarities exist? What differences did you see? Were the differences based on culture, religious belief, location?

How do you feel about the American influence on other cultures? Some say it is wholly negative, spreading vices of promiscuous sex, rampant violence, and consumer culture. Others say our influence spreads the ideals of freedom and democracy that have helped topple oppressive governments and liberate people worldwide. Do other countries influence American teens?

What do you think about MTV being shown around the world? Does it bring cultures together or destroy tradition? In a time when many are criticizing the consumer culture epitomized by MTV, should we be sending the message of inadequacy that MTV sells to the rest of the world? Should teens in countries struggling with debt and poverty be tempted with images of designer jeans, expensive sneakers and hot cars? Should American teens be concerned with these same items? Teens everywhere list pop star Madonna as their role model. What is it that Madonna and others like her offer? She represents fame and money and success, but also controversy and rebellion. Since the teen years are a time of gaining independence from parents and authority, does the rebelliousness of someone like Madonna give teens a temporary role model? Who will your role model be five years from now?

#### ***Series of eight 26 minute programs***

#### **Youth and the Global Village (Introduction)**

Do teens around the world hold similar views on issues such as marriage, culture and religion?

#### **The Story of Rosie (Jamaica)**

What is the role of the family?

#### **The Story of Idrissa (Niger)**

Are cultural values being threatened?

#### **The Story of Eman (Egypt)**

Do men and women share the same rights and freedoms?

#### **The Story of Pintinho (Brazil)**

Are sports a ticket to the future?

#### **The Story of Puttinan (Thailand)**

Are young people being exploited?

#### **The Story of Sonam (India)**

Do teens believe in God?

#### **Youth and the Future (Conclusion)**

How do teens feel about their future?



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