

Youth Study Committee Completes Study Survey
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SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

The Youth Division Study Committee conducted a survey last winter to learn how the youth division can better serve members' study needs. This committee, initiated by the national youth division leaders in 1996, comprises seven members, who will first deepen their own commitment to the SGI-USA study movement and proceed to support youth study throughout the country.

SGI Vice President Shigeo Hasegawa shared his vision for this group last summer, saying: "We can leave academic study to the academics. There is no Buddhism separate from daily life. I hope you will study Buddhism deeply through your lives, through your experiences, actions and behavior."

The committee developed the survey as a means to research the study patterns of youth division members, as well as to find out what issues they consider most important to address through study activities. Young women's and young men's division members were equally represented. The members who responded were primarily in the 12-17 and the 24-35 age groups. Different geographical areas were represented from the East Coast to the Midwest to the West, from the South to the Southwest.

In the survey, members were asked to identify the most important issues to be addressed in their study of this Buddhism. The results showed that more than half the members identified goal-setting, relationships and career issues as most important. Other issues considered important were self-esteem, health, and violence.

A question that asked how members like to study found that most members study alone rather than in groups or at meetings. The study material used most frequently is the *World Tribune*, followed by *Living Buddhism* (formerly the *Seikyo Times*).

The survey also included a space for members to share suggestions. Many members agreed with a young women's division member from Virginia who suggested that "youth division study needs to become more strongly established throughout the United States."

Another frequently expressed opinion was that study have practical application. As a young men's division member from Hawaii wrote, "Make study apply to daily life — my life!"

Many members made specific suggestions about youth division study meetings. A young women's division member from New York encouraged having "brief amounts of material everyone can read right there and discuss right from the heart!"

The Study Committee is determined to use these results to better assist youth throughout the country in their study of this Buddhism, says Shin Yatomi, the committee chief. Last week, committee members wrote a feature on goal-setting for the "Study Page" and plan to address other topics of interest in coming months in similar features, as well as in their weekly "Sign Posts" Gosho series.

If you never got a chance to fill out the survey — or never even saw it — the committee would still like to hear from you. Send your comments and suggestions to: Shin Yatomi, Youth Division Study Committee, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA, 90401.

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