

REMEMBER

- On demand entertainment has caused inability to handle boredom. They have short attention spans and crave immediate & constant feedback. 11% are diagnosed as ADHD.
- They've grown up in a time of redefined families, identities and sexuality—morality is emotional, individualistic and situational.
- Stress is a daily reality; discomfort is unacceptable; making mistakes is to be feared.
- There's a growing exhaustion from never recharging away from technology; few margins for solitude or silence exist.

BUT...

- They want to change the world - and they believe they can! They value diversity and plurality and, when engaged in a cause, are entrepreneurial and tireless.
- They can be transparent, self-reliant and responsible. Honesty & integrity are high values they are looking for.
- They're Generation 'we' not Generation 'me', especially excited about being "people leaders" and truly making a difference in the big issues around them. God's desire for reconciling the world through a revolution of love makes sense to them.

RECOGNIZE

- Gen Z kids were born from 1997- 2010 and represent 25% of the Canadian population. They are also known as the iGeneration, the distracted generation or 'screenagers'.
- The average Gen Zer has the attention span of about 8 seconds. They've grown up being served media and messaging from birth, and have adapted to quickly sort through and assess enormous amounts of information effortlessly.
- 96% own a cell phone - the communication device of choice - and dedicate 6-10 of their waking hours to screen time. Almost 80% of Generation Z display symptoms of emotional distress when kept away from their personal electronic devices. They see their screens as an extension of themselves.
- While their "at risk" behaviours are far lower than previous generations, so is their mental health. Anxiety is at an all time high for these young people.

RESPOND

- **Think 'pull' and not 'push'** in engaging with these teens; they want to buy in, have freedom to question, express dissent, and wrestle with ideas
- **Help them discover who they are** apart from their curated identity on social media.
- **Recognize** that many have had early and prolonged exposure to the online world of cyberbullying, sexting and porn. Talk about this with them.
- **Model and help them practice empathy** and face to face conversation, to push back against the loss of these skills due to the overwhelming importance of screen mediated relationships in their lives.
- **Encourage them to explore** and move past their fears for the future! Personal achievement is central to a Gen Z's identity, often causing large amounts of stress about succeeding. Help them counteract this with tools for managing stress as well as new messages about the freedom they have to try, fail, and still be incredibly valuable.
- **Get them working together** for important causes! These kids have the ability to be self-directed & passionate - help them discover how to direct their energy toward being who God created them to be in ways that impact the world around them.

- **Explore the validity of faith.** Gen Z has grown up with less church and religious input in their lives than the previous generations. They assume that faith is unscientific and therefore built from personal opinion. They are hesitant to hold any firm moral or spiritual beliefs, partly for fear of looking judgemental. Over 1/3 feel that a good God and human suffering cannot co-exist. As leaders, we need to be prepared to look at the tough questions with courage and credibility, being ready to give an answer to those who ask for the reason for our hope - but always with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15)

[GEN Z]



lifeteams
resources



RESOURCES

<http://visual.ly/generation-z> - An excellent Gen Z infographic for a quick overview.

Book: *iGen* by Jean M. Twenge.