

WHO IS



GEN Z?

**UNDERSTANDING
GEN Z'S VIEWS
& VALUES**



Research conducted and analyzed
by Anya Dua at the Gen Z Identity Lab



My name is Anya Dua.
I am the founder of the
Gen Z Identity Lab and
a rising freshman at
Stanford University.

MY PROJECT

I believe, in order to better understand our future, we must seek a better understanding of a certain group of people: Generation Z. Born between 1997 and 2015, Gen Z is reaching a pivotal point in which the oldest Gen Zers are entering the workforce, and many are able to vote or are reaching the voting age. To understand our country's future, we need to first understand the values that makeup Gen Z's identity, as identity influences how we vote, spend our money, and decide where to work. That is the reason why, for the past three years, I have poured my energy into the creation of my research organization, the Gen Z Identity Lab.

I conduct nationally representative, statistically significant surveys on Gen Zers' opinions on different

topics, from climate change to COVID-19 to mental health. My goal is to show that Gen Z's views are nuanced and cannot be reduced into a single narrative. Politicians, schools, and other adults in power have assigned one identity to Gen Z. We are the progressive, social-activist, phone-obsessed generation. There is nothing wrong with these characteristics, but they do not paint the full picture of our identity. This single narrative is detrimental to adults' understanding of Gen Z and to this demographic's understanding of their own identity. In this survey, I asked respondents to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a variety of attitudinal statements to determine the key qualities of Gen Z's values and how we are misunderstanding them.



The importance of family and friends remains paramount, but **Gen Z's view on the relationship between success and work has shifted.**

KEY FINDINGS

To best understand a group's values, we must identify how they define success.

The top five definitions of success amongst Gen Z:

- Leaving a positive impact on the world
- Having a loving relationship with a spouse or life partner
- Enjoying your work
- Having a good work-life balance
- Having good friends

Despite rhetoric about how Gen Z is a very different group, Gen Z's core values don't diverge from the values that have guided American life for decades. Relationships with family and friends are still paramount. However, two definitions of success stand out: leaving a positive impact on the world and having a good work-life balance. Gen Z is reframing the way they look at careers. They want their careers to enhance the world around them AND yet not take over their lives.

KEY FINDINGS

Adults need to take **student mental health** more seriously.



There appears to be a mental health epidemic.

50% of Gen Z report they feel burnt out.

50%

of respondents have been diagnosed with either depression, anxiety, or both.

However, **only 30%** of Gen Z think their school/workplace takes their mental health seriously.

- It's time to tackle student mental health and ensure that quality education also fosters mental and social-emotional well-being.

Racial equity is overwhelmingly important to Gen Z but we don't agree on how to achieve it.



Racial equity is top of mind for Gen Z.

When asked to identify the most important issues in America today,

50%+

of Gen Z pointed to racial equity (second only to Covid-19).

- To achieve opportunity for all students, racial equity must be central to the approach, because it is central to the problems.

62%

think that children should be taught how to be anti-racist.

Achieving equity through education is one of the most prevalent solutions but Gen Z does not agree with its implementation.

- For example, in the realm of higher education, **52%** think college admissions should be race-blind (**17%** disagree)
- Gen Z is very split on affirmative action (Affirmative action, defined as "the practice or policy of favoring individuals belonging to groups known to have been discriminated against previously")

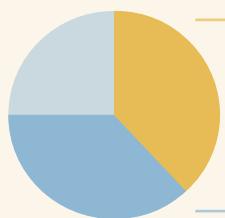


34% support affirmative action

25% do not support

41% neither support nor do not support

Gen Z doesn't all have the same opinions on issues dominating the political discussion, such as gender.



38% agree that there are only two genders

37% disagree that there are only two genders

Gen Z is split on hot-button questions regarding gender such as parental consent for gender reassignment surgery, the classification of transgender athletes, and deciding which restroom transgender individuals should use.

14%

take conservative stances

- Minors should not be allowed to undergo gender reassignment surgery without parental consent; individuals should not be able to use restrooms assigned to the gender with which they identify, regardless of biological sex; transgender athletes should not be able to compete on teams for the gender with which they identify.

50%

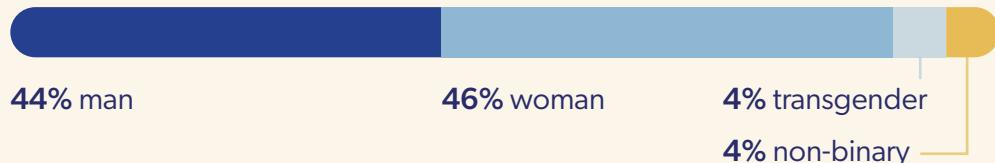
take liberal stances

- Minors should be allowed to undergo gender reassignment surgery without parental consent; individuals should be able to use restrooms assigned to the gender with which they identify, regardless of biological sex; transgender athletes should be able to compete on teams for the gender with which they identify.

36%

are unsure of their stance on all of these issues
(we haven't all figured out our views yet!)

Gen Z is overwhelmingly cisgender.

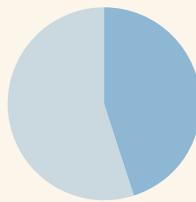




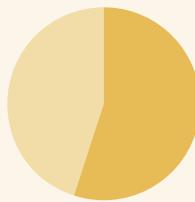
Despite unforeseen challenges from the Pandemic, **Gen Z is hopeful about their future.**

COVID-19 has clearly impacted youth mental health.

KEY FINDINGS



45% agree that their mental health has gotten worse due to COVID-19.



However, **over 55%** of Gen Z remain hopeful about their future.

- The response to COVID-19 has shown us that when faced with an enormous challenge, Gen Z relies on flexibility and adaptation to overcome it.

But Gen Z is less hopeful about the future of the country as a whole.



55% of Gen Z feel hopeful about their personal future.



However, **only 40%** of Gen Z feel hopeful about the future of our country.

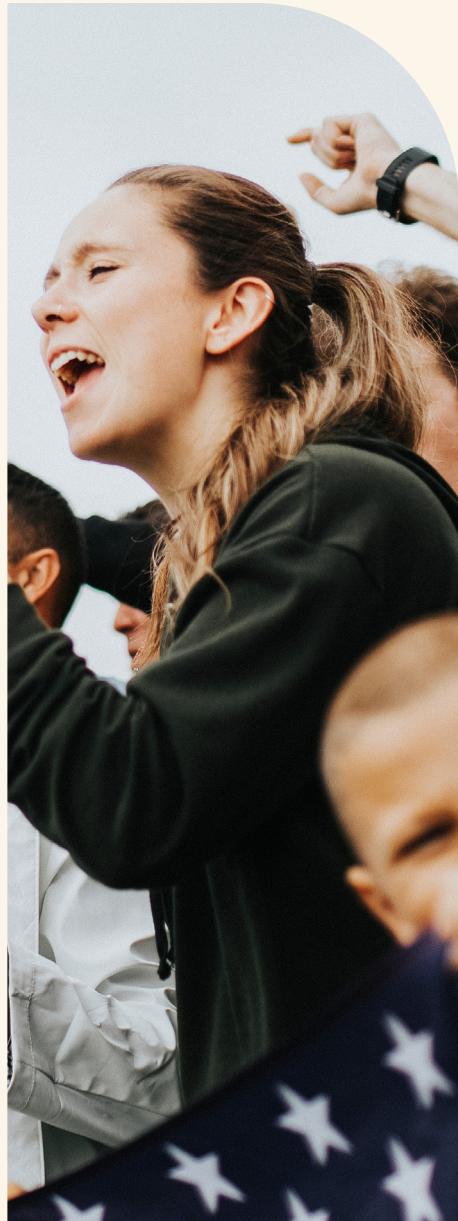
46%

agree that America is in decline

60%

of Gen Z think America is a divided country

- This is perhaps the biggest factor that leads to a lack of hope. When will we ever be able to work together? If the Uvalde shooting isn't enough to unify us and spark action, will anything be enough? This hopelessness about our country's future has grasped Gen Z.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INSTRUMENT

An online survey designed and piloted with 35 young Americans; survey fielded by panel provider, Centiment

SURVEY SAMPLE

Nationally representative sample by age, gender, and region

TOTAL RESPONSES

2,870

AGES OF RESPONDENTS

15-24 year-olds

MARGIN OF ERROR

+/- 3%

MONTH CONDUCTED

September 2021