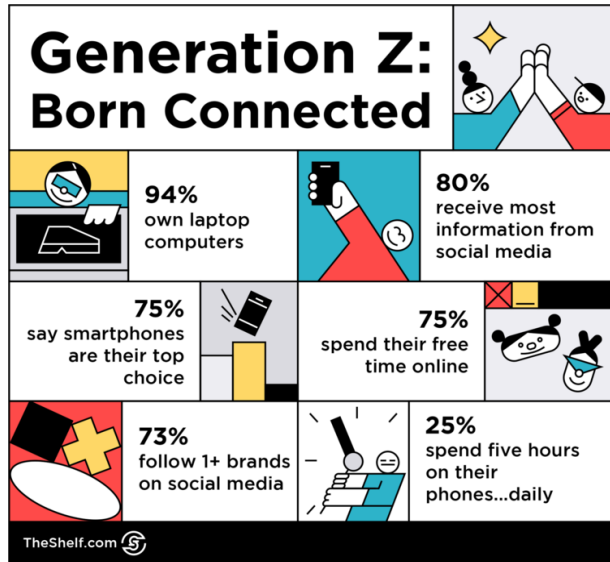


Background on Gen Z

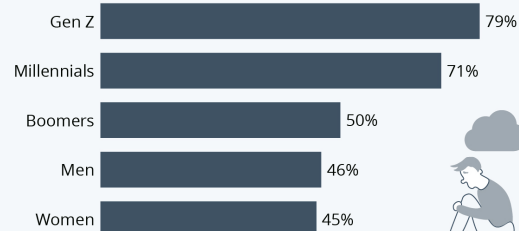
- Born roughly between 1997-2012
- 60 million people in the US
- In 2023, Gen Z will make up 40% of the world's population
- Fastest growing consumer segment
- Buying power of over \$140 million



Gen Z Is Lonely

Percent of U.S. adults who are lonely, shown as demographics

61% of all U.S. adults reported feeling lonely, which is up 7% from last year



n=10,441 adults
Survey was conducted during the summer of 2019
Source: Ipsos Polling for Cigna U.S. Loneliness Index



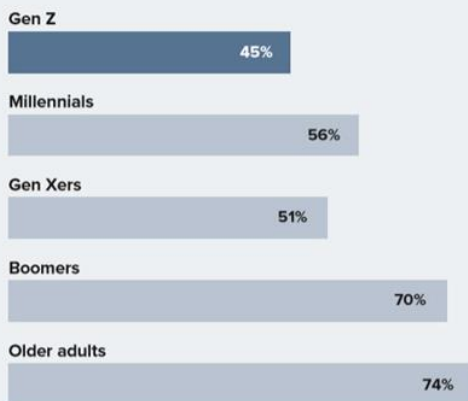
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Gen Z and Mental Health

- More likely to truthfully report mental health concerns and admit to receiving treatment or therapy
 - **Aren't ashamed** of their mental health issues, which is helping to reduce the stigma on mental health and subsequent treatments and therapy
- **Stressors:** mass school shootings, more screen time and less human connection leads to loneliness, debt, world issues and current events, Covid-19 pandemic, harmful content on social media, pressure to conform heightened by the internet
 - "Gen Z is more likely to self-harm, have a poorer body image, skip sleep, be overweight, and have depression."
- People on social media talk about mental health and their experiences which encourages others to talk about it as well. This makes people more open to **sharing** their struggles and seeking therapy or treatment
- **Asking for help** is viewed as a strength because it shows you want to get better and be better instead of hiding your struggles and staying stuck

Mental Health of Gen Z

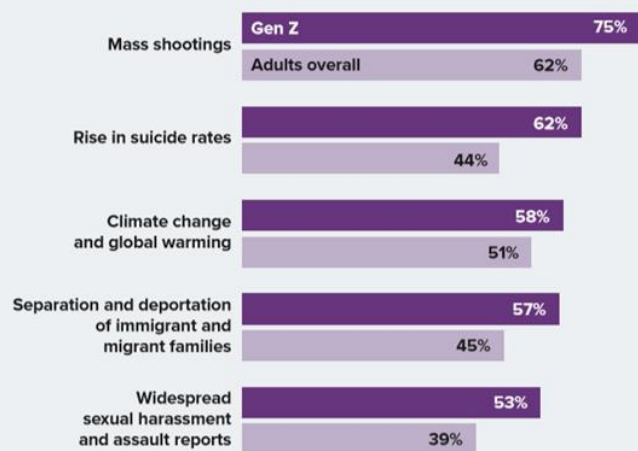
Compared with other generations, Gen Z is least likely to report very good or excellent mental health



Source: APA. (2018). *Stress in America: Generation Z*

News Events Stressing Gen Z

Compared with other generations, Gen Z is more likely to report stress related to these national news topics



Gen Z and Decision-Making

Professional and Educational Decisions:

- Take control and make their own professional and educational decisions, which include where they go to college, their major, and what career path they choose
- Success and well-being is defined differently by Gen Z
 - Includes following their passions and emotional well-being, which is in turn considered when making professional and educational decisions

Buying Decisions:

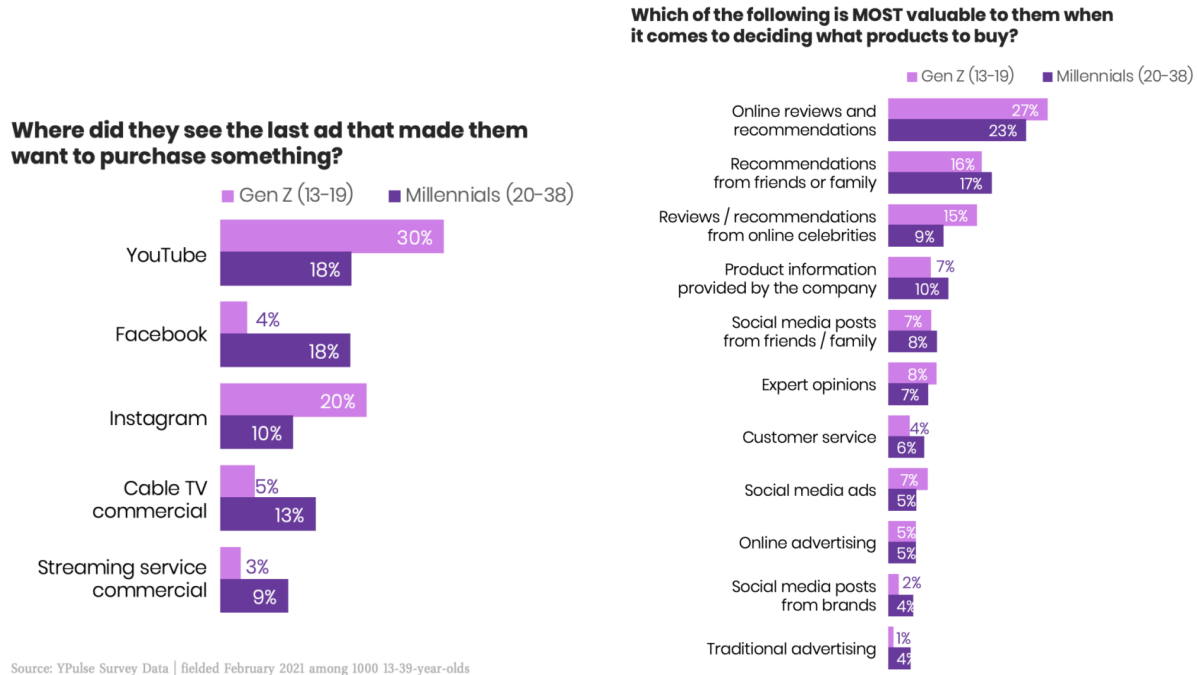
- When deciding whether to buy something or not, Gen Z does **research** on Google or social media first
 - Look over the brand's social media account to determine if the brand's core values and story align with their own personal values
 - They want to discover who the brand is before they decide to purchase from them
 - Gen Z wants to feel like they know the brand, their core values, and their efforts through their social media or a quick Google search
 - The brands should tell a story about who they are, what they are about, and what they believe in
- Gen Z rarely shops in stores, but when they do, they participate in **webrooming**. Webrooming is doing research beforehand to find out what to buy and where, then going to the store simply to make the purchase
 - The purchase decision has been made before they even enter the store- no need for convincing salesmen
- In general, Gen Z is more **interdependent** than independent and tend to consult others before making decisions, specifically buying decisions

- This comes from Gen Z being generally unsure of themselves and not overconfident. They feel a greater need for approval and greater pressure and want to be sure they are making the right decisions
- They often send pictures to their friends asking if they should buy something or post online asking their followers for opinions
- This interdependence is a result of growing up constantly connected to people through the internet
- Makes decisions based on **personal, social, and environmental values**
 - Believe that brands have a social responsibility to have a public stance on social and environmental issues and to act in accordance with these stances
 - Want companies to use their power and money for good and push for environmental change, human rights, and diversity, equity, and inclusion
 - They want **honesty and transparency**, not greenwashing or ingenuine activism
 - They want to know they can trust the brand and in turn, companies will gain consumer loyalty
 - Willing to spend more for sustainable products (other generations are less willing)
 - Concerned with fast fashion

How Gen Z's Stance on Mental Health Affects their Decision-Making

- When Gen Z is making a decision, whether purchase, personal, professional, or educational, they think **logistically and analytically** to consider all aspects of the decision and its subsequent benefits or consequences (both personally and globally)
- When making a purchase decision, one of the major decision making factors is if the brand's **values align** with their personal values, which includes public stances on mental health, human rights, current events, and environment
- Gen Z craves **stability and trust** due to all the stressors they've grown up with, so they want to be able to trust the companies they purchase from
 - Trust that they are being truthful about their environmental efforts, following through on their stances/promises, and correctly reporting the health and environmental effects of their products
- Since Gen Z is generally interdependent and unsure of their own decisions, they frequently seek out the input of others (family, friends, influencers/celebrities, or online reviews) before purchasing something
 - Online **reviews** don't always mean the review section on the brand's website. For Gen Z it can mean searching the product on Tik Tok, Instagram, etc. in search of honest reviews from real people
- "Gen Z, they have a million and one options," Kathryn Winokur, Hally's founder and CEO, told us. "It goes into their decision-making set. 'Is this product **good for me**? What are their stances on the **environment**? What are their opinions on **mental health**?' All that is very much core to their consideration set."
- Gen Z wants to feel heard and appreciated, so they respond well to ads that feel **personalized**
 - Research shows that marketers would benefit by making different ads for each ad group

- Ex: for a VCU ad- target those interested in art with a different ad than those interested in gaming, etc.



Interesting Articles to Read More about Mental Health & Gen Z

Stressors: <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/01/gen-z>

Mental Health:

<https://www.verywellmind.com/why-gen-z-is-more-open-to-talking-about-their-mental-health-5104730>

Difference between Millennial and Gen Z purchasing habits:

<https://www.ypulse.com/article/2021/04/15/the-big-differences-between-gen-z-millennials-purchasing-influences-in-2-charts/>

How to market to Gen Z: <https://www.theshelf.com/the-blog/generation-z/>