

ZEROING IN ON GENERATION Z

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GENERATION Z

“Generation Z” follows the “Millennials”. Today, this would include those up to 22 years of age. It’s too soon to be specific. Things written about them are in generalities and there will be exceptions.

> **Characteristics** - Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz of The Chicago Tribune writes that Gen Zers are entrepreneurial yet pragmatic, hardworking yet easily distracted, with a streak of realism and a desire to make a social impact.

> **Independence** - According to Public Relations Society of America, Zers, after seeing people struggle in the workplace after the Great Recession, are entrepreneurial with a desire for occupational independence.

> **Church Participation** - A 2016 U.S. study found church attendance of Zers during young adulthood was 41% compared with 18% for Millennials at the same age.

> **Morals** - Research from the Annie E. Casey Foundation found Zers had lower teen pregnancy rates and less substance abuse. They also have a strong desire to make the world a better place.

> **Education** - Zers have a higher on-time high school graduation rate with 81% hoping for a college degree. Many high school students spend summers interning toward future careers.

> **Finances** - According to The Daily Telegraph, Zers are good personal money managers.

> **Political Views** - Zers tend to be more conservative than Millennials.

INFLUENCES

Technology - Generation Z is the first to have internet technology so readily available at an early age. In 2015, 77% of 12 to 17 year olds owned a cell phone. Nearly three quarters of teens have access to smart phones. Researchers are divided on the impact. Some maintain digital technology will make Zers better educated and well rounded while others fear technology dependence may hinder proper development.

Social Media - Zers use the internet as a way to access information and interact with others. While there are many benefits, psychologists and parents are concerned about access to false information, inappropriate images and access to immoral people.



THE CHURCH ZEROS IN ON GEN Z

Worship - Since Zers are digitally conditioned, worship services can be made more appealing

by going digital. Many churches are already projecting services on screens in the sanctuary. Sermons are enhanced with power point technology. Scripture passages, graphic illustrations, quotes, etc., projected visually, capture the sight and sound senses of worshippers, old and young alike.

Variety of Approaches - The age groups of Zers range from childhood to age 22. A variety of approaches are necessary to meet the needs and interests of each segment.

Youth Groups - Some churches have structured three youth groups consisting of pre-confirmation, high school students and college students (meeting mostly in summer). The groups not only offer social interaction, but include relevant Biblical discussions and societal action to benefit others.

Parenthood Training - Parents are the primary resource for reaching younger Zers. The Church should provide parenting classes and child rearing resources for both church members and the community. Books, DVD’s, CD’s, etc. should be made easily accessible.

Education - Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, Bible Classes, Seminars, etc. should be structured to communicate via digital technology. Opportunities should be given Zers to tap their smart phones for relevant Biblical information.

Internet Use - Congregations emailing monthly newsletters have a great opportunity to include items for Zers. Congregational web sites also have an avenue to Zers with relevant items of interest salted with Biblical perspectives.

RELATED GENERATION RESOURCES

www.selc.lcms.org - Personal Stewardship

“Traditionalists” - “Baby Boomers”

“Generation X” - Millennials