

Quick Read

Gen Z and Stress

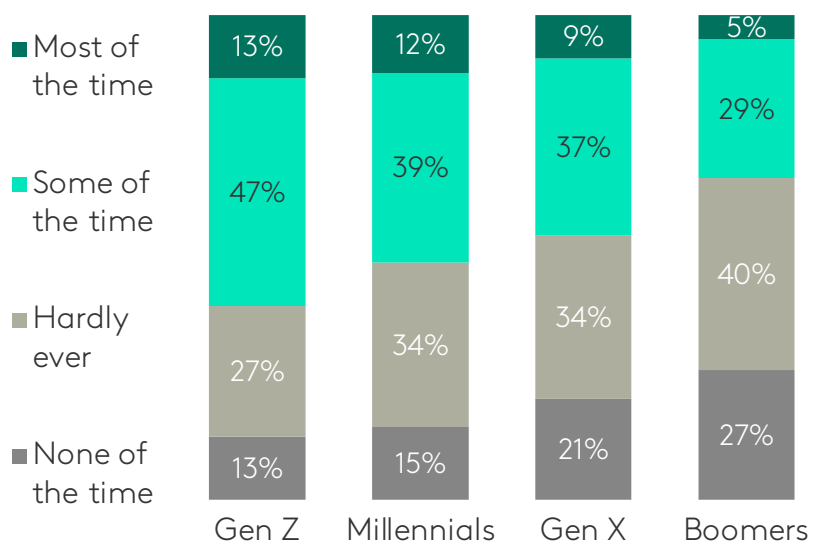
A look at what's troubling a generation under duress

Of the pandemic's many lasting legacies, perhaps the biggest will be a generation of young Canadians for whom this decade has so far been a deep and worsening mental health crisis. Gen Z is far and away the most stressed of all the generations, and these teens and twentysomethings are living in world far removed from the easygoing and carefree youth and young adulthood enjoyed by their older generational counterparts.

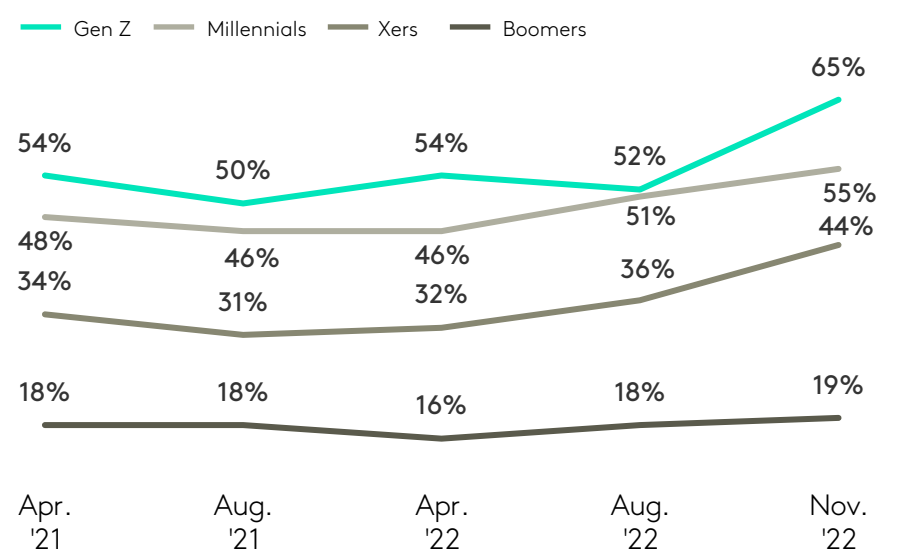
The pandemic's longest-lasting legacy may be its impact on Gen Z's mental wellbeing

The pandemic was undoubtedly an acute threat to people's physical health. But as we look back at some of the most significant changes left in its wake, the negative toll it took on Gen Z's mental wellbeing may have scarring effects that this generation carries with it for the rest of their lives. While other generations saw increases in mental health distress, Gen Zers are far more concerned about their mental wellbeing today than they were at the outset of the pandemic.

Thinking about your life in general, how much of the time would you say you are depressed?



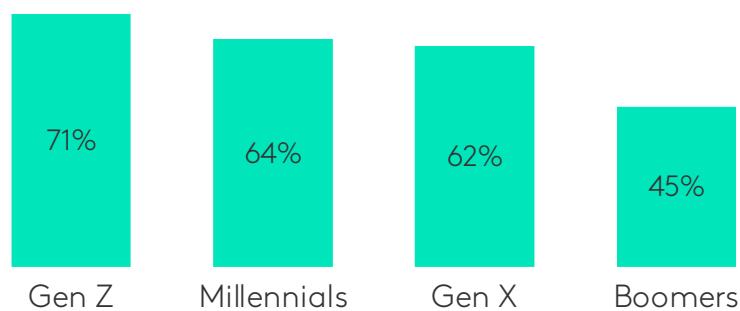
Aspect of your wellbeing you are most concerned about: Mental Health



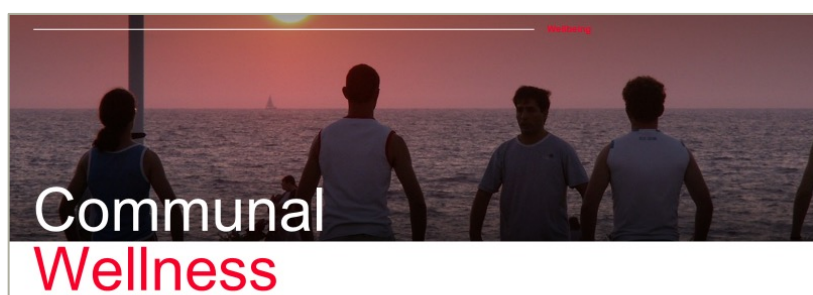
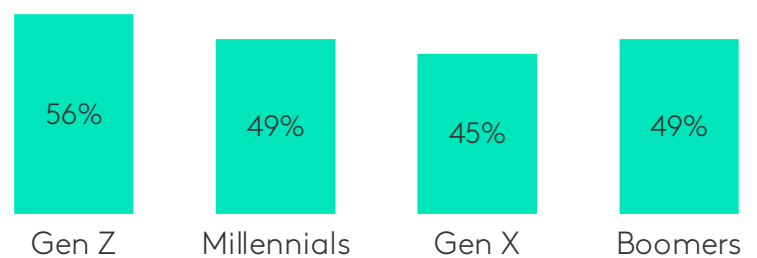
But the struggle doesn't mean they're disengaged from the marketplace

When we look at Gen Zers who are most concerned about their mental health, they show signs that they are looking to the marketplace for stress relief. Not only do seven in ten say they like to engage in a little retail therapy when they're down in the dumps, but they're the only generation for whom a majority believe it's important to have a fun and enjoyable shopping experience. These young people are more likely than older generations to see brands as a player in their mental health.

Buying myself something new helps me feel better if I am feeling down or unhappy (among those most concerned about their mental health)



It is important to me to have fun/enjoy myself when shopping (among those most concerned about their mental health)



Wellbeing is moving beyond personalized health to recognize the impact and role that communities have on individual health. Learn more about the Communal Wellness trend in our [Canadian Consumer Wellbeing Trends](#).

For Our Kids, a non-profit seeking to build "a green, equitable, and just world where our children and grandchildren grow up safe and healthy," is providing a series of climate anxiety resources for Canadian children. Recognizing that the physical and mental impacts of climate change will be hardest on the youngest generations, For Our Kids is providing books, seminars, and action projects that can help Canadian children regain a sense of agency about the mounting climate crisis and become engaged, informed advocates for a healthy environment who can inspire generations to come.



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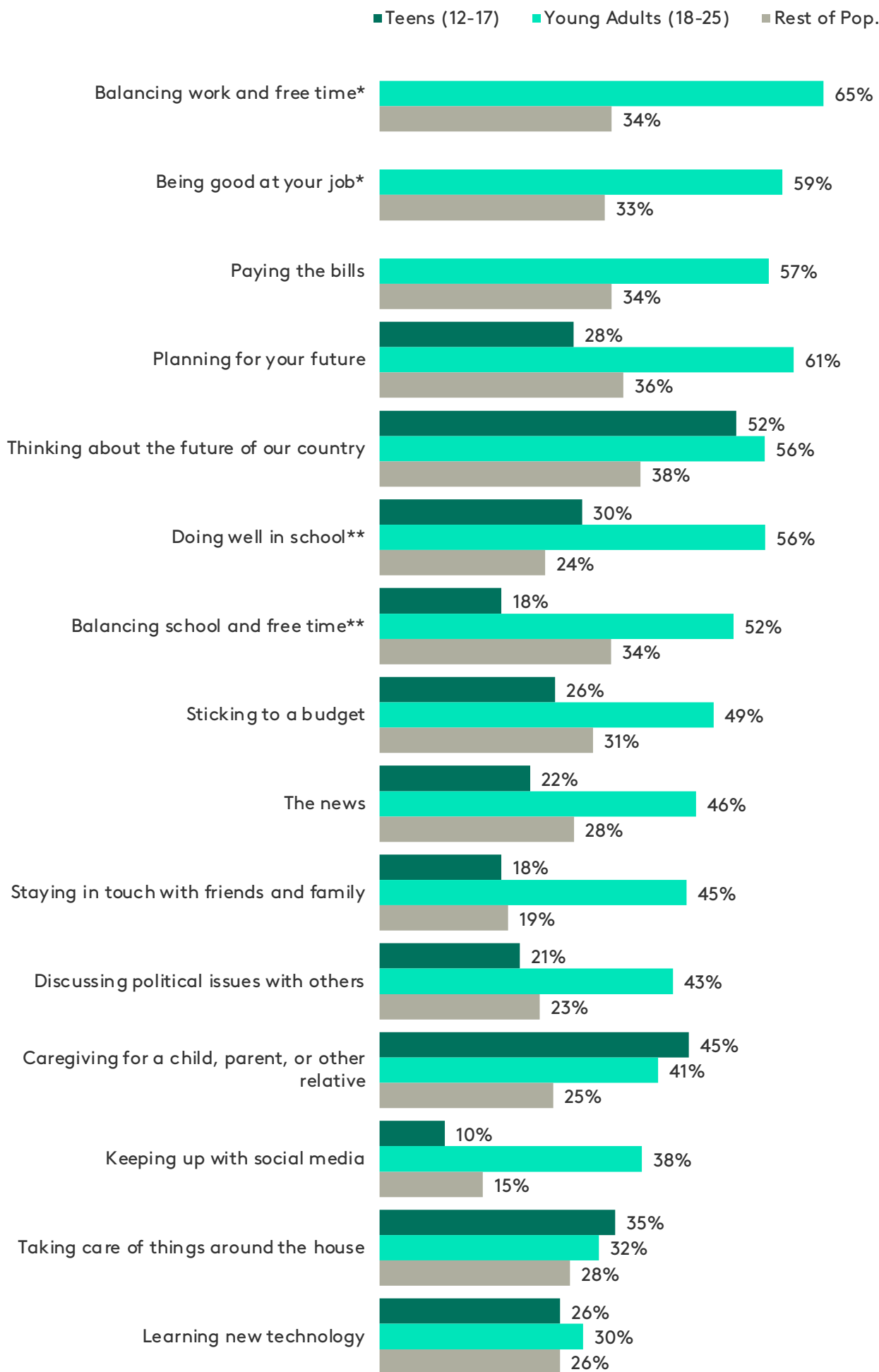
Gen Z and Stress

A look at what's troubling a generation under duress

From the news and the future to work, family, and money, Gen Z finds it all more stressful

Across all measures of stress, young Canadians stand out from the rest of the population. And while some stressors—particularly those that have to do with the future—are felt acutely by Canadian teens, it's the older members of Gen Z that appear to be having the hardest time coping with the polycrisis that they're growing up amidst. It would appear that stress and mental health challenges are some of the defining features of their formative experiences, and these young adults will continue to need brands to provide more than good value—they'll need to deliver emotional lift as well.

How much stress does this cause you (Top-3 Box on 7-pt. scale)



Work is a significant source of stress for young Gen Z adults. They are struggling to achieve balance while feeling pressure to perform.

From the pandemic and war to inflation and climate change, their lives have been disrupted time and again, making the future seem like a particularly unsettling proposition that stresses Gen Zers young and old.

Here again we see the strain that the world around them causes for Gen Z. As it has so often been about disruptive and traumatic events, simply consuming the day's news is something that causes stress for nearly half of young adults.

A large percentage of teens say that caregiving stresses them out. These distressing data demonstrate the emotional toll that a growing number of "young caregivers" experience, a trend that will only intensify as the country ages and more young people live in increasingly multigenerational households.

It is not hyperbole to say Gen Z faces a mental health crisis—study after study continue to find alarming rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders among young Canadians. While this may seem like an issue for public health policymakers, it is indeed a material issue for brands as well. These Canadians are the next generation of consumers and workers, and they are growing up in a post-purpose world where brands are expected to do much more than provide quality products at a good price—brands today are seen as a source of emotional lift. **Every brand must know its mental health benefit** and be ready to deliver on it as Gen Z increasingly evaluates the market with this criteria in mind.

Source: Kantar Canada MONITOR 2022 (Q3; * Among employed full or part time; ** Among full-time students