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Daily Insight Article:

HOW ARE MILLENNIAL PARENTS DIFFERENT FROM THE REST OF THEIR GENERATION?

MILLENNIAL PARENTS AREN'T JUST SETTING NEW STANDARDS WHEN IT COMES TO RAISING THEIR CHILDREN, THEY'RE ALSO SETTING THEMSELVES APART FROM THE REST OF THEIR GENERATION IN SOME MAJOR AREAS…

Millennials have redefined almost all of life's biggest milestones, and raising a family is no exception. About 80% of U.S. Millennials are expected to be parents over the next decade, and 22% of 18-33-year-olds have told us that they're currently a parent or guardian of a child. The pressure is on for these new moms and dads who are driven by the desire to be "good parents." They've been very active in voicing their demands ineducation, food choices, parenting tools, and even the playthings that they will introduce in their child's life, and they are setting new standards from the ones that were in place when they were raised. With an estimated $2 trillion in global buying power, young parents are a viable market for brands, and understanding their world is essential for turning the group into loyal consumers.

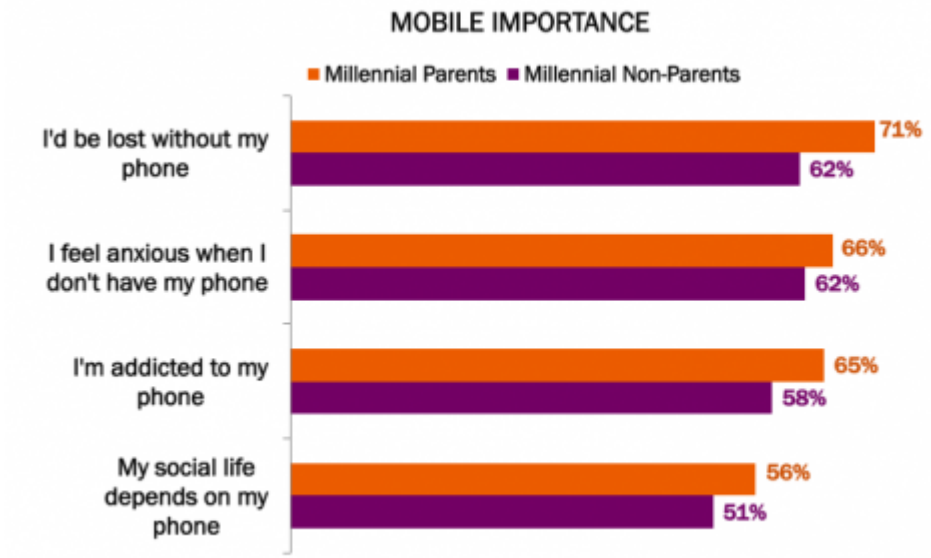
Although this demographic shares many of the values that resonate with the generation—authenticity, purpose, uniqueness, a desire for inclusion—our research is regularly showing that their habits are setting them apart from the rest of their generation in some key and revealing ways.

One important note: 49% of Millennial parents are 30-33-years-old, and 20% are 25-29-years-old—this means that the oldest members of the generation are the ones currently raising families. We're just at the start of the Millennial parenting era. Some of the differences between Millennial parents and the rest of Millennials right now is certainly impacted by the fact that we're looking at differences in *both* family status and age groups. As the younger members of the generation age up and start families of their own, parenting behaviors and differences will continue to shift—and we'll be keeping an eye on it.

That being said, there is no question that having a child truly reshapes everyday behaviors, and Millennial parents' behavior is differing from their non-parent peers in various areas. To gain a better grasp on what makes this group tick, we're highlighting some of the big differences we've found between them and the rest of their generation:

1. They're even *more* hooked on their phones.

Arguably the most important tool in a Millennial parent's arsenal is their smartphone—they're the modern, mobile generation of parents. In our recent monthly survey on mobile behaviors, we found that 92% of Millennial parents have a smartphone, and they are even more hooked on them than Millennial non-parents:



Their reliance on mobile is clear: 65% say they are addicted to their phones, compared to 58% of non-parents, and 66% feel anxious when their digital assistant isn't around. This group has truly embraced the technological advancements of the current world, and according to an Edison Research analyst who studied Millennial moms, their smartphones are "more than just a device to make calls and communicate. It's their everything." Their devotion to, and dependence on, their mobile devices to help them parent is helping to spur an industry of tech-enabled child-care products, and it's clear that brands who want to reach Millennial parents had better think mobile.

2. They're using social media differently.

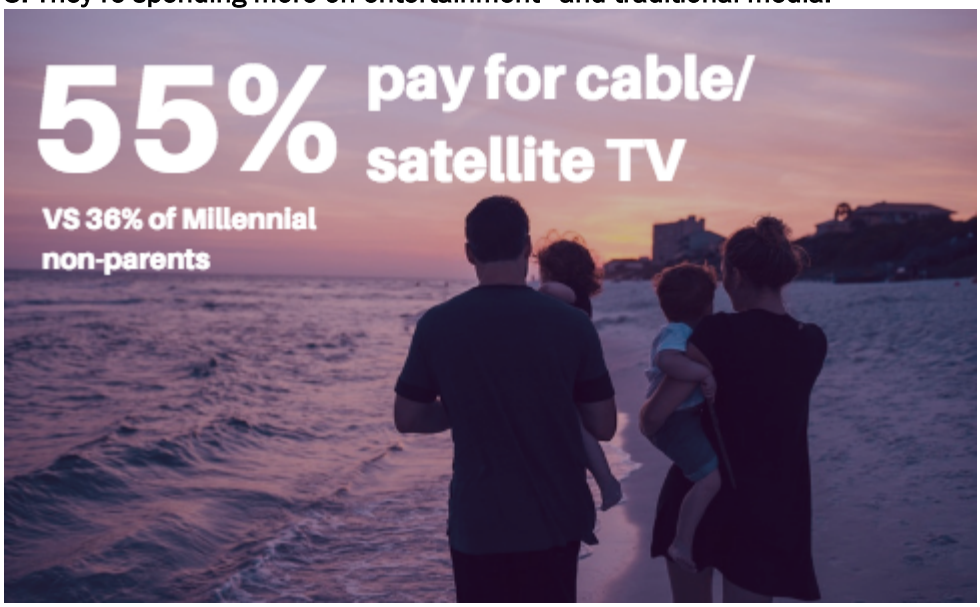
Connectivity is obviously key for the group, and when we asked which type of app they couldn't live without, social media was the top answer for 31%, outpacing other categories by a significant margin—and the platforms they're spending time on are not the same as their non-parent counterparts:

What are the top 10 social media platforms used daily?

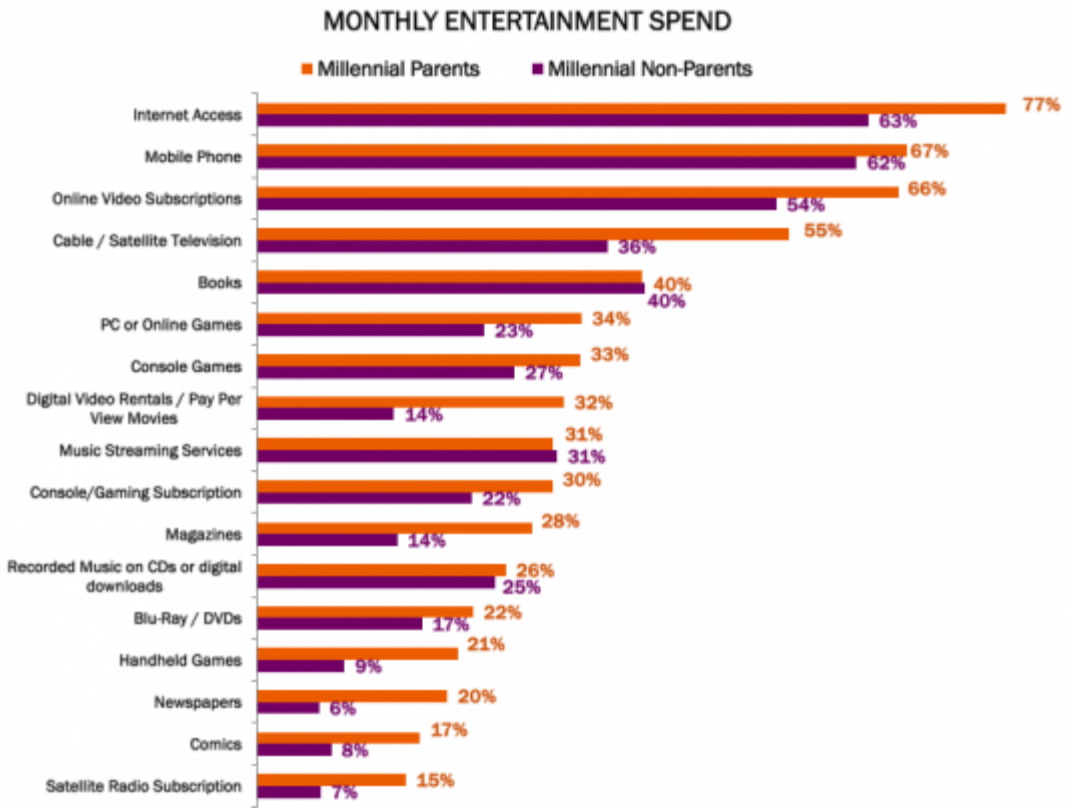
Millennial parents	Millennial non-parents
1. Facebook	1. Facebook
2. YouTube	2. Instagram
3. Twitter	3. YouTube
4. Google+	4. Snapchat
5. Instagram	5. Twitter
6. Facebook Messenger	6. Facebook
7. Snapchat	7. Tumblr
8. Skype	8. Pinterest
9. LinkedIn	9. Reddit
10. Pinterest	10. Kik

Although Facebook may be losing some young users to Instagram and Snapchat, 80% of Millennial parents say they are still using it daily, and 67% are actively posting content or commenting every day—compared to 39% of non-parents. These statistics are especially important to brands, because we've found that young parents are also more likely to be posting about them: 48% have said they posted about a brand on social media and 63% posted a positive message—compared to 35% and 51% of non-parents respectively. Brands can definitely use social media to their advantage when forming relationships with parents, and by catering to their needs, could motivate them to be their biggest advocates. The opportunity to also use social media to gain inspiration from young parents is also present, with three in ten having posted product ideas for brand, compared to 14% of non-parents.

3. They're spending more on entertainment—and traditional media.



They've embraced smartphones, but there's one area that Millennial parents haven't disrupted as much as the rest of their generation, and that's traditional media usage. When it comes to monthly entertainment, Millennial parents are spending more than non-parents in many categories, and are more likely to spend on both non-traditional and traditional forms of media:

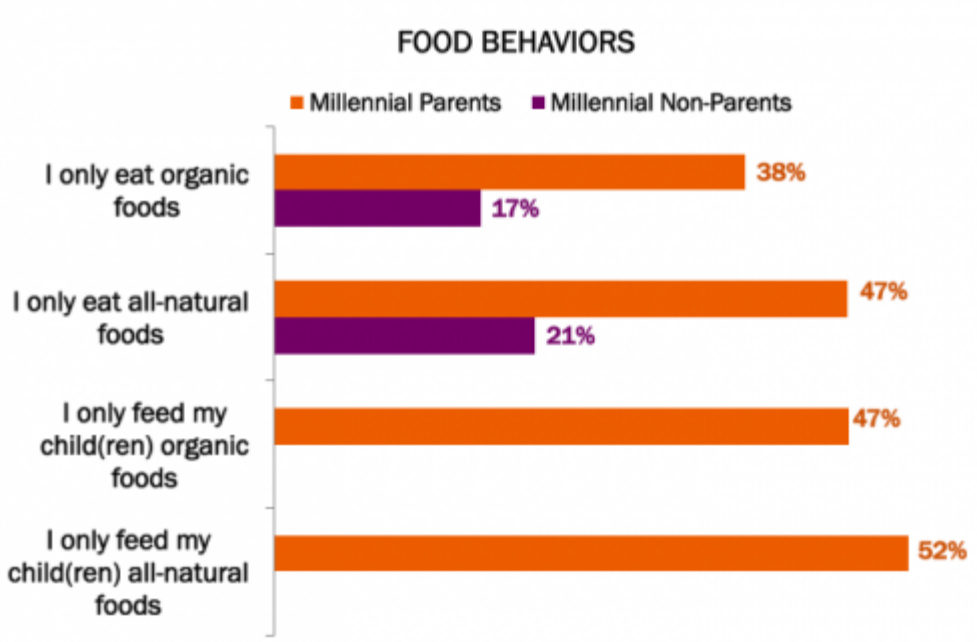


In almost every category, Millennial parents are more likely to be spending on in-home entertainment and media than non-parents. According to consulting firm SNL Kagan, an estimated 812,000 subscribers "pulled the plug on their pay-television service in the second

quarter"—the "biggest quarterly loss" they've ever seen, mostly stemming from the rise of inexpensive streaming services like Netflix, Amazon.com, and Hulu. But for Millennial parents, cable is still providing entertainment: 55% are spending on cable/satellite TV monthly, 19% more than non-parents. They also say TV is the outlet in which they prefer to see ads, and rate TV ads more positively than non-parents. But that doesn't mean that they're not disrupting entertainment—they're also more likely than non-parents to be spending on online video subscriptions. We can make some assumptions that Millennial parents are staying home more than their non-parent peers, which means that they're more likely to pay for in-home entertainment, for both them and their kids. Their ages are also most likely at play here as well—older Millennials are more likely to pay for cable than younger Millennials overall.

4. They've got healthy food on their minds.

66% of Millennial parents consider themselves foodies, which is actually 28% *more* than non-parents. But that is most likely because these young parents are putting a lot of thought into what's on their families' plates. Health is at the forefront of their mind when it comes to their eating behaviors, most likely because they are eating by example:



Young parents are leading the way when it comes to eating organic and all-natural foods, and many make it a habit to feed their children similar foods as well. Over half of Millennial parents agreed with the statement that they would pay a little more to eat organic food, compared to 42% of non-parents, and 41% say an all-natural label will motivate them to buy a food item when grocery shopping.

Parents may also be identifying as foodies more because they are cooking and shopping for groceries more. When we ask how times a week they cook or prepare a meal at home, parents say they are cooking meals an average 6.58 times a week, compared to 4.74 times a week for non-parents. Almost eight in ten parents say that cooking is one of their favorite things to do, versus half of non-parents.

Millennial parents are also slightly more likely to say they are shopping for groceries a couple of times a week (25%) and every day (8%), which we can assume is due to the amount of food they are going through and how often they are cooking. When they do shop for groceries, freshness is the top quality they look for (70%), followed closely by price/sales (69%).

4. They're actually exercising *more* than non-parents.

Young parents aren't only embracing health in their food choices, but in their physical behaviors as well: 65% say they are currently playing sports, taking fitness classes or working out on a regular basis, compared to 57% of non-parents, and 55% say they have gym memberships, compared to 46% of non-parents. Their top choice in work out options is going to the gym, followed by playing a sport or pick up game, and then working out at home. When we asked why they work out, 62% say to stay healthy, more than any other reason, followed by maintaining good general health.

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