

# The Gen Z Difference: Career & Lifestyle

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*Prioritizing the holistic wellness  
of our next generation through  
mindset, community and  
resilience.*



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As parents, educators, and leaders, we have a responsibility to mentor future generations in their career pursuits. However, it's safe to say that things look very different from when the Millennial and Gen X generations navigated through that territory. We've seen the standard 9-5, Monday through Friday model evolve into 4-day work weeks and fully remote options. While these changes might appear to be beyond what we know or grew up with, it is exactly what the Gen Z population is looking for. Why? Technological advancements and the COVID-19 pandemic have led us to investigate a new way of approaching careers. Current research helps us understand the motivations behind these changes and their psychological impact on the rising generation. Let's review some major factors that will provide more context as you support your child throughout their educational and career endeavors

## **1. Social Media is Centralized**

The job search has expanded beyond Google search engines and now encompasses social media platforms such as Tik Tok, and Instagram. The ease and accessibility of social media provides an outlet for connection, self-expression, and profit all from the comfort of your home. Viral dance videos, health and lifestyle tips, or day-in-the-life clips have become launching points for potential work opportunities.



*What's Our Role?* While social platforms create a space for connection and creativity, research indicates that it does not replace the benefits of face-to-face interaction. Encourage your child to take advantage of in-person gatherings as it will foster relationship building, problem solving and teamwork. Furthermore, research indicates that regular social interaction (especially in the workplace) strengthens social and emotional intelligence, productivity, and overall health and well-being.

## **2. Career = Fulfillment**

While there still may be a consideration of compensation or promotion opportunities, researchers are noting that those aspects are taking a back seat to fulfillment and lifestyle. For the Gen Z population, a career encompasses a person's values, goals, and passions. They are considering the meaning behind their work, and its significance on the world around them.

*What's Our Role?* Whether it's in casual conversation, or writing in a journal, encourage your child to reflect on their behavior and feelings. You can do this simply by asking them to explain their thought process to you about a certain decision or asking them why they like or dislike a particular activity. Reflection simultaneously strengthens self-regulation, self-awareness, and confidence, which remain imperative for navigating lifestyle and career.

## **3. Flexibility is Everything**

Growing up amid a pandemic has caused a universal feeling of lack of control and certainty. Consequently, the Gen Z population is intentionally seeking work opportunities that are flexible as this offers them a sense of control in a world that in many ways is out of their control. Thus, the increasing options of work from home, hybrid, or even setting their own hours are particularly appealing to them.

*What's Our Role?* Currently, our education systems continue to operate within a controlled model (i.e., designated start/finish times, required classes, etc). Since this structure doesn't necessarily correlate with the new work model, we can provide opportunities for students to create their own schedules with allotted "breaks". This will equip our students for the "real world" while instilling autonomy, decision-making and time management.

