

Understanding Parents:

10 CHARACTERISTICS OF TODAY'S PARENTS

If we want to effectively partner with parents, we need to understand who they are and what they are facing. Here are 10 characteristics of today's parents to keep in mind:

1

80% of church-attending parents of 5- to 14-year-olds feel like the children's ministry at their church is making some type of long-term difference in their child's life¹.

2

The majority of preteen kids are being raised by millennials who were born somewhere between 1981 and 1996.

3

Technology has surrounded our kids since before they were born. 46% of millennial parents said they posted a picture of their youngest child either in the womb or before the baby was 1 day old, compared with 10% of Generation X parents².

4

Parents today have a greater desire to invest in their children. As a result, they tend to want to spend a lot of time with their children and are likely to be child-centric, much more so than parents in the 1960s³.

5

According to George Barna's latest research with the Cultural Research Center, 67% of parents of preteens claim to be Christian, but only 4% of those parents have views consistent with Scripture⁴.

6

75% of churched parents believe that children's ministry should address current events, social topics, mental health or potentially difficult subjects¹.

7

2/5 of churched adults — including those with children's-ministry-aged kids — say the church, church leaders and church services for kids are very influential on children¹.

8

Half of the parents you serve believe the Church should be the primary influencer of child discipleship¹ — even though the average child only attends 1.7 times per month⁵.

9

39% of churched parents of 5- to 14-year-olds indicate their child has a meaningful relationship with an adult in their church¹.

10

A significant majority of American parents (71%) ... do not consider raising children with a strong religious faith to be very important³.

1. Children's Ministry in a New Reality: Building Church Communities That Cultivate Lasting Faith. Barna Group, 2022.

2. Steinmetz, Katy. "Millennial Parents Cover Story: This Generation Is Different." Time. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://time.com/help-my-parents-are-millennials-cover-story/>.

3. Smith, Christian, and Amy Adamczyk. Handing Down the Faith: How Parents Pass Their Religion on to the Next Generation. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

4. Barna, George. "American Worldview Inventory 2022 Release #1: The Worldview Dilemma of American Parents." <https://www.arizonachristian.edu/culturalresearchcenter/research/>, March 8, 2022. https://links.arizonachristian.edu/CRC_AWVI2022_Release01_22.

5. Bell, Valerie, Chris Marchand, Matt Markins, and Mike Handler. Resilient: Child Discipleship and the Fearless Future of the Church. Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, 2020.