



# Defining Generation Y

## Gen X on Steroids

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The words to describe our generation are endless and range all over the spectrum. Generation Y, the term for those born in the '80s or '90s, is oft labeled as dynamic, informed, flexible, driven, sexualized and, above all else, plugged in.

Members of Generation Y are consistently networking and using technology. This generation is programmed to program the nation. Since the end of the baby boomers, technology has made leaps and bounds and the vast majority of Gen Y'ers are at the head of this technology—multitasking on their iPods, laptops, cell phones and video game consoles.

This generation will not be satisfied without the constant stimulation that it is bombarded with on a daily basis. Consumerism is at a high as brands and the media are constantly telling Americans to buy, buy, buy. But, of course, this generation is also creating this plugged in world of today, with CEO's like Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook forever changing the way that this generation and future generations will communicate.

And, this generation is constantly communicating. Managers and teachers can be found everywhere begging Gen Y'ers to please, put away their cell phones and to stop text messaging! But how can we be expected to continue our multitasking without our cell phones—which multitask within themselves with email, music and other various applications. While this generation largely exists in the technological world, we're not losing touch with the normal "adult" realities. Everyone still strives for a career and a family, often trying to juggle both without compromising either.

What this new society has told us, however, is that it is completely acceptable to put off family life to pursue dreams of a career that will allow for fame, fortune or both. Without a doubt, Gen Y'ers are pursuing higher educations than previous generations. Because of the economy, the Bachelor's degree is basically an equivalent to a high school diploma in the job

market and a Master's degree is needed to really make the big bucks, thus creating competition on unprecedented levels.

This competition seen in the job market is trickling down lower and lower, but what can be expected when this generation has been taught since early childhood that their list of accomplishments outweighs the leisure of life? For Gen Y'ers, high school is all about the extra-curricular activities and good grades, because without those a student will not get into a good college, and then how is that student ever supposed to go anywhere in life? Society has told us we need to be plugged in, on-time and driven to achieve anything worthwhile. In this generation, the symbol of perfection is more unrealistic than ever before when it comes to time and health.

If Generation Y is so fast-paced and plugged in, how extreme will Generation Z be? As the bar is raised, one can only hope that we too rise to the occasion.

### Talkin' 'Bout My Generation

There is some disagreement on what makes a generation, but some of the most widely accepted are as follows:

**The Greatest Generation** is the generation that includes the veterans who fought in World War II. They were born from around 1901 to 1924.

**The Silent Generation** born 1925 to 1945, is the generation that includes those who were too young to join the service during World War II.

**The Baby Boom Generation** includes those born following World War II, about 1946 up to approximately 1964, a time that was marked by a significant increase in births.

**Generation X** is the generation who were born after the baby boom ended, with earliest birth dates ranging from 1961 to the latest 1981.

**Generation Y** has birth dates ranging from mid to late 1970s to the latest in the early 2000s.

**Generation Z**, also known as Generation I, are people who were born after the establishment of the Internet. The earliest birth is generally dated in the early 1990s.