

Who are the Centennials?

By

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The Centennial Generation

Generation “Me,” Generation “We,” Generation “Z,” the “Homeland” Generation, the “Selfie” Generation, Generation “Instant Gratification” and Generation “Reality TV” are all names that have been used to define America’s youngest cohort. I prefer the term Centennials, recognizing that they are the first generation of youth born into the new century and that they differ significantly from their predecessor generation.

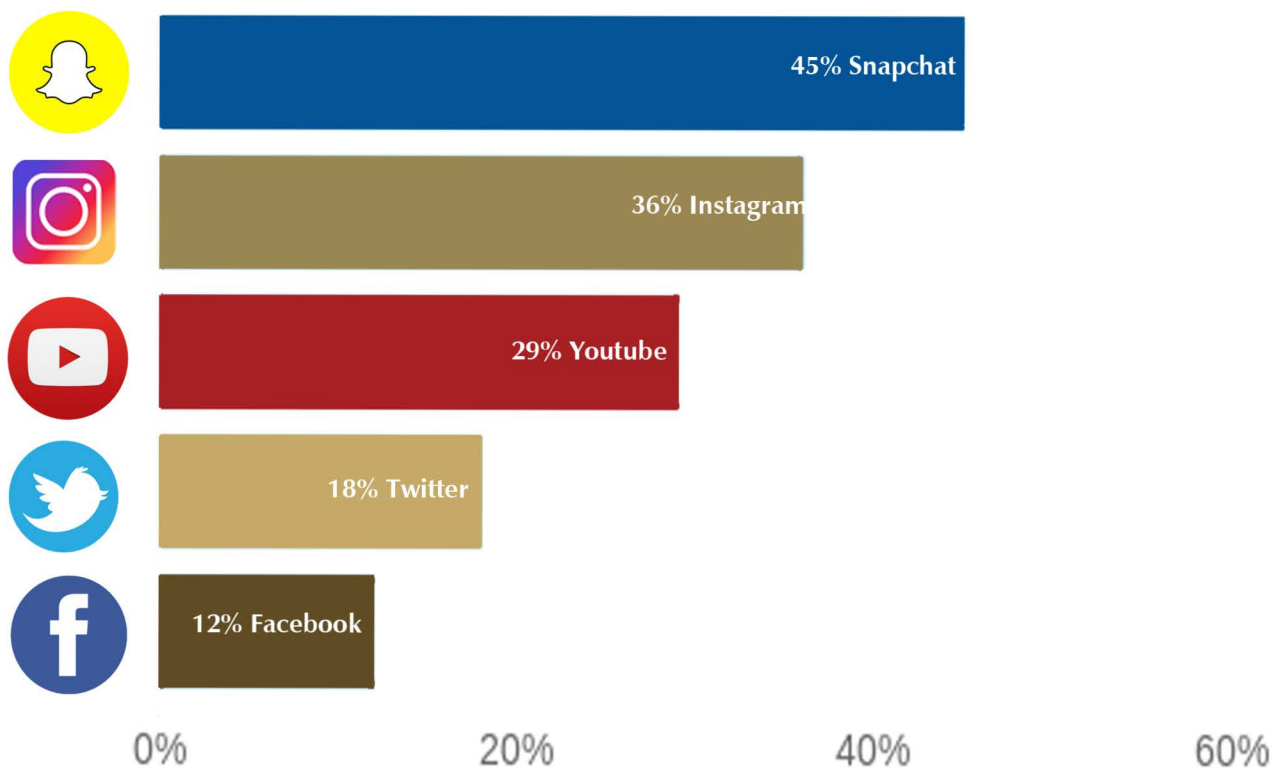
The Centennials were born after 1997. This mobile-first generation is defined by diversity, always present technology, social media, 24-7 information cycles, and increasing rates of educational and social disparity. Centennials are fearful for their future and their ability to achieve the American Dream.

They are the first generation of LGBTQ teens to say we will not live closeted lives. Because they have always known a world of social media and technology, they expect authentic communications, the opportunity to follow their passions, and the ability to exercise choice, not only on line, but in every dimension of their life. For them being connected means “never having to be alone.”

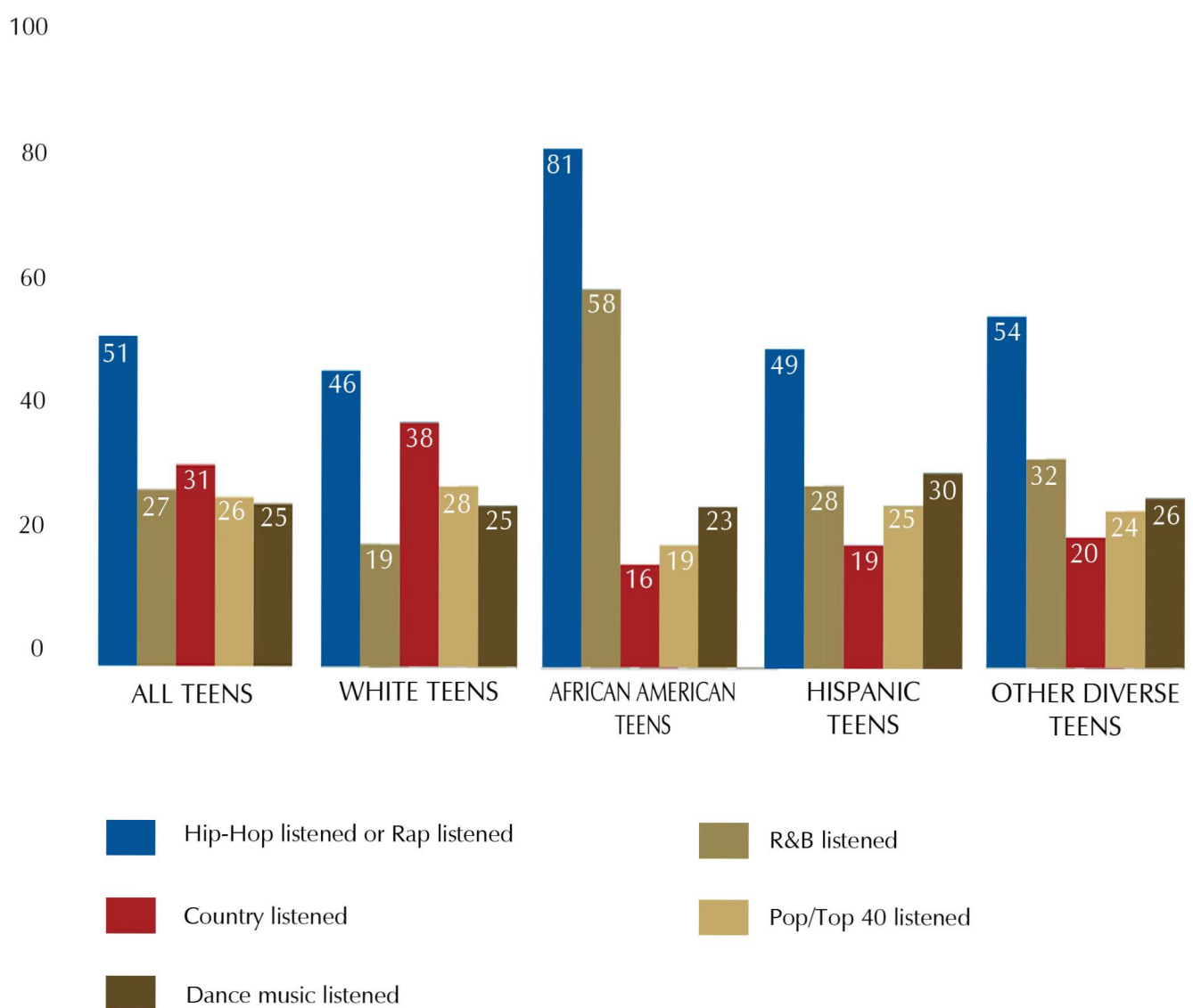
GENERATIONS IN CONTEXT

Generation	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials	Centennials
Birth-Period	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1997	1998-Present
Current Age	53-71	37-52	21-36	0-20
Size	76M	55M	65M	69M
Social Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnam War • Civil rights movement • Women's movement • Manufacturing Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenger Explodes • Two working parents – “latchkey kids” • Inner City Poverty • Drug Trade • Emergence of Hip-Hop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased school violence • Single parents • 9/11 • Social media boom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Recession • Terrorism and war • 24-7 media/Reality TV • African American president • Majority minority generation • Gay Marriage • LGBTQ Youth • Disconnected youth • Boys of color crisis • Trump presidential ripple
Aspiration	Job security	Work life balance	Freedom & flexibility	Security & stability
Iconic Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color TV • Audio cassette • Transistor radio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCR • Walkman • CD player • PC • Atari • Nintendo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet • Email • Cell phone • DVD • Laptop computer • PlayStation, Xbox • Song download • iPod 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3D Printing • High Definition Video • Internet of Things • Android and Google • Streaming media • iPad & iPhone • PS4, Wii, Xbox360 • Uber & AirBnB • Virtual Reality
Primary Social Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook  • LinkedIn  • Twitter  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook  • Instagram  • LinkedIn  • Twitter  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instagram  • Snapchat  • YouTube 
Communication Preference	Face to Face/Phone	Text Messaging / Email	Texting and social media	Facetime/video chats and social media
Orientation to Digital	Digital Neophytes	Digital Immigrants	Digital Natives	Digital Intuitives

MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS OF CENTENNIAL GENERATION TEENS



MUSICAL PREFERENCES OF CENTENNIAL GENERATION TEENS



5 TIPS FOR CONNECTING WITH CENTENNIALS



They are mobile first and digital intuitive – so you must go where they are and authentically communicate in the digital world, providing them with digitally engaged experiences, if we want to establish a share of voice in their lives.



They are influenced by individuals that reflect their background, passions, and interests – so elevating Centennial ambassadors and influencers are key to being viewed as authentic and credible.



They can smell insincerity a mile away, so establish authenticity as the foundation of your marketing, outreach, and teen engagement initiatives. Center your efforts on their interests, hopes, and dreams, their passions, establishing opportunities for them to create, explore, and express themselves in authentic ways. Given their interest in all things hip-hop, this is often a particularly strong culturally relevant foundation for reaching Centennials, if it is done well.



They seek out spaces to HOMAGO – Hang Out, Mess Around, and Geek Out, where they can be themselves, go deep into their passions, and be their genuine self. They especially covet experiences where they can create media, share content, and engage others in the creative process.



Because they grew up in the Great Recession, they are concerned about their future and want programs and relationships that help them to understand the pathway to accomplishing their dreams and allow them to access meaningful workforce development and college access experiences.

Contact informations

For More Information Contact:

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Dr. Williams is a national expert on the Centennial and Millennial Generations and served as the senior vice president and chief education and youth development officer for 4M youth with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.



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Source: Williams, D., Parsons, L., McQuiston, M., Ellis, I., Penner, A., Crusoe, D., Walch, T., Collins, K., and Madriga, K. (2017). Voice, Choice, Access, & Passion: Preparing the Centennial Generation for Leadership. Atlanta, GA: Boys & Girls Clubs of America.