

THE NEXT CHAPTER:

LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GENERATION
CREATING - NOT CHANGING - THEIR LIVES IN PANDEMIC.

RE-EMERGENCE

VICE MEDIA
GROUP

OBJECTIVE:

TRACK YOUTH RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AROUND THE GLOBE TO FORECAST THE FUTURE OF CULTURE

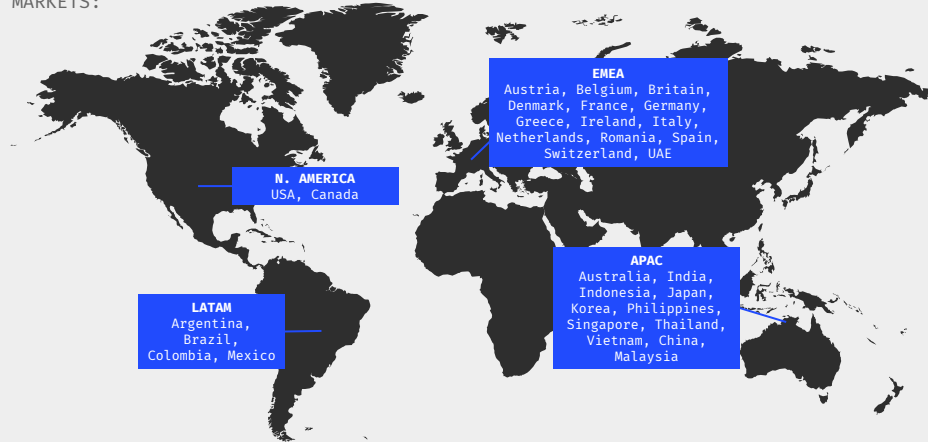
METHODOLOGY:

Online quantitative studies fielded via VICE, Refinery29, and i-D websites and social channels, combined with category and market specific insights from VICE Media Group's proprietary insights communities, VICE Voices and Mad Chatter.

SAMPLE:

Gen Z & Millennial Focus
n=350-9,000 Respondents Per Study

MARKETS:



GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE TRACKING STUDIES

MARCH-APRIL 2020

**YOUTH IN
PANDEMIC I:
CHECKING IN**

APRIL-MAY 2020

**YOUTH IN
PANDEMIC II:
AT HOME
EXPERIENCES**

MAY-JUNE 2020

**YOUTH IN
PANDEMIC III:
HEALTH & WELLNESS**

AUG-SEPT 2020

**YOUTH IN
PANDEMIC IV:
FUTURE
OF WORK**

JUNE-JULY 2021

**YOUTH IN
PANDEMIC V:
RE-EMERGENCE
& INDULGENCE**

CATEGORY & MARKET DEEP DIVES

OCT-NOV 2020

**COMPASSION IN
CURRENCY**
US, UK, & CANADA

JAN 2021

**IDENTITY IN
2030**
US & UK

JAN-FEB 2021

**FUTURE OF
EXPERIENCES**
US & UK

FEB 2020 - SEP 2021

**BLAZING THEIR OWN
EDUCATIONAL PATH**
US (TRACKING STUDY)

JUNE-JULY 2021

**HUMOR IN
MEDIA**
US & UK

**WE ARE *NOT*
GOING BACK
TO NORMAL**



DESPITE EFFORTS TOWARDS NORMALCY, LIFE IS FAR FROM NORMAL

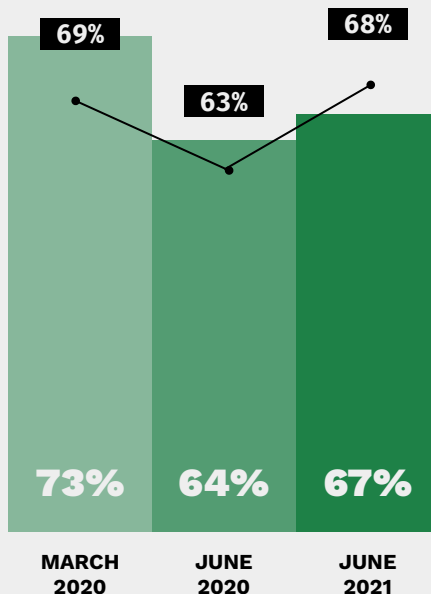
Q?: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the pandemic? (High/Very High)

63%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE SAY:
“Things are starting to reopen in my country,
or are already fully reopened.”

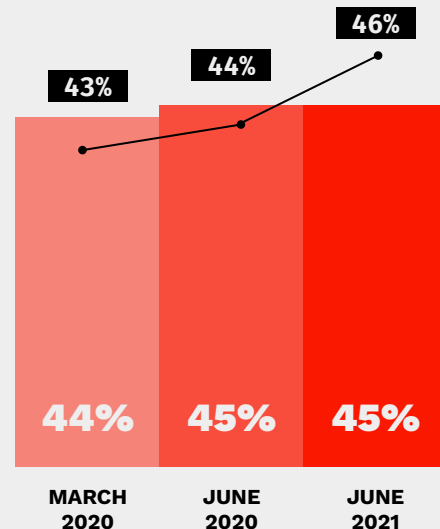
63% GEN Z
64% GEN Y

UNCERTAINTY:



OVERWHELM:

***GEN Z**



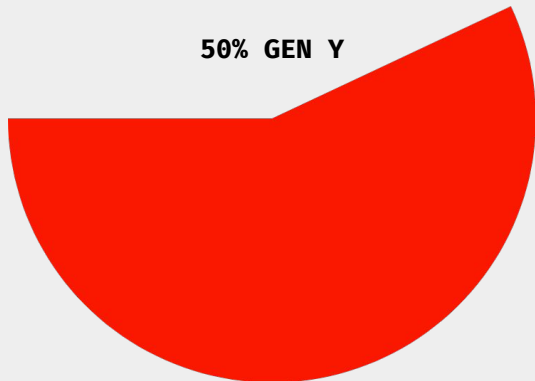
YOUTH OPTIMISM TOWARDS THE FUTURE IS DWINDLING, BUT THEIR READINESS FOR CHANGE IS OMNIPRESENT

57%

OF GEN Z

Believe the pandemic will have a **negative** long-term impact on society and culture.

50% GEN Y



6 in 10

OF GEN Z SAY:

"I will **advocate for societal changes** based on what we've learned from this pandemic."

7 in 10

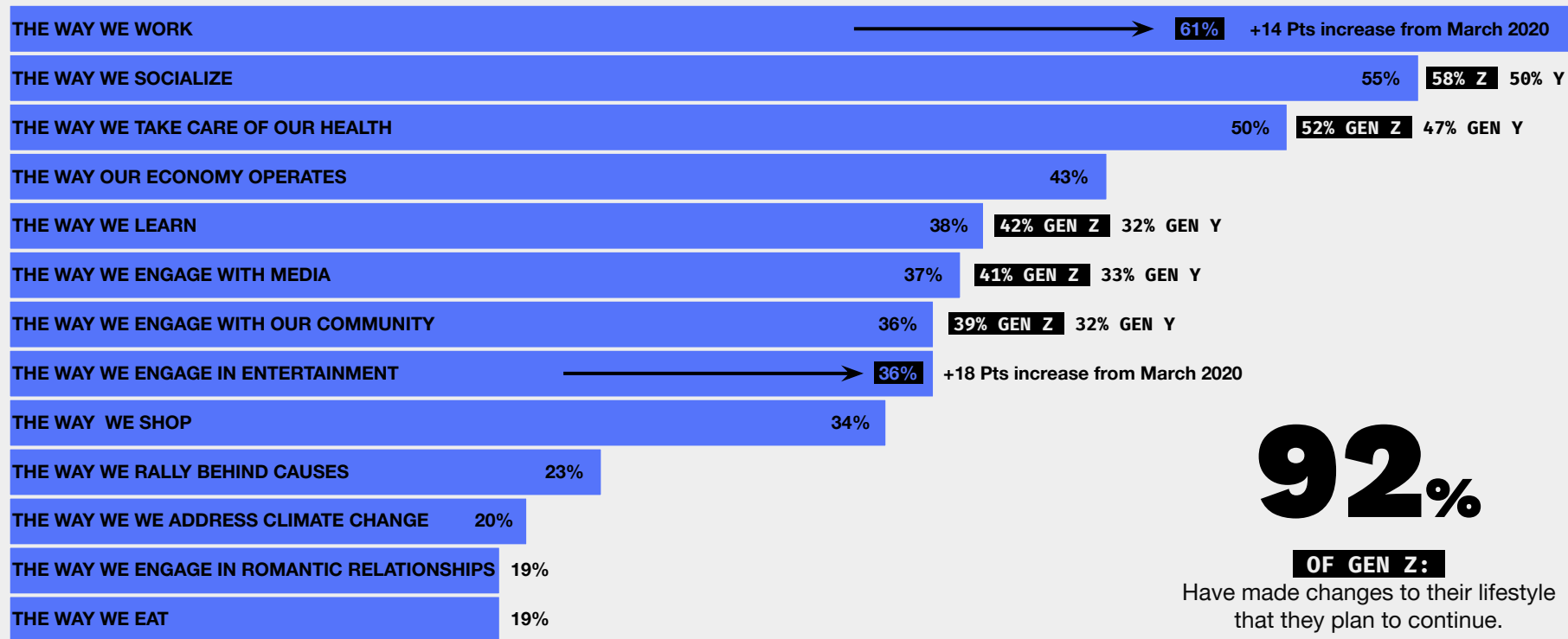
OF GEN Z SAY:

"New generations (Gen Z & Millennials) will **take it upon themselves to solve societal issues** impacted by older generations."

6 in 10 GEN Y

THEY FORESEE A NEW WAY OF LIFE DRIVEN BY KEY FORCES OF CULTURE

Q?: What do you imagine will be the most lasting societal change after this pandemic?



92%

OF GEN Z:

Have made changes to their lifestyle that they plan to continue.

“

Life wasn't normal before covid and hopefully we can make new paths of life that are better for everyone moving forward! I am passionate about the planet, uplifting marginalized people, fighting capitalism, and changing the whole damn system!

”

GEN Z, WOMAN, USA

NAVIGATING THE NEXT CHAPTER OF CULTURE

01
02
03
04

MENTAL HEALTH
RELATIONSHIPS
CAREER
MEDIA

#1 MENTAL HEALTH

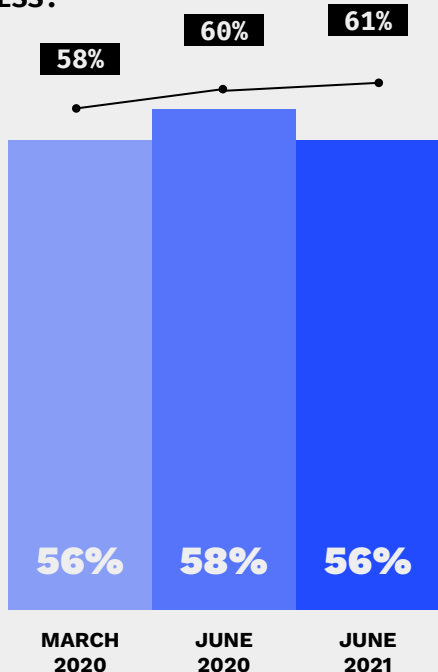
~~TABOO~~

TABLE TALK

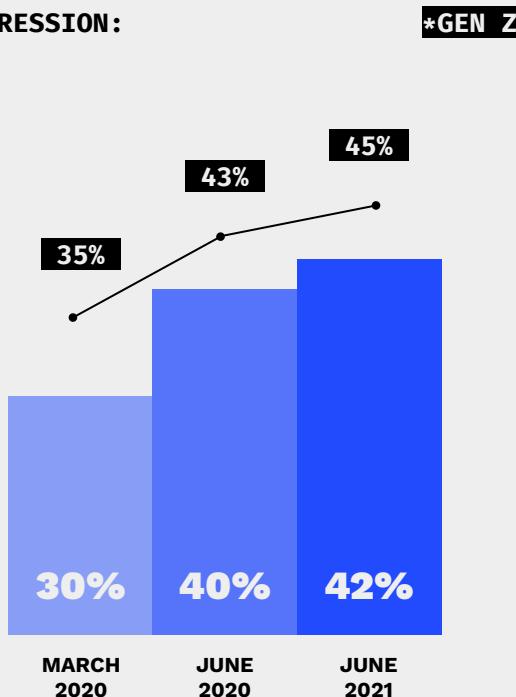
YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BECOME CHRONICALLY AWARE OF THE STRAIN ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

Q?: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the pandemic? (High/Very High)

STRESS:



DEPRESSION:



41%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE:
Foresee themselves having **lasting anxiety** as a result of the pandemic

43% GEN Z
38% GEN Y

THEY'VE MADE IT A PRIORITY TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR THOUGHTS

#1

Mental/Emotional Health is the #1 thing
young people value more today
than they did before the pandemic

1 in 2

OF GEN Z

Have made lifestyle changes around
their mental health that they plan to continue

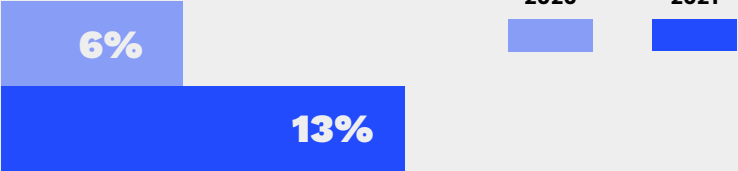
2 in 5 GEN Y



THEY'VE IMPLEMENTED MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICES THAT THEY PLAN TO CONTINUE

Q?: Since the start of COVID-19 to today, have you used any of the following to maintain your wellbeing?

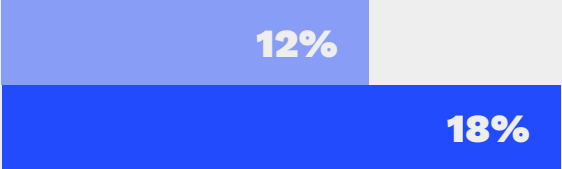
MENTAL HEALTH APP



THERAPY/COACHING



MEDITATION PRACTICE



2x

The overall % of youth taking **action** around mental health has **DOUBLED** since the start of the pandemic

*"I started doing **yoga and meditation** on a **regular basis**... Which has really changed my life... And also helped me pass through these challenging times."*

GEN Z, MAN, INDIA

"I started sessions with a psychologist because I realized how important my mental health is and that is something that I will continue to do ❤️."

GEN Z, WOMAN, GREECE



“ Many of the changes I made were to take good care of my mental health. I realised that having a healthy mind is really important to keep your life moving forward and to grow as a person as well. ”

GEN Z, NONBINARY, MALAYSIA

THEY WILL MAINTAIN HABITS THAT PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH

Q? : What habits have you created that you plan to keep post-pandemic?

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



- #1** motivation to work out is 'To feel good'
- #2** 'To manage mental/emotional health'

*"When I started **yoga**, I learned that it was important to communicate with people, which had a **positive effect on my body and soul**."*

GEN Z, WOMAN, JAPAN

PERSONAL TIME



76% of young people say: "I will respect my personal needs and boundaries more in the future."

*"The isolation helped me to do a lot of **introspection** and change my way of seeing things. I am now a much **more positive person** and I value each moment I step outside."*

GEN Z, WOMAN, ARGENTINA

NATURE



63% of young people spent more meaningful time outdoors/in nature in 2020

*"I have **developed a love for my environment and the outdoors** so I have chosen to be more conscious of the trash I create."*

GEN Z, WOMAN, USA

HOBBIES & PASSION



59% of young people value their hobbies more than they used to

*"I became aware of the things that were important to me, the new things that I would like to do, like **starting hobbies again, doing sports and getting involved in volunteering**."*

GEN Z, WOMAN, BELGIUM

THEY WILL CUT HABITS THAT HINDER IT

Q? : What habits do you plan to drop?

SOCIAL SEPARATION



*"[I want to drop] dating sites! And be able to stumble into a bar and **talk to strangers.**"*

GEN Z, WOMAN, FRANCE

TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME



*"Using **too much social media** platforms and the **high use of my smartphone** have resulted in anxiety."*

GEN Z, MAN, INDIA

OVER-CONSUMPTION



*"Excessive consumption. Throughout the pandemic, **I've spent more money than ever.**"*

GEN Z, WOMAN, INDONESIA

TIME AT HOME/INDOORS



*"Staying in one place for a long period of time, because it **affects my mental well-being.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, FRANCE

*"**Isolation - it's not a sustainable lifestyle.** I should have been spending more time with friends and family before the pandemic."*

GEN Z, MAN, CANADA

*"**Excessive use of social media and content streaming.** Once I am able to, I want to use my time in a more fulfilling way."*

GEN Z, NON-BINARY, GERMANY

*"Social media addiction, late bedtimes, **online shopping or unethical consumerism.**"*

GEN Z, NONBINARY, UK

*"Staying indoors for too long continuously, because **I want more fresh air.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, USA

#2 RELATIONSHIPS

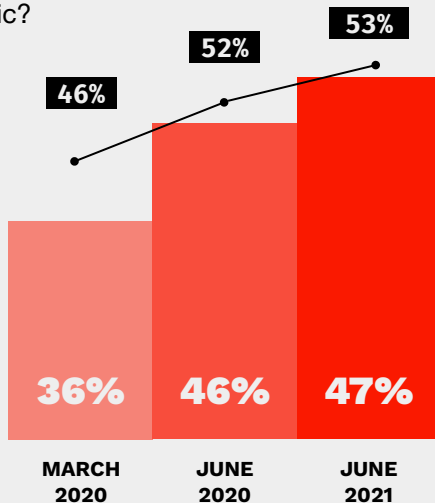
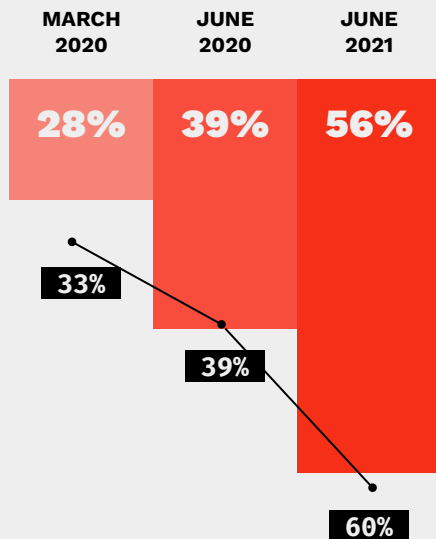
~~CASUAL~~

CRITICAL

YOUTH'S SENSE OF CONNECTION HAS DETERIORATED

Q?: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the pandemic?

CONNECTION:
(Low/Very Low)



LONELINESS:
(High/Very High)

***GEN Z**



THEY ARE EAGER TO REUNITE



94%

Of young people **plan to return to in-person experiences** (festivals, concerts, national/world tours, plays, museums, etc.)



72%

Of young people say what makes an experience fun is the **the opportunity to share moments with others**

81% GEN Z



75%

Of those who plan to go out more say it will be **good for their mental health to be around people again**

78% GEN Z

BUT RE-ACCLIMATING TO IN-PERSON EXPERIENCES WILL TAKE TIME AND ADJUSTING

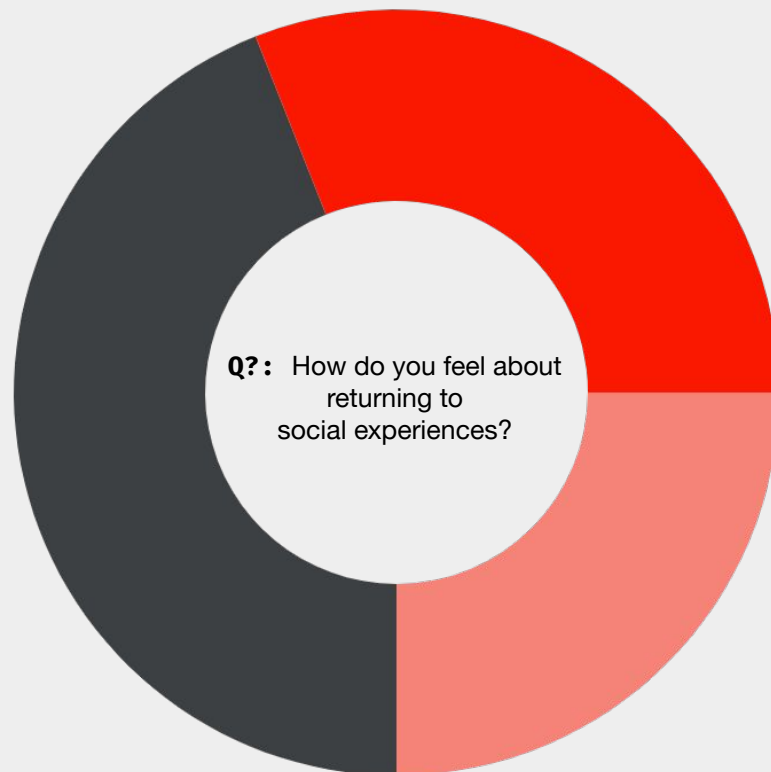
44%

Excited

46% GEN Z

42% GEN Y

But 23% of those who are excited **don't feel ready**, mentally & emotionally, to return



Q?: How do you feel about returning to social experiences?

31%

Hesitant

27% GEN Z

34% GEN Y

72% of those who are nervous/hesitant **don't feel ready**, mentally & emotionally, to return

25%

Nervous

27% GEN Z

24% GEN Y

THEY HAVE BECOME MORE DELIBERATE ABOUT WHO THEY SPEND THEIR TIME WITH

INVESTED RELATIONSHIPS

"I got closer to my friends because we went through a lot during this time and talked and trusted each other more than before."

GEN Z, WOMAN, GERMANY

"The [emotional] distance between my family members became closer. Before the pandemic, I didn't like any family member. But now, I love them."

GEN Z, NONBINARY, JAPAN

*"I made close ties with my family and friends and **plan to keep these strong.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, UK

1 in 2

OF GEN Z

Made changes in their friendships that they plan to continue

1 in 3 GEN Y

DIVESTED RELATIONSHIPS

*"I realized that those who must be there, are there, and **those who do not want to be there are useless to try keeping in my life.**"*

GEN Z, NONBINARY, ITALY

*"The time off from the start of the pandemic allowed me to take a very in-depth analysis of the romantic relationship and friendships that I have. Since then **I have become rather picky with my associates.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, USA

*"I have given a clean **break to all futile and circumstantial friendships.**"*

GEN Z, WOMAN, GERMANY

INVESTED RELATIONSHIPS WILL SEE NEW LEVELS OF COMMITMENT

#1

The #1 aspect of their lives young people plan to indulge in more moving forward is their **relationships & loved ones**

59% GEN Z 54% GEN Y

87%

Value **'Maintaining close relationships'** just as much or even more than they did before the pandemic



*"I now deal with friendships much more consciously, think more carefully about who is important to me and **cultivate these friendships very consciously**. I would like to maintain this mindset that friendships cannot be taken for granted."*

GEN Z, NONBINARY, SWITZERLAND



THEY'LL MEET NEW PEOPLE, BUT WILL DO SO MINDFULLY

73%

Of young people value **'Meeting new people'** just as much or even more now than they did before the pandemic

55%

Of young people say what makes an experience fun is **the opportunity to meet new people**

72% GEN Z



*"I don't plan to keep staying away from people. What I plan to keep is the importance that I give to my friends, and **I'll try to make real friends from now on.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, ARGENTINA

#3 CAREER

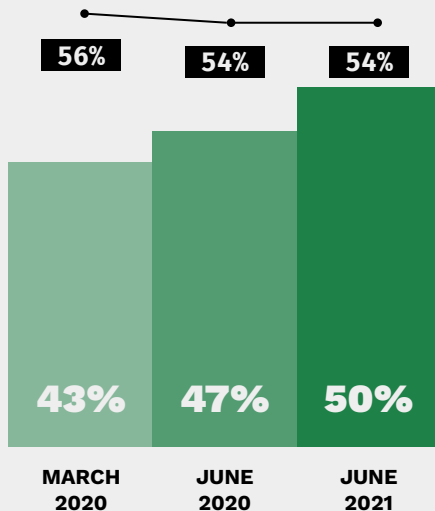
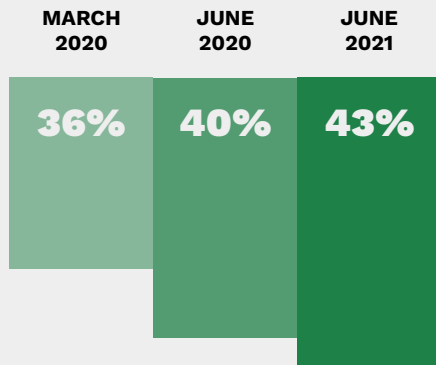
PATHS

PASSIONS

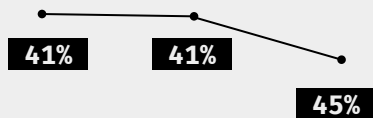
YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR PURPOSE

Q?: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the pandemic?

PURPOSEFULNESS
(Low/Very Low)



BOREDOM
(High/Very High)



***GEN Z**



“ For the longest time I thought I was lazy for passing out right after work. Now I realize I was just exhausted and not giving enough time to things that fuel me. Now, letting myself be bored has created the space to think more deeply/creatively about all kinds of topics. My inner world is richer now. ”

GEN Z, WOMAN, USA

TAPPING CREATIVITY HELPED UNCOVER WHAT MOVES THEM

Q?: Since the start of COVID-19 to today, have you done any of the following to maintain your wellbeing?

LEARNED NEW SKILLS



EXPERIMENTED WITH NEW RECIPES



TOOK UP OLD OR NEW HOBBIES



6 in 10

Young people value their **hobbies** more than they used to

7 in 10

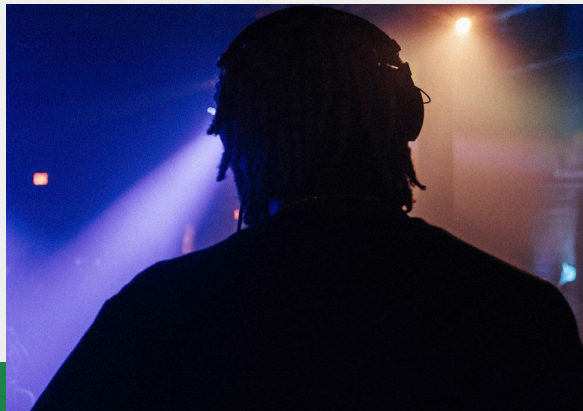
Young people are more focused on how much time they spend **engaged in what they love**

THEY'RE NOW TURNING THEIR PASSIONS INTO PAYCHECKS



*"I discovered my **passion for music** and would love to bring it back and maybe **one day make it a profession.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, ITALY



*"I got up with my old hobbies like painting, singing and cutting hair. Read around 50 books. I plan to continue to read and **have already started online classes for singing.**"*

GEN Z, MAN, INDIA



*"I found **hobbies that I enjoy and they make some money** so I must continue."*

GEN Z, WOMAN, USA

MONEY STILL MATTERS, BUT ENJOYING HOW THEY MAKE IT MATTERS MORE



84%

Of young people value **MONEY** just as much or even more now than they did before the pandemic
(53% value it *MORE*)

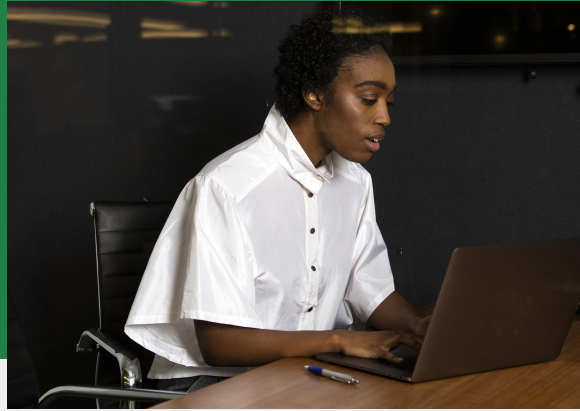
85%

Of young people value **WORK-LIFE BALANCE** just as much or even more now than they did before the pandemic
(57% value it *MORE*)

82%

Of young people want to **DO SOMETHING THAT REALLY MATTERS TO THEM**

THEIR PASSIONS WILL LEAD THEM TO UNCHARTED FIELDS OF WORK



"I started a new company, partly to make money, partly to make a difference, partly to have something to do, partly to give people jobs."

GEN Z, MAN, USA

72%

Of young people value **SIDE HUSTLES** just as much or even more now than they did before the pandemic

71%

Of young people value **ENTREPRENEURSHIP** just as much or even more now than they did before the pandemic

TOP GEN Z SIDE HUSTLES

- #1: **Buying & re-selling goods**
2x more than GEN Y
- #2: **Freelancing**
- #3: **Crafting/artistry**
1.5x more than GEN Y
- #4: **Investing**
- #5: **Driver (Uber, Lyft, etc.)**

THEY'LL RE-IMAGINE THE EDUCATIONAL PATH TO THEIR NEW VISION OF WORK



65%

Of High Schoolers say,
“I want to follow my own educational path.”

only 48%

Of High Schoolers believe that education
beyond High School is necessary

-12 percentage point decline
from Feb 2020 to Sep 2021

58%

Of High Schoolers believe a **skill-based education** (e.g. trade skills, nursing, STEM, etc.)
makes sense in today's world

#4 MEDIA

TAPPING THROUGH
TAKING AWAY

YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN OVERWHELMED WITH NEWS & INFORMATION

GLOBAL PANDEMIC



CLIMATE CHANGE

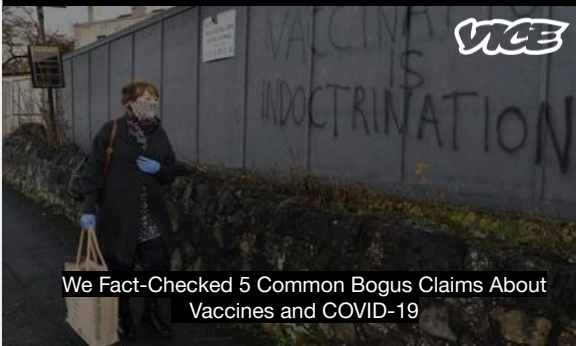


*"I limit the amount of news I take in a day. The news in general is usually not that upbeat, I already have severe anxiety and depression. I'm a very sensitive person and **consuming too much can send me spiraling.**"*

SOCIAL INJUSTICE



MISINFORMATION



GEN Z, WOMAN, USA

THEY'RE NOW CUTTING THROUGH CONTENT TO FIND THE TRUTH, BUILD RESILIENCE, AND IMMERSE IN MOMENTS OF RESPITE

TOP 3 CONTENT TYPES THEY'LL SEEK MOVING FORWARD:

#1

TRUTH

75% OF YOUNG PEOPLE
will seek content that:

- Provides info based on fact/science
- Uncovers stories others aren't telling
- Keeps them in-the-know

#2

RESILIENCE

69% OF YOUNG PEOPLE
will seek content that:

- Inspires self-growth
- Gives them hope
- Helps them contribute to the world

#3

RESPITE

68% OF YOUNG PEOPLE
will seek content that:

- Makes them laugh
- Entertains them
- Helps them escape

TRUTH: THEY'LL CONSULT MORE SOURCES & EXPERTS TO VERIFY INFORMATION

#1

The #1 change young people will make when seeking news in the future is to **pay more attention to the opinions of experts** (academics, scientists, activists, authors, etc.)

1 in 4

Young people will engage with more **alternative news outlets** that uncover stories others aren't telling

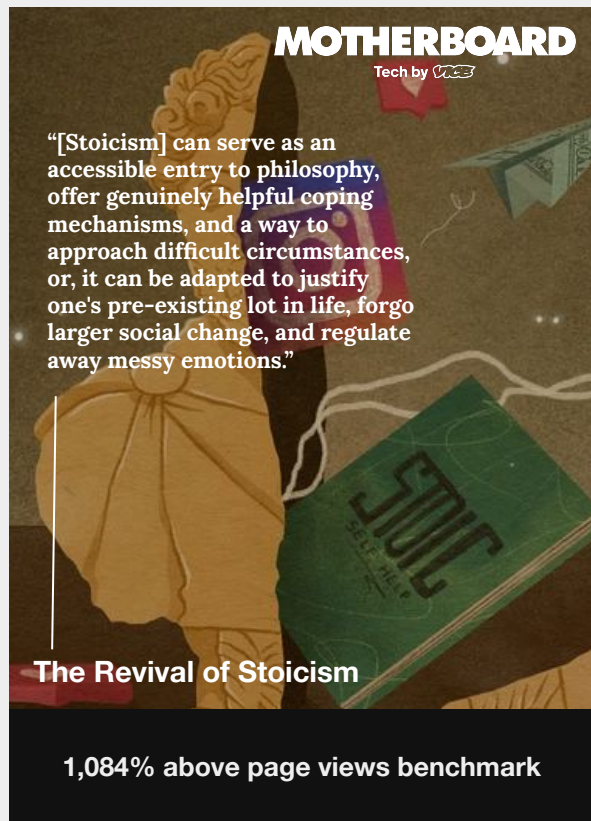


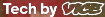
The Internet Is Mad About a Hunter Biden Art Show That Doesn't Exist

*"I will be suspicious of most newspapers (TV news in particular) and **will verify the sources.**"*

GEN Z, WOMAN, ITALY

RESILIENCE: THEY'LL SEEK CONTENT THAT OFFERS TOOLS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

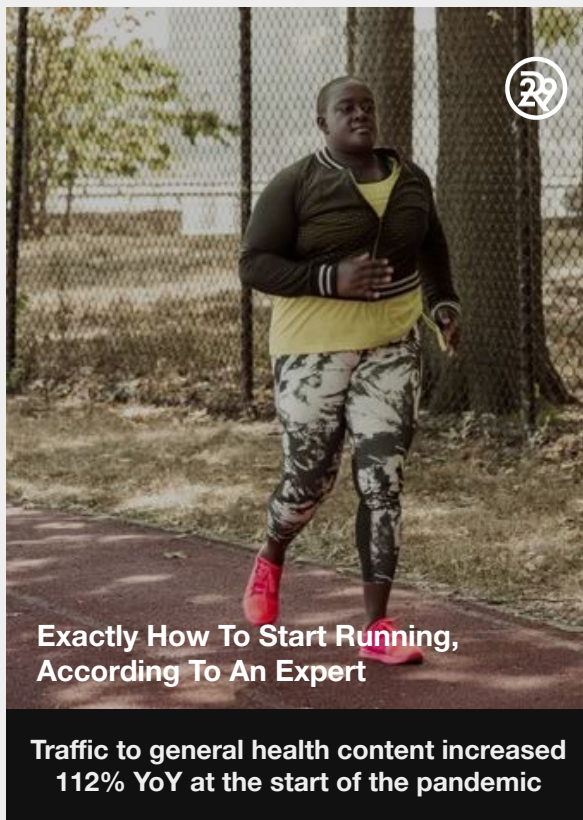
A graphic for a Motherboard article. It features a stylized illustration of a person in a yellow robe holding a green book titled 'STOIC'. The background is a textured brown. The Motherboard logo is at the top, with 'Tech by' and a small icon below it. A quote is on the left, and a headline is at the bottom. A black bar at the very bottom contains a statistic.


MOTHERBOARD
Tech by 

"[Stoicism] can serve as an accessible entry to philosophy, offer genuinely helpful coping mechanisms, and a way to approach difficult circumstances, or, it can be adapted to justify one's pre-existing lot in life, forgo larger social change, and regulate away messy emotions."

The Revival of Stoicism

1,084% above page views benchmark

A photograph of a person running on a path in a park. They are wearing a dark jacket, a yellow shirt, and camouflage pants. A circular logo with the number 29 is in the top right corner. Below the photo is a headline, and a black bar at the bottom contains a statistic.



Exactly How To Start Running, According To An Expert

Traffic to general health content increased 112% YoY at the start of the pandemic

43%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Have been watching/wanting more **documentaries** (the second most popular genre after comedy)

1 in 2

YOUNG PEOPLE

Foresee themselves indulging more in **self-growth** experiences

52% GEN Z

46% GEN Y

RESPIRE: THEY'LL ACTIVELY PURSUE A GOOD LAUGH

89%

Of young people use humor
to cope with serious things

92% GEN Z

87%

Of young people believe memes
about world crises in the moment
can be funny



REFINERY29

#1

Comedy is #1 genre young
people have been watching/wanting
more of

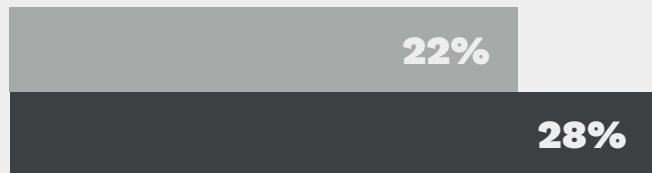
YOUTH WON'T JUST CONSUME CONTENT, THEY'LL INTERACT WITHIN IT

Q?: Since the start of COVID-19 to today, have you used any of the following to maintain your wellbeing?

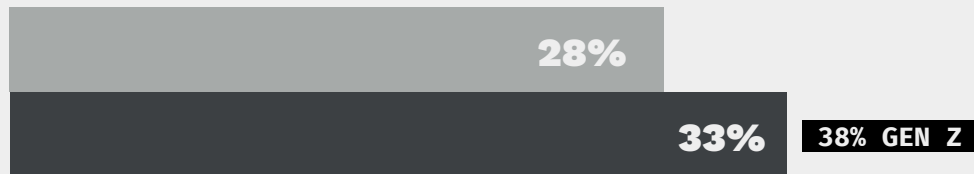
MARCH
2020

JUNE
2021

VIRTUAL HANGOUTS



ONLINE GAMING



SOCIAL MEDIA



64%

OF GEN Z SAY:

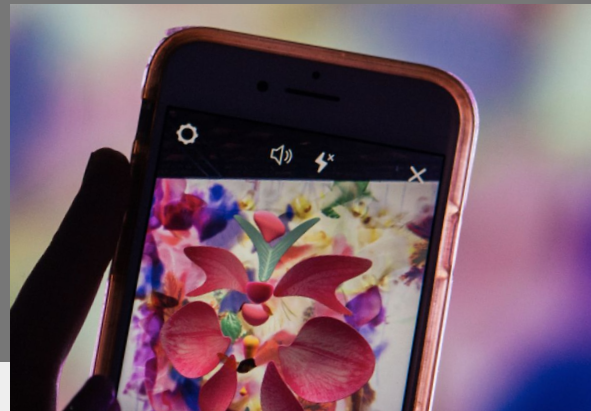
“Social media’s role in experiences will be to serve as a **place for event-goers to engage with others** before/during/after the event.”

58% GEN Y

1 in 4 Gen Z increased the amount they play video games because more of their friends & family were playing.

60% GEN Z

THE WALLS BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL EXPERIENCES WILL DISSIPATE



93%

OF GEN Z

Are interested in **3-D AUDIO**.
86% GEN Y

2 in 5

OF GEN Z

Have created or designated **physical space**
inside their homes for **playing video games**.
1 in 4 GEN Y

54%

OF GEN Z

Purchased new tech (speakers, game
consoles, etc.) to **enhance their**
experience of entertainment at home
throughout the pandemic.
47% GEN Y

THE NEXT CHAPTER: FOOTNOTES FOR THE FUTURE

#1 MENTAL HEALTH ~~TABOO~~ **TABLE TALK**

Every decision that young people make will be rooted in their quest for emotional and mental stability. Brands must understand the importance of mental health within the consumer decision-making process, and deliver products, services, and messages that support the consumer journey of self-exploration, acceptance, and growth.

#2 RELATIONSHIPS ~~CASUAL~~ **CRITICAL**

Young people will continue to invest in their closest relationships. They view quality time as something to be indulged in, and they seek ways to enhance it. Brands can play a pivotal role in social experiences - offering ways to free up time and space for people to be present with one another, or facilitating experiences that gift consumers more meaningful moments and memories.

#3 CAREER ~~PATHS~~ **PASSIONS**

Young people are pioneering new ways to work, with their passion as their guiding light. Brands must consider this new mindset and motivation, and find ways to fuel nontraditional education and the entrepreneurial spirit.

#4 MEDIA ~~TAPPING THROUGH~~ **TAKING AWAY**

As the media landscape continues to expand and evolve, young people will cut to the content that enhances their lives through truth, resilience, and respite. Brands can play a pivotal role by leaning into these pillars, designing messages for mindful consumption, and giving consumers something to apply in their own lives.



THANK YOU



THANK YOU

VICE MEDIA
GROUP