



Millennial Mosaic Press Release #2

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Why Millennials Are an Upgrade on Previous Generations

There's a lot of consternation about the Millennial generation – Canada's youngest adults born since the mid-1980s and now reaching their thirties. They frequently are depicted as self-absorbed, technologically-obsessed know-it-alls, with little interest in other people. They allegedly are beset with all kinds of personal problems, are living at home too long, and have little hope as they face the future. **But new research has uncovered quite a different reality – that Millennials are not only looking good but may well be a solid upgrade on previous generations.**

In their new book, *The Millennial Mosaic*, sociologist Reginald Bibby of the University of Lethbridge and colleagues Joel Thiessen and Monetta Bailey of Calgary's Ambrose University draw on a massive number of national surveys, present and past to examine young people today compared to older Canadians both today and yesterday.

What they find is that Millennials – young adults born since the mid-1980s – look extremely good.

- They love the Internet and their cell phones. But similar to generations before them, they place high value on family, friends, and being loved.
- Like older adults they also value knowing a comfortable life and being successful, but they also recognize the importance of working hard.
- Interpersonally, they similarly value characteristics like honesty, politeness, and concern for others. But, as the most diverse generation in Canadian history, they are more inclined than older generations to accept virtually every kind of social, demographic, and lifestyle variation. Pluralism is part of their DNA. Beyond only embracing the idea of diversity, they maintain that we also have to have a just and fair society.
- They have lots of personal concerns, led by the future, money, and time. But rather than facing the future with negativism or despair, most Millennials have high hopes and expectations when it comes to education, careers, income, relationships, and family.
- Thanks to higher levels of education & being equipped with technology, they can be expected to evolve into the most informed generation in Canadian history.
- And rather than being permanently “squeezed” out of careers, Millennials will be filling positions as growing numbers of Boomers and Gen Xers leave the paid workforce.
- Further, Boomers and Xers are not going to be permanently gobbling up resources; those older cohorts will be leaving behind some \$750 billion in the next decade alone in what CIBC has described as “*the largest intergenerational wealth transfer in Canadian history*” (for the record, in the U.S., Millennials will be inheriting more than \$30 trillion).

This latest edition of “kids,” say Bibby, Thiessen, and Bailey, will be more than “alright.” They have the potential to be a solid upgrade on previous generations and contribute to a significant enhancement of life in Canada.

Illustrative Tables

**Valued Goals & Interpersonal Characteristics
of Millennials and Other Adults**

% Viewing as "Very Important"

	ALL	Millennials 1986-plus (18-29)	Xers 1966-1985 (30-49)	Boomers 1946-65 (50-69)	Pre-Boomers 1945-earlier (70-plus)
Goals					
Family life	75	63	74	78	85
Being loved	63	63	59	65	70
Friendship	62	61	55	64	76
A comfortable life	51	56	53	48	48
Success	46	52	43	44	50
Means					
Honesty	84	75	80	90	93
Politeness	68	62	65	74	77
Concern for others	55	49	49	61	66
Working hard	51	55	49	52	53

Source: Reginald W. Bibby, Joel Thiessen, and Monetta Bailey. *The Millennial Mosaic*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2019.

Select Attitudes: Millennials and Other Adults

% Agreeing

	ALL	Millennials 1986-plus (18-29)	Xers 1966-1985 (30-49)	Boomers 1946-65 (50-69)	Pre-Boomers 1945-earlier (70-plus)
Racial & cultural diversity is a good thing for Canada	76	83	78	73	69
Approve of marriages between white and Asian people	95	98	95	96	89
Approve of marriages between white and black people	94	98	95	95	85
Immigrants to Canada have an obligation to learn Canadian ways	89	71	89	93	94
Canada should work to accommodate and protect transgender people	78	82	79	75	75
Approve of unmarried adults having children	70	72	76	70	46
Approve of same sex couples marrying	63	72	68	60	47
Canada should have two official languages – English and French	63	71	64	58	61
Favour Canada being a mosaic vs. a melting pot	39	53	42	33	31
The environment is a "very serious problem"	35	44	33	35	34
A person should retire at 65, regardless of health	29	31	31	28	24

Source: Reginald W. Bibby, Joel Thiessen, and Monetta Bailey. *The Millennial Mosaic*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2019.

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