



Poll STATION

With Linda Banister

Today, as in the past, we often question the values and priorities of youth. For this *Poll Station*, we decided to ask Edmontonians what they thought about today's youth age 25 years and under, and their attitudes towards work and life.

DO TODAY'S YOUTH HAVE DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORK AND EMPLOYMENT THAN IN THE PAST?



Respondents who agreed that youth attitudes differ 81%
 Respondents who moderately agreed 12%
 Respondents who did not agree 6%

To begin the survey, we asked Edmontonians whether they agreed that today's youth have a different attitude towards work and employment than youth had in the past. The majority of respondents (81%) agreed that their attitudes towards work differ, while 12% moderately agreed and 6% did not agree. When those that agreed (n=81) were asked in what way their attitudes are different, 30% reported that they don't care as much about their jobs or that they don't take them seriously, followed by 22% that reported youth expect a high wage or starting position without earning it and 19% that were of the opinion that youth have a poor work ethic.

When the same group of respondents (n=81) were asked why youth attitudes are different, the most frequent response was that youth have been given too much or more than previous generations (21%), followed by the belief that differences in today's youth are the result of poor parenting (17%), that youth lack a strong work ethic (10%) and that society and its world view on work has changed (9%).

DO TODAY'S YOUTH HAVE DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIFE THAN YOUTH IN THE PAST?



Respondents who agreed that youths had changed 72%
 Respondents who moderately agreed 17%
 Respondents who did not agree 7%

Next, respondents were asked if youth 25 years of age and under have a different attitude towards life than youth in the past. Slightly less than three-quarters (72%) of respondents agreed youth attitudes have changed, while 17% moderately agreed and 7% disagreed. Again respondents (n=72) were asked to explain in what way attitudes had changed. Respondents most frequently commented that youth are selfish and lazy (14%), that they expect too much without having to work for it (11%), and that youth want more leisure time and to take more time for themselves (8%).

When respondents (n=72) were asked to speculate as to why youth attitudes had changed approximately one-quarter of respondents (24%) provided the opinion that youth are given too much and that they always have someone else to rely on, while 13% indicated they are too reliant on technology. Eleven percent (11%) of respondents each reported that youth watch too much TV or that poor parenting is to blame and 8% commented that there is a lack of discipline and the need for a harsher justice system.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE UNIQUE ABOUT TODAY'S YOUTH?

Finally, respondents were asked if there were anything else unique about youth of today that they would like to add. While two-thirds (67%) of respondents did not provide any further comments, 5% mentioned that youth are skilled with technology, 5% of respondents reinforced that youth lack manners and respect, while 3% of respondents each reported that youth today are smarter and better educated and that they are better than they are portrayed.

Interestingly, only 5% of survey respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25 and actually qualified as members of today's youth population. Of the remaining 95% of respondents, twelve percent (12%) were aged 26 to 35 years. The vast majority (83%) of respondents were 36 years of age or older, including 23% aged 36 to 45 years, 26% aged 46 to 55 years, 17% aged 56 to 65 years and 17% that were 66 years of age or older.

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