

# MILLENNIAL ACTIVISM & ENGAGEMENT

Edmonton Vital Signs is an annual checkup conducted by Edmonton Community Foundation, in partnership with Edmonton Social Planning Council, to measure how the community is doing. Vital Topics are a quick but comprehensive look at issues that are timely and important to Edmonton.

Unless otherwise stated, "Edmonton" refers to Census Metropolitan Area and not solely the City of Edmonton.

## Who are the MILLENNIALS?

### Millennial (Gen Y)

Defined as the cohort born between **1981 and 1996**.

### iGEN (Gen Z)

Post millennials born between **1997 and 2010**.

The youngest generation born 2011 to present is referred to as the **Alpha generation**.

### GENERATION X (Gen X)

Born between **1965 and 1980**.

### BABY BOOMER (Boomers)

Born between **1946 and 1964**.

### The SILENT Generation

Born in **1945 or earlier**.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this document these terms are defined as:

**ADVOCACY** – Support of an issue including actions taken to further the cause such as raising awareness, voting, and other actions of support.

**ENGAGEMENT** – Involvement in society, community, and beyond that helps shape what you want to see in the world.

**ACTIVISM** – Actively working to change a system, prejudice, or injustice.



## VOTING POWER

According to the latest municipal census, **MORE THAN 1 IN 4 EDMONTONIANS ARE MILLENNIALS.**

They carry more political voting power in Edmonton than the baby boomers and the silent generation combined.

More millennials are now eligible to vote in Canada than baby boomers. Canadian youth have typically voted in lower numbers than other age groups. But, in the 2015 federal election, a record 57% of all eligible youth voters turned out.

### BARRIERS TO VOTING

According to the **2015 National Youth Survey** (aged 18-34 consisting largely of millennials at the time of the survey), two major barriers that prevented youth from voting are motivation and access.

Compared to older voters, **Canadian youth:**

- are less interested in Canadian politics
- feel less strongly that voting will make a difference and believe that the government does not care what they think
- tend to see voting as a choice rather than a duty

They also discovered that **millennials:**

- were less likely to receive a voter information card
- were less aware of the ways to register and vote
- perceived the voting process as too difficult (e.g. getting to the polls, proving their identity)



**POLITICAL ACTIVISM** According to Environics Survey of Canadian Millennial Social Values:

- **More than half** of millennials follow news and current events daily online.
- **One in four** millennials actively engage with issues and causes, most often online.
- **One in five** millennials participated in ongoing events or meetings about a cause/issue in the past 12 months.

# Do millennials get involved with CAUSES?

According to Case Foundation's Millennial Impact Project:

*Millennials value all ways of giving back as equal whether it is volunteering, a donation, or signing a petition.*

## Issues that matter to millennials

Commonly cited issues for millennials are:

- Housing.
- Affordability and making ends meet.
- Healthcare.
- Climate change and the environment.

## How millennials engage with causes

- Millennials are digital natives who look to technology first to connect.
- They want to improve the lives of those needing help. The organization is secondary to the cause.
- Authenticity in causes – They want to know who, what, why, and how you're doing it.
- They are looking for gratitude and an interpersonal connection with causes they support.

# PHILANTHROPY

Canadian millennials contributed 15% of all money donated in 2017. The same percentage as in 2013.

Historically, most donors are people middle aged or older. For millennials, the demands of building a career and raising a family often leave little disposable income for philanthropy.

## TOP 3 GIVING PRIORITIES BY GENERATIONS

	MILLENNIALS	Gen X	Boomers	Silent Generation
1	Health	Worship*	Worship*	Worship*
2	Animals	Animals	Health	Health
3	Worship*	Health	Children	Arts

\* PLACES OF WORSHIP

## What motivates millennials to give:

**AUTHENTICITY** – Millennials value meaningful connections and are more likely to give to a cause (not a specific organization) when moved by an authentic story.

**TRANSPARENCY** – Millennials like to see where their money goes and how their contribution makes a difference.

**SHARING** – Millennials value their friends' opinions. They also want to share the impact so others will become inspired by their cause.

## Volunteering

According to the 2013 Millennial Impact Report, **73% OF MILLENNIALS VOLUNTEERED FOR A NONPROFIT IN 2012.**

- More than **three-quarters** volunteered because they were passionate about the cause or issue,
- **2 in 3** felt they could have an impact on a cause they cared about.

According to a report from Volunteer Connect:

**The typical volunteer in Edmonton would be:**

- early-30s, big-city dweller, born in Canada (or very recently immigrated to Canada),
- volunteers about three times per month, involved with a couple of specific causes they connected with online,
- interested in using and building their skills.
- **71% of volunteers** want flexible volunteer activities on their own schedule.
- Edmonton (and other urban) volunteers report the number one barrier to volunteering is they could not find interesting opportunities.

### Millennials are everyday changemakers.

They believe all actions matter – big and small. They exhibit social good in small acts they perform every day individually, which results in leverage as a group to cause change.

### Millennials believe in activism.

71% consider voting as activism. Self-identified activists are more likely to contact their representatives and/or take part in marches/rallies than to use social media for cause support.

### 81% are confident that whatever actions they take will lead to improvements.

### Millennials care about social issues.

Millennials see themselves in the shoes of others who don't look like them, speak the same language, have the same education, or come from the same background – perhaps because of their high level of diversity.

## How millennials give

**67%**  
of millennials

donate by website, app or text to donate compared to only 48% of Gen Xers.

Millennials prefer:

- **monthly giving**
- **charitable gifts in lieu of gifts.**

### Millennials are passionate about issues, not institutions or politicians.

Millennials express little trust in the government's ability to address key issues and are impatient with politics, but they still willingly contact their political representatives and vote.

### Millennials value collective action and networks and are often influenced by their peers.

Millennials are far more likely to become involved if their peers are already there. With their collective voice, they address social ills.



Google

Millennials are ...

millennials are lazy?

millennials are selfish?

millennials are not loyal?

## ...full of social values!

According to Millennial Impact Report, millennials believe they will change the world by working together, making small, thoughtful decisions, and speaking out for what they believe in.