

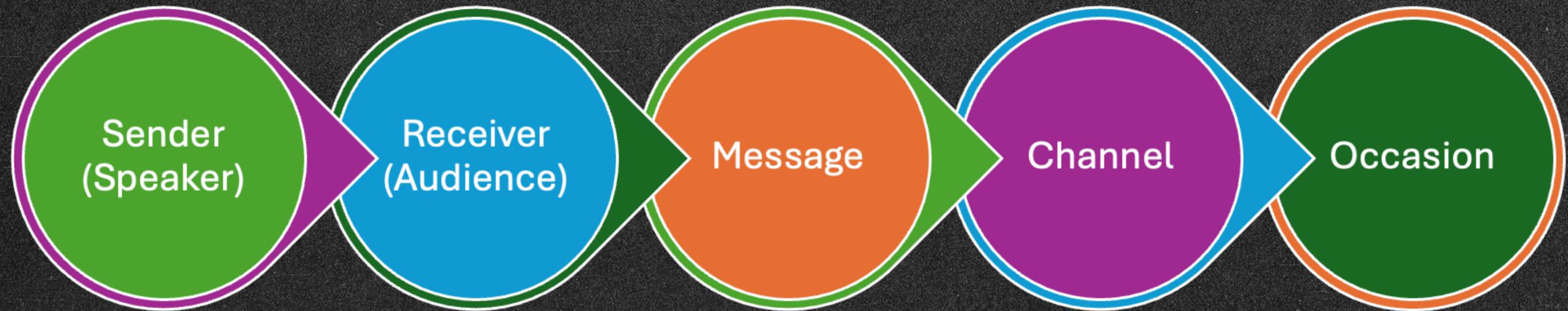
 **Conference**  
**2026**

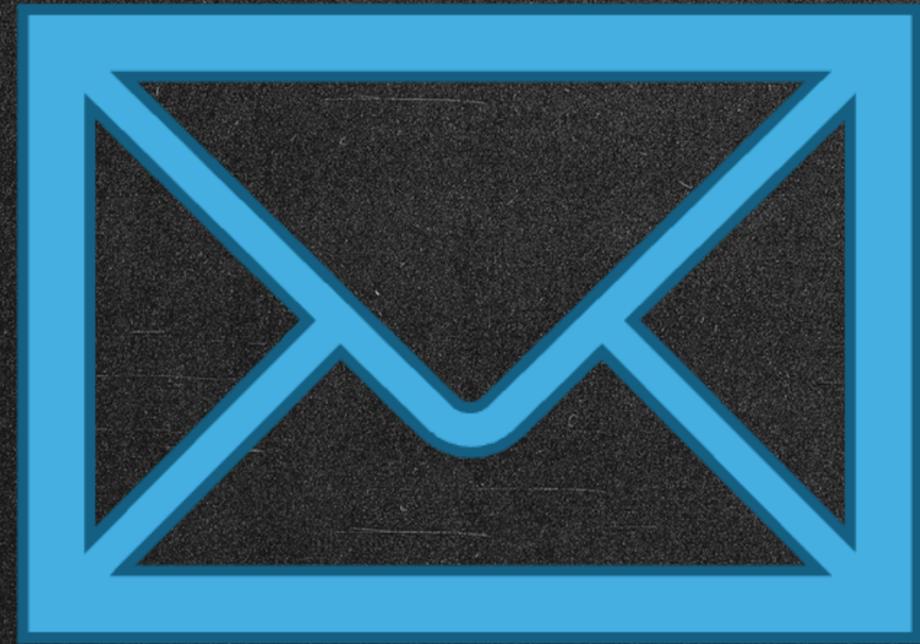
***SPEAKING GEN Z AND BEYOND: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR  
REACHING EMERGING GENERATIONS***

Joy EA Qualls, PhD  
Biola University

***OUR COMMUNICATION  
IS ONLY EFFECTIVE IF  
OUR AUDIENCE FINDS IT  
EFFECTIVE***

# ***THE COMMUNICATION SITUATION***





**Sender (Speaker)**



**Receiver (Audience)**

# **AUDIENCES**



**Ideal**

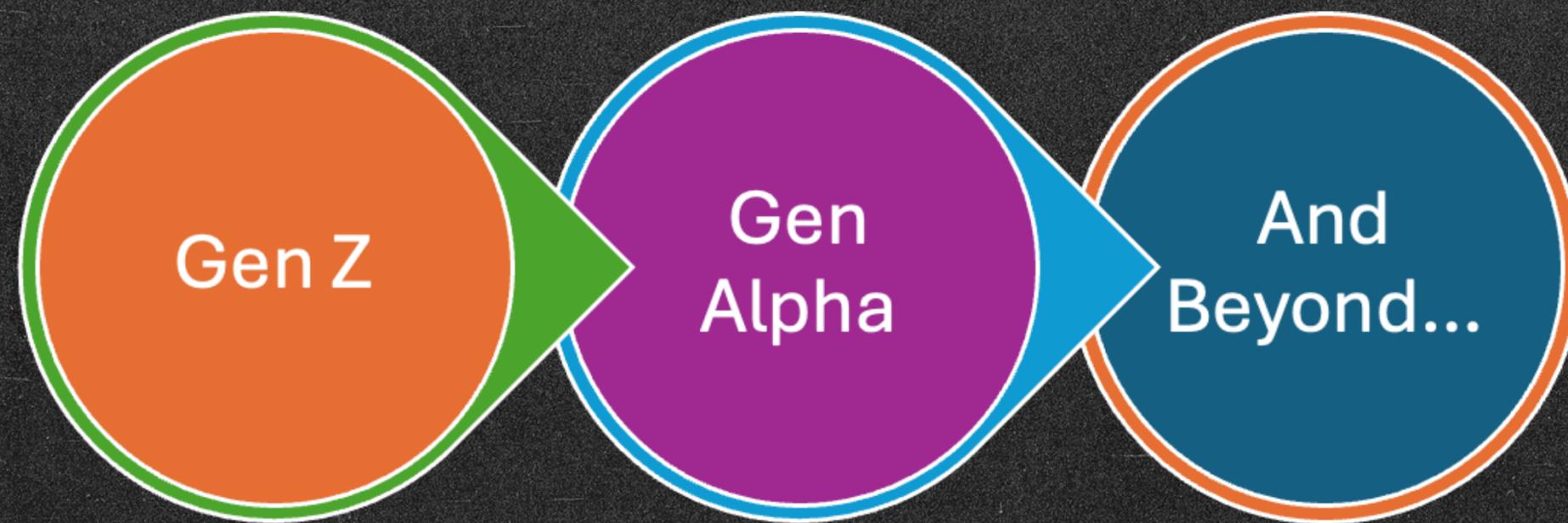


**Tertiary**



**Actual**

# **AUDIENCENALYSIS**



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT GEN Z?

**Ages 14-29 years old  
(1997-2012)**

- **Children of Gen X & Elder Millennials**
- **Marriage Redefined**
- **Sexuality Fluid**

**Digital Natives (first  
complete  
generation)**

- **Access to Devices**
- **Access to the Internet**
- **Streaming Dominate**

**Pragmatic,  
Independant,  
Competative**

- **Fiscally Conservative**
- **Socially Liberal**
- **Pandemic Educated**

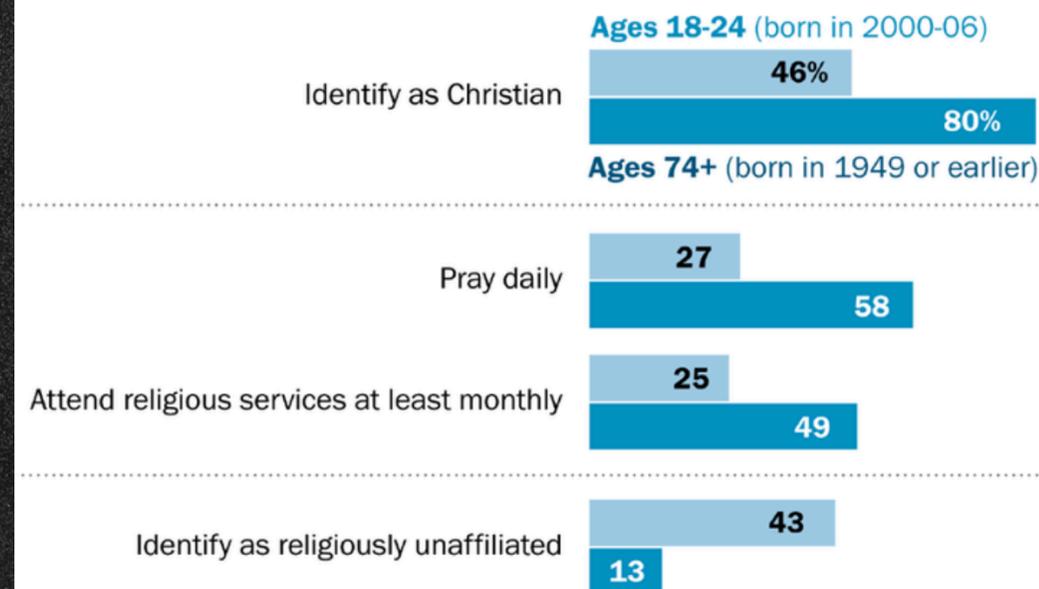
**Value:**

- **Diversity**
- **Social Consciousness**
- **Financial Security**
- **Mental Health**

# GEN Z & THE RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

## Big age gaps in shares of Americans who identify as Christian, pray regularly

% of U.S. adults who say they do the following, by birth cohort



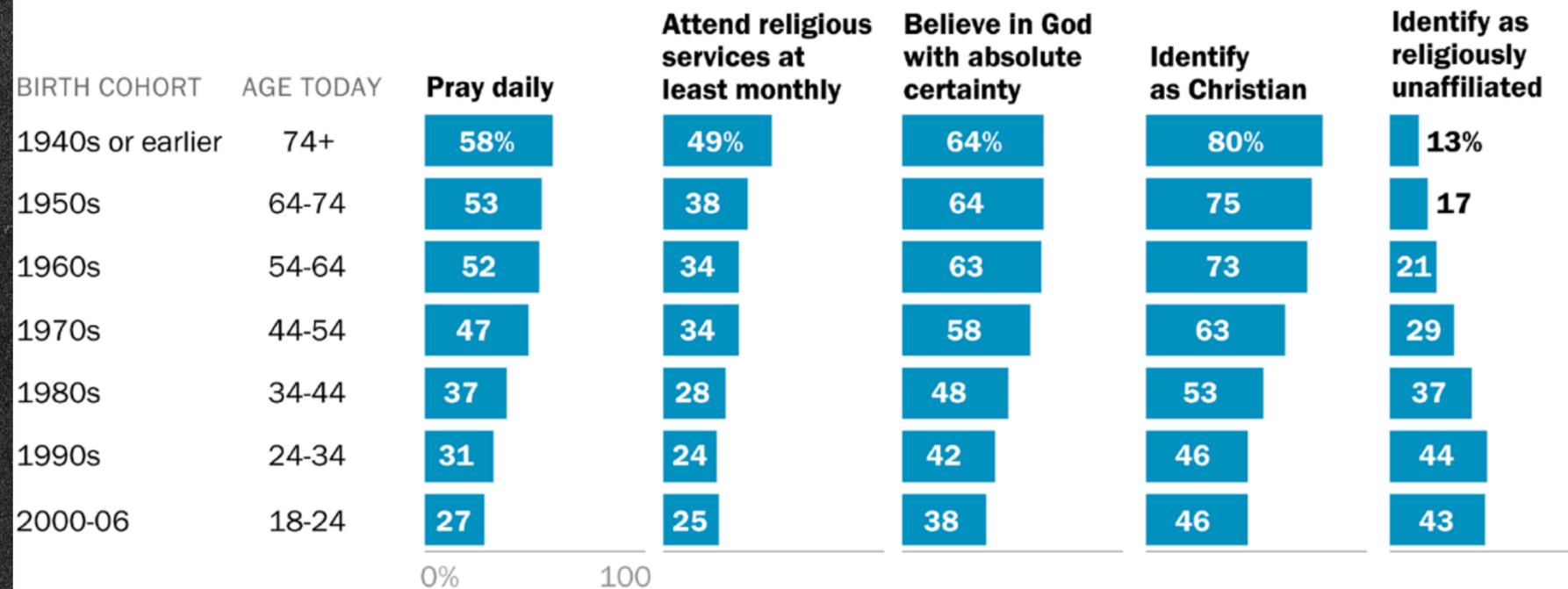
Note: The survey asked respondents, "In what year were you born?" Approximate age was calculated by subtracting the respondent's year of birth from the year in which they completed the survey (2023 or 2024). The "Religiously unaffiliated" category consists of people who describe themselves as atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular" when asked about their religion.

Source: Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## In the U.S., young adults are far less traditionally religious than older adults

% of U.S. adults who say they do the following, by birth cohort



Note: The survey asked respondents, "In what year were you born?" Approximate age was calculated by subtracting the respondent's year of birth from the year in which they completed the survey (2023 or 2024). The "Religiously unaffiliated" category consists of people who describe themselves as atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular" when asked about their religion. The estimates about belief in God come from two questions. The first was a yes/no question that asked, "Do you believe in God or a universal spirit?" Then, respondents were asked "How certain are you about this belief? Absolutely certain, fairly certain, not too certain, not at all certain."

Source: Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# U.S. TEENS' MOTIVATION TO CONTINUE LEARNING ABOUT JESUS

Barna

*Throughout the rest of your life, how motivated are you to continue learning more about Jesus Christ?*

● Very motivated ● Somewhat motivated ● Somewhat unmotivated ● Not at all motivated  
● I am not sure

All teens



Committed Christian teens



Nominal Christian teens



All other teens



*n*=1,015 U.S. teens ages 13 to 17, July 21–August 24, 2021; *n*=24,870 teens ages 13 to 17, July 21–August 24, 2021. | Source: Barna Group

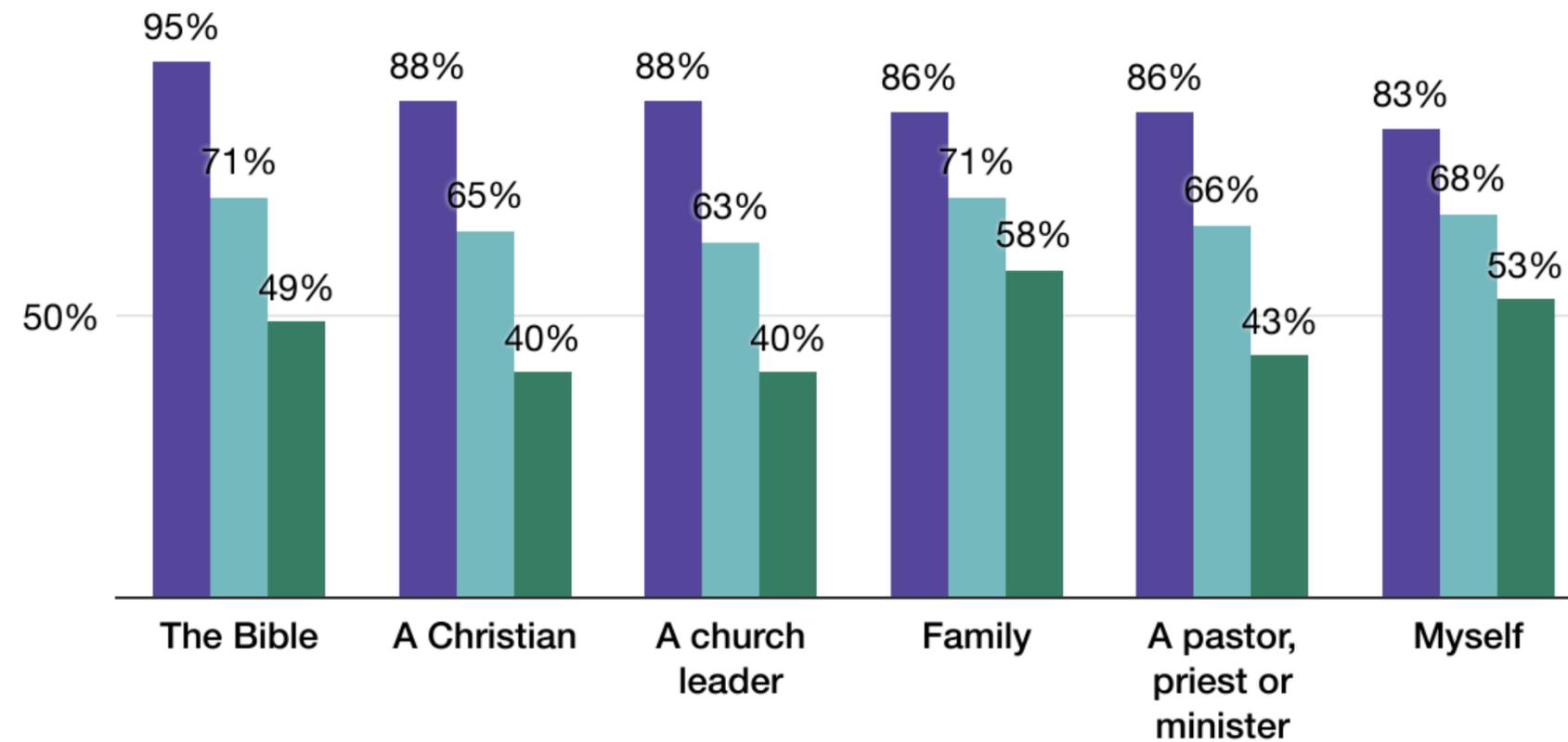
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Barna.com

# U.S. TEEN'S TOP TRUSTED SOURCES FOR LEARNING ABOUT JESUS

Barna

*If you wanted to learn more about Jesus, who or what would you consider a trustworthy source?*

● Committed Christian teens ● Nominal Christian teens ● All other teens



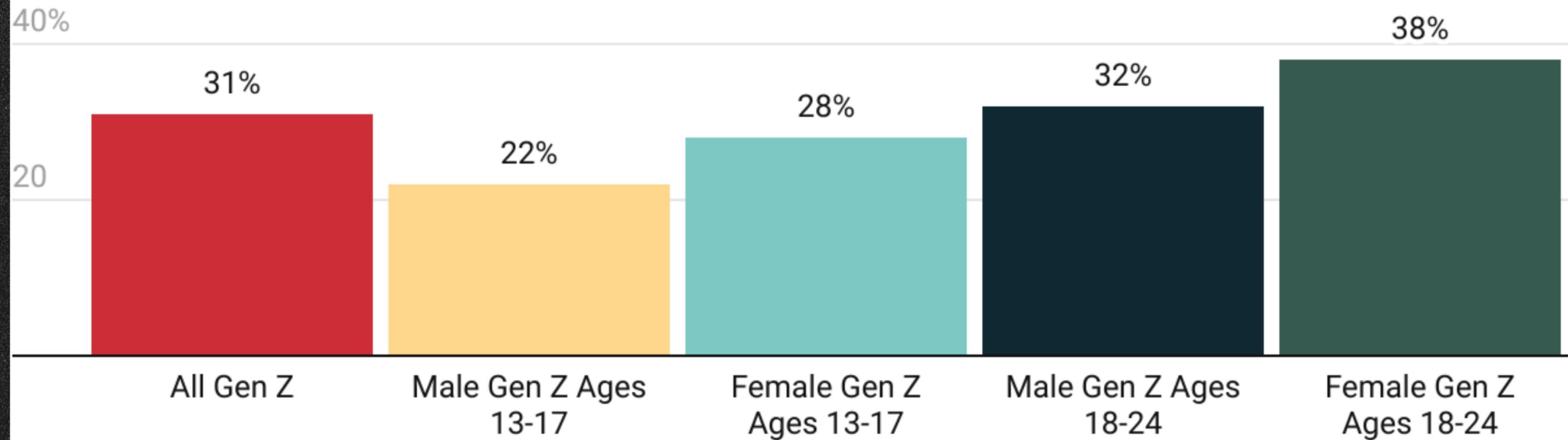
*n*=2,025 U.S. teens and young adults, July 21–August 24, 2021. | Source: Barna Group

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# THE GENDER GAP IS REAL

## More Young Women Identify as Having "No Faith"

% of Gen Z (Ages 13-24) that identify as "atheist," "agnostic" or "no faith"



*n=2,000 U.S. teens and young adults ages 13 – 24, 2023*

Source: Barna Group • Created with Datawrapper

# DISENGAGED AND DISCONNECTED

## Supported by Father



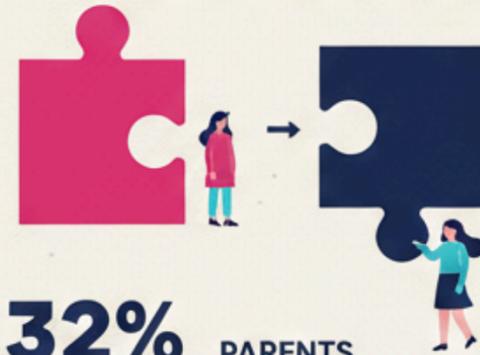
**23%**  
FEEL SUPPORTED

## Supported by Mother



**36%**  
FEEL SUPPORTED sharp drop

## Parents Understand



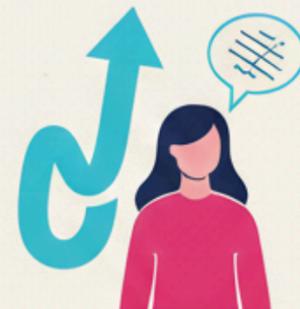
**32%** PARENTS  
BELIEVE PARENTS UNDERSTAND

## Valued by Older Adults



**33%**  
FEEL VALUED BY OLDER ADULTS

## Generation Gap



**40%**  
OF GEN Z WOMEN AGREE:  
"OLDER PEOPLE DON'T  
UNDERSTAND OUR  
OUR PRESSURE



**RELATIONSHIP RELATIONSHIP  
RELATIONSHIP**

*“If we want to see change in Gen Z trajectories, relationships are the place to start. Faith is a skill that must be modeled first and strong supportive relationships can bridge the gap between doubt and belief.”*

**~Daniel Copeland, Barna Group**

# ***TO SPEAK GEN Z IS TO SPEAK...***

Agency

Empathy

Community

Connection

Seen

Supported

Known

Belonging

# ***TO SPEAK GEN Z IS TO CREATE...***

Intergenerational  
Mentorship

Participation

Leadership

Appropriate  
Authority

Fewer Programs

Quieter  
Marketing

Less Production

Life Around the  
Table

***Questions?***