

Generation Alpha and environmental consciousness



In the research for [our latest book](#), the theme of Generation Alpha being an environmentally conscious generation came up numerous times. So how and why is this a key among this emerging generation of children?

Looking to their older Generation Z counterparts

We know that for Generation Z (Generation Alpha's older siblings) the environment is a key issue of concern. Many people (particularly Gen Z) began paying attention in 2018 when fifteen-year-old Greta Thunberg from Sweden began protesting outside the Swedish Parliament in place of going to school. Her small display of personal conviction had a ripple effect and ignited a global youth climate movement. In 2019 she was recognised as Time's 2019 Person of the Year and was the 2019 International Children's Peace Prize Winner.

According to Amnesty International’s survey of more than 10,000 people aged between eighteen and twenty-five, Gen Z rank climate change as the most important issue of our time, followed by pollution and terrorism.¹ This is the generation that Generation Alpha are looking up to, and they have formed movements and organisations that encourage people to take action. These kids care.

When asked about why younger generations are having such impacts, twenty-two-year-old Steph told us, ‘Our generation is living in a world that is more interconnected than ever. With our online communities, we share the realities of climate change at home and can see the reality of it further abroad. Seeing and sharing these realities motivates us to take action and think about what we can do to ensure a better planet for the future. The resources and education we have at our fingertips gives us a voice as a generation of activists, developing campaigns, initiatives and putting pressure on our governments to do more.’

Generation Alpha already making positive changes at home

Generation Alpha are being influenced by their environmentally conscious older Gen Z counterparts, and both emerging generations are using their voice to speak up on broader social issues - even at home. According to a survey we conducted of parents, 80 per cent said their child/ren have influenced their actions or consumption decisions, making them more environmentally aware. In addition to the influence of Gen Z on their concern for the environment, the products, toys, shows and entertainment that Generation Alpha engage with are also increasingly focusing on environmental issues, which is also having an impact on them.

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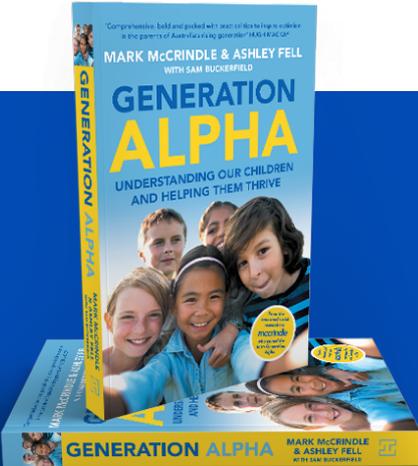
Monica Dreger, the former Head of Global Consumer Insights at Mattel, one of the world’s leading toy and children’s entertainment manufacturers, believes one of the greatest

strengths of Generation Alpha is that they have the belief and action to effect change. In an interview, she told us that she is seeing kids as young as seven or eight talking about environmental issues and what they can personally do, which she has never seen in a generation before. She said, 'Even though they didn't create this mess, they are still taking ownership of these issues that they wouldn't have in the past. Activism is part of their mentality of being able to do something about it, even something small. In my family, my kids are plant-based eaters, because they want to do their share for the environment. They would be mortified right now seeing me with a Starbucks cup, because it's not reusable! We are not allowed to do that anymore in our house and that is something that is really guided by the Generation Alphas.'

The challenge for Generation Alpha in a post-COVID-19 world will be living with hygiene protocols requiring single use and disposability, amid environmental concerns and a desire for reusability.

Generation Alpha
Understanding our children and helping them to thrive

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¹ 'Climate change ranks highest as vital issue of our time Generation Z survey', K. Naidoo, Amnesty International, 10 December 2019

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