

# Generation Beta

Redefining Life, Longevity,  
and Retirement



Prudential



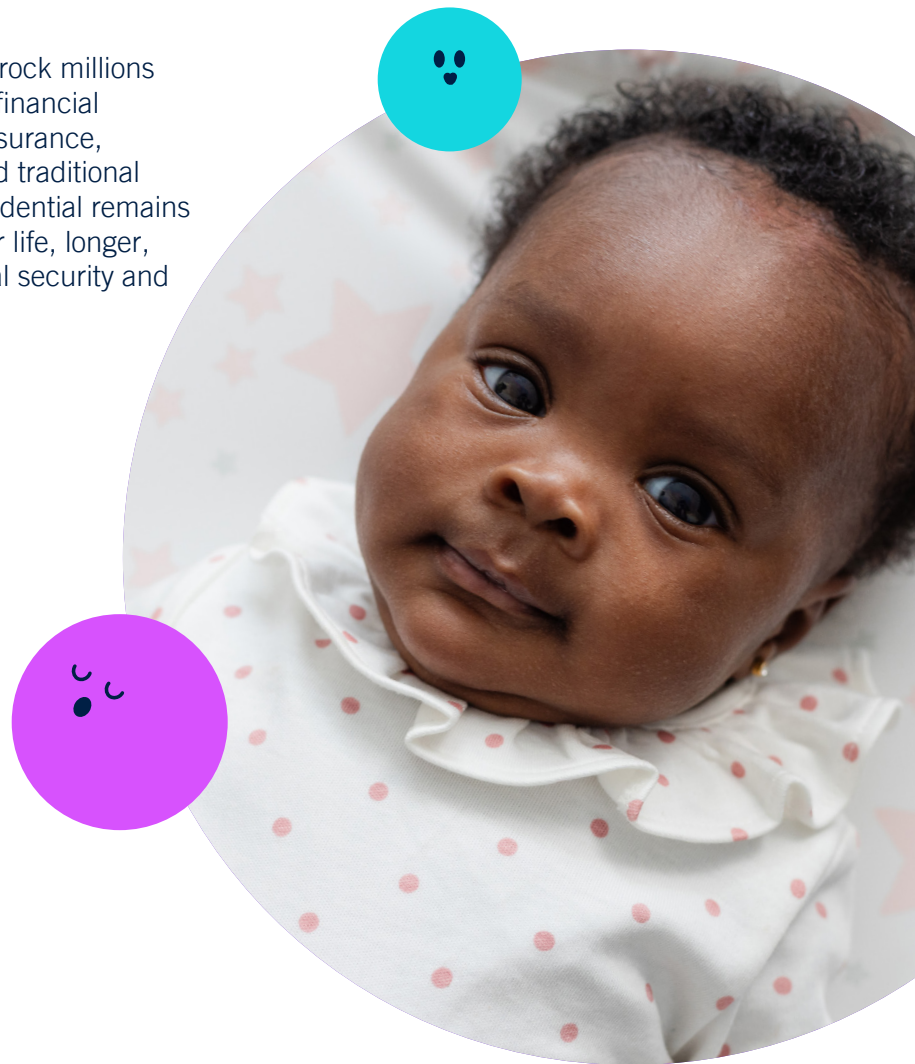
January 2025

# Executive Summary

Prudential's study, *Generation Beta: Redefining Life, Longevity, and Retirement*, sets the stage for a new generation beginning on January 1, 2025—Generation Beta. This pivotal moment marks the start of an era filled with boundless possibilities as well as considerations for how to help ensure the well-being and financial success of the next generation.

The study explores how Generation Beta (people born between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2039) will navigate a future shaped by groundbreaking technological innovations, evolving societal norms, and economic shifts. With the potential to live the longest lives of any generation, Generation Beta is poised to redefine life, longevity, and retirement in ways we can only begin to imagine.

For 150 years, Prudential has grown to become a rock millions have relied on to build financial security, creating financial opportunities by expanding access to investing, insurance, and retirement security. As longevity increases and traditional models of work, family, and retirement evolve, Prudential remains committed to helping every generation live a better life, longer, by protecting their life's work and building financial security and comfort that can last a lifetime.



# Key Findings

## 1 Life: Predictions for the Lives of Generation Beta

Generation Beta is poised to inhabit a world shaped by technological breakthroughs, evolving family structures, and shifting societal norms. Experts and respondents anticipate a future marked by flexibility, with predictions of more fluid work lives and family dynamics.

- **Technology:** People overwhelmingly agree that technology will define this generation; the majority see it as a force for good, with 58% predicting that tech will make their lives better. In many ways, tech could become an extension of humanity, with 54% believing that AI/robots will be able to empathize with humans in the future.
- **Family Dynamics:** Traditional family structures are expected to evolve, with 86% believing traditional nuclear families will not be the norm in the future. 68% believe that Generation Beta will have more pets than children, signaling a shift in priorities and one that will change the dynamics of retirement, financial solutions, and generational caregiving as we know it today.
- **Workplace Shifts:** How Generation Beta will work will look vastly different, with 80% expecting they will pursue more than three distinct career paths over their lifetime and 86% believing Generation Beta will have jobs that haven't been invented yet.

Generation Beta's future, shaped by technological breakthroughs and societal shifts, predicts transformative changes in education, work, healthcare, and family life. How this generation harnesses these possibilities will shape their lives and influence their paths to building future financial security.



# Key Findings

## 2 Longevity: Equipping Generation Beta for a New Era

With medical and technological advancements potentially extending life expectancy, Generation Beta will face opportunities and challenges tied to living longer lives over the coming decades.

- **Healthcare Innovation:** 51% believe that cancer will be cured by Generation Beta. However, only 4 in 10 think obesity—a persistent health issue—will be eradicated, highlighting some skepticism about the broader behavioral shifts required to support longer health spans as well as life spans.
- **Economic Uncertainty:** Despite optimism, financial instability looms. While 55% believe that Generation Beta will be wealthier than their parents, 61% also predict they will face more financial uncertainty.

Generation Beta faces longer life spans alongside environmental, social, and financial challenges. To set them up for success in this new era, prospective parents are focusing on equipping them with practical skills, empathy, and financial literacy, blending high-tech education with hands-on learning.



# Key Findings

3

## Retirement: Reimagining Retirement for a New Generation

For Generation Beta, retirement will be less about stepping away from work and more about embracing flexible, purpose-driven life phases.

- **Mini-Retirements:** 66% predict that in the future, retirement will be fluid as people will constantly go in and out of it. This is driven by longer life spans and evolving work patterns.
- **Financial Challenges:** 48% of parents and future parents think their children will never retire. The people surveyed also estimate that Generation Beta will need approximately \$1.88 million to sustain retirement but will struggle to be able to attain this.
- **Starting Earlier:** 80% of prospective Generation Beta parents agree that, in an ideal world, parents would start saving for their child's retirement from birth. In fact, the number one regret among current and prospective parents is that they "didn't save more for my retirement."

As traditional paradigms fade, Generation Beta's retirement is expected to emphasize flexibility and self-care, shifting from stepping away from work to embracing new life phases. Challenges like insufficient savings and older retirement ages highlight the need for innovative planning and beginning to build retirement savings as early as possible.

The start of a new generation—Generation Beta—represents an era filled with new possibilities, challenges, and opportunities. As we move into an era of unprecedented longevity and envision a generation that may not retire until the 2100s, Prudential's research aims to understand how to help Generation Beta live better lives, longer, right from the start.



# The Study



# Introduction

Prudential is a global leader in investment, insurance, and retirement security that helps millions of people around the world ensure they're able to live a better life, longer. In an ever-changing world, it's important that we continuously listen to understand changing customer needs and expectations—so that we can deliver innovative financial solutions that support future generations.

January 1, 2025, marks the start of a new generation—Generation Beta. This inflection point provides an interesting opportunity to think about the future lives of this brand-new generation. What will their family, healthcare, education, and working lives be like? What can we do today to ensure that these young people have better lives in the future? Countless research studies have shown that people tend to plan for their retirement too late. What would the world be like if we started thinking now about what retirement might look like for people born in 2025?

To answer these questions and many more, Prudential has undertaken a comprehensive research study that aims to understand what life might look like for this next generation—the possibilities, the opportunities, and the challenges they might face. While “Generation Beta” is

an informal label, following on from their predecessors “Generation Alpha” as a continuation of general Greek alphabet conventions, the name may well stick, as it reflects a future defined by continuous evolution. In fact, 79% of respondents agree that this generation will exist in a constant “beta” mode—a state of perpetual development.

While the naming of generations often evolves through cultural dialogue (other suggestions from the research included tech-oriented names like “Generation AI,” “Generation Robot,” and “Space Agers”), the name “Generation Beta” reflects a future where agility and resilience will be essential as shifting family structures, evolving education systems, transforming job markets, and reimagined retirement models redefine their world.

# 79%

agree that this generation will exist in a constant “beta” mode.

## This report is made up of 3 core chapters:

- 1** Life: Predictions for the Lives of Generation Beta
- 2** Longevity: Equipping Generation Beta for a New Era
- 3** Retirement: Reimagining Retirement for a New Generation

# Methodology

This study employed a multi-phased approach:

## Phase 1: Literature Review

An extensive review encompassing over 20 books, 100 industry reports and articles, and hours of TED Talks focused on future trends. This review provided insights into the potential future of Generation Beta across key areas, including family structure, education, housing, work, healthcare, economics, technology, and climate change.

## Phase 2: Expert Interviews

In-depth, one-hour interviews with a diverse range of experts across key fields to gather insights into the evolving landscape of Generation Beta's future. The experts were chosen from the following disciplines: Demography, Consumer Behavior Strategy, Sociology, Futurology, Economics, Education, AI Ethics, and Financial Services (from both within and outside of Prudential).

## Phase 3: Consumer Focus Groups

In-depth focus groups with parents, expectant parents, and grandparents from across America to discuss their views and opinions on Generation Beta.

## Phase 4: Quantitative Survey

A robust 25-minute nationally representative survey of 2,008 Americans with a focus on key audiences: Generation Alpha parents, prospective Generation Beta parents, grandparents, and child-free individuals.



# 01

Life: Predictions  
for the Lives of  
Generation Beta



# 1. Life: Predictions for the Lives of Generation Beta

It goes without saying that no one can predict the future. However, we can look at patterns in data and collective expectations to provide a glimpse into what the future may hold.

Experts and consumers alike were able to imagine new possibilities for Generation Beta, from the role of technology in their lives and upbringing to enhanced fluidity and flexibility of work and family to predicting developments in healthcare that are poised to transform the world we live in.

Some of these possibilities cause us to dramatically reimagine the future world Generation Beta will inhabit, with nearly half of people (47%) believing New York City and Los Angeles will be replaced as the largest cities in the United States, and 46% predicting that space travel will be the most popular vacation destination for Generation Beta. Where people will live, where they will travel to—we don't exactly know, but it sets the stage for the enormous possibilities of this generation.

**"I think Generation Beta is a possibility generation... there's a lot of possibility there that they will have access to tools and opportunities to create a world that looks very different than what we've ever seen and experienced before."**

**Kimberly Bryant, Educator,  
Founder of Black Girls Code**

## Technology as the defining force

Technology is a core topic that underpins many of the other themes in this research. This will be the defining force for Generation Beta (as evidenced, perhaps, by the fact that the number one prediction for naming the generation is "Generation AI").

While there is some complexity in our relationship with technology, the majority see it as a force for good, with 58% predicting that tech will make their lives better in various ways. Among Generation Beta parents, 78% believe their homes will have robots to help with household tasks and that their groceries will be delivered by drone.

In many ways, tech could become an extension of humanity, with 54% believing that AI/robots will be able to empathize with humans in the future.

**"The evolution of tech and education means our children will have more opportunities in the future than we have."**

**Man, 36,  
Current Parent**

As technology transforms Generation Beta's world, parents are asking, "How will we protect humanity?" Traits like emotional connection, empathy, and being present are seen as critical superpowers in a tech-driven future where 77% believe that the majority of interactions will happen virtually. As one respondent put it, *"We are humans, not robots."*

Creativity also emerges as a critical ingredient, with 36% of prospective Generation Beta parents viewing it as vital for the future, rivaling tech-savviness (34%). A grandparent noted, *"AI cannot duplicate a creative spark—it can fake it, but it won't be genuine."* Balancing technological innovation with human imagination may be Generation Beta's key to thriving in a digital world.

Education will also undergo a significant technology-driven transformation, with AI potentially playing a central role in shaping how children will learn in the future. 71% of prospective Generation Beta parents believe that AI will replace teachers in schools, while 78% expect AI to enable more personalized learning experiences. Parents envision a system where education

adapts to each child's strengths and interests, offering a tailored path to success. *"Choosing an interest earlier on will make it easier to focus and gain experience in what you want to pursue,"* noted one expectant parent, reflecting on the possibilities of AI-driven personalization. This shift will also redefine how education is delivered. An overwhelming 86% of prospective Generation Beta parents predict that much of their children's learning will take place through screens or virtual reality, replacing traditional classroom tools like textbooks and notebooks.

*"There are going to be virtual classrooms. Everyone will be home, but they'll be all together; you'll be an avatar, and you'll be in a classroom. They won't need the school or the space."*

**Man, 35,  
Expecting Parent**

*"It will be a lot more tech orientated. They don't teach handwriting in schools anymore because they all use computers. They'll learn how to work with AI; it will be technology-focused."*

**Woman, 56,  
Grandparent**

**78%**

expect AI to enable more personalized learning experiences.

This technological integration extends beyond tools, with 60% of parents of Generation Beta believing that AI will even play a role in raising children.

As education, work, and daily life become more tech-centric, preserving the values of empathy, imagination, and humanity will be more important than ever.

## Fluid and flexible families

Much of the data suggests that Generation Beta will lead increasingly fluid and flexible family lives as well.

# 86%

believe traditional nuclear families will not be the norm in the future.

**“The traditional family structure of a man and a woman getting married and having kids, that’s **not going to be the norm.**”**

**Dr. Sarah A. Soule, Sociologist at Stanford University**

The idea of what a family looks like is expanding—65% of Americans today believe that families can be of any shape and size. Regardless of whether your family is a biological one or more of a chosen family, many people think that family structures will change in the future.

Parents are finding creative ways to maintain connections and community for their children in an era of shrinking biological family units. As one parent explained, “My son doesn’t have much extended family, so we’re filling that hole with friends—our cousins are becoming aunts and uncles to our kids.”

This expanded idea of family is shaping predictions for the future. 86% believe traditional nuclear families will not stay the norm in the future, with 1 in 5 going as far as to say there will be no commonly accepted family structure. In fact, 68% of Gen Z respondents believe five generations will be living under the same roof by 2050. A parent in the study reflected, *“I think there’s going to be more living together than in the past—an ebb and flow of multi-generational living where family members move in and out of the household.”*

In this more inclusive era, many also expect societal norms around parenting to shift, particularly with Gen Z. 60% of Gen Z respondents predict that more men will take on stay-at-home parenting roles, with 55% of Gen Z parents believing parental leave will extend to at least 12 months and be government-recognized.

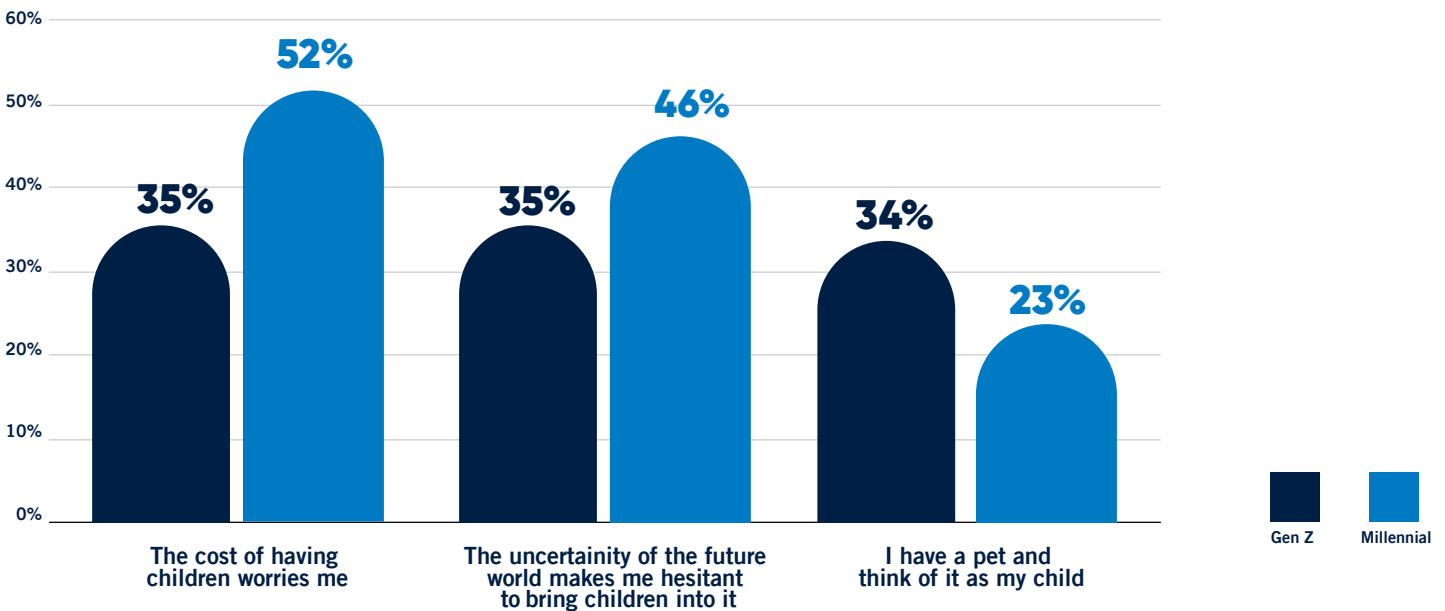
The decline of the one-size-fits-all family is not surprising, given that 25% of people say that they are considering not having or have decided not to have children in the future. Uncertainty about the future weighs heavily in their decision-making: 31% say the cost of having children worries them, and a further 30% hesitate to have kids due to global instability.

**“I have two kids that don’t even want to have kids because they don’t want to bring children into this world—that’s concerning to me.”**

**Woman, 64, Grandparent**

Generational differences highlight shifting priorities and motivations regarding having children. For Millennials, the cost of raising children (52%) and uncertainty about the future (46%) are the most significant concerns. While Gen Z also highlights financial challenges (35%) and future uncertainty (35%), they are less concerned overall compared to Millennials.

**You mentioned you are considering not having or have decided not to have children in the future. Have any of the following reasons factored into your decision/thought process?**



Interestingly, 34% of Gen Z view pets as an alternative to having children, suggesting a shift in lifestyle preferences. This trend raises broader implications. The prioritization of pets among Gen Z may reflect a predicted lack of disposable income needed to raise children, with pets seen as a more affordable and manageable alternative. However, this shift also suggests a potential challenge for Gen Z later in life, as fewer people having children could mean less family support for elder care and long-term financial assistance. This underscores the need for solutions tailored to child-free individuals, such as comprehensive plans for elder care and lifetime income that can enhance financial security.

## More flexible working lives

# 80%

expect they will pursue more than three distinct career paths over their lifetime.

Work for Generation Beta is expected to be more fluid and less structured, signaling a departure from the traditional 9-to-5 model. In fact, 74% of people believe Generation Beta will work fewer than five days a week, reflecting the growing expectation for flexible schedules driven by advancements in technology, remote work opportunities, and a focus on work-life balance. Additionally, 80% expect they will pursue more than three distinct career paths over their lifetime, and 72% predict they will change jobs more than 10 times.

# 86%

believe Gen Beta will have jobs that haven't been invented yet.

This shift mirrors changes already taking shape in the job market today. As one grandparent observed, "Over 100 years ago, you would be a farmer, but in the winter, you did the gig stuff in the 'off-season.' Now we're going back to that; my son-in-law is doing three different things because his main job doesn't pay him enough." The flexibility of the gig economy may reflect the future of work for Generation Beta, where traditional, single-track careers give way to multifaceted and dynamic paths.

The idea of lifelong, singular employment is becoming increasingly outdated. Kimberly Bryant, founder of Black Girls Code, captures this shift: "I don't see the next generation necessarily going to work for a traditional employer. I think those days of students finding their pathway in an office will be gone." Instead, Generation Beta is expected to focus on self-reliance, leveraging technology, and carving out diverse professional experiences that reflect their interests and ambitions.

**"I think there's going to be a lot more instability and change in people's work lives over their full working life."**

**Dr. Juliet Schor, Economist at Boston College**

In fact, 86% believe Generation Beta will have jobs that haven't been invented yet. Asked to predict future jobs for Generation Beta, the top three were Cyber Security, Climate Change Reversal Specialist, and Human-Tech Integration Specialist, aligning with some of the emerging global challenges highlighted later in this report. These fields highlight the growing importance of technology and sustainability in shaping the economy and workforce of tomorrow.

With less traditional stability from employers and more frequent career switching, we'll need to explore new ways to enhance financial security that align with evolving work models of the future.

## A healthcare revolution

The data reveals optimism about a personalized healthcare revolution that is potentially set to transform the lives of Generation Beta. 71% predict that Generation Beta will have individualized healthcare based on their DNA. The role of AI and robotics will likely accelerate, and 59% think AI and robots will be able to predict and prevent health issues before symptoms appear.

Respondents believe many of the things that interrupt and blight our health today will lessen or disappear. 51% believe that cancer will be cured by Generation Beta, and 52% anticipate advances in medicine eliminating the need for organ donors. However, only 4 in 10 think obesity—a persistent health issue—will be eradicated, highlighting some skepticism about the broader cultural and behavioral shifts required to achieve universal breakthroughs.

Experts caution that technology can only solve so much, with a continued need to focus on preventative care and the environment in which we live to ensure this becomes a reality in the future.

This focus on prevention aligns with the growing conversation about longevity. As Marisa Zalabak, AI ethicist and founder of Open Channel Culture, noted, “There’s a massive push for immortality... many are investing seriously in this idea of preserving life much longer.” While 58% of people would prefer a shorter but healthier life for themselves, 42% are drawn to the possibility of living longer, even with potential health challenges. Generational differences add nuance to this debate—Boomers emphasize vitality and health span, while younger generations view longevity as an opportunity for exploration, achievement, and new possibilities.

# 71%

predict that Gen Beta will have individualized healthcare based on their DNA.

# 59%

think AI and robots will be able to predict and prevent health issues before symptoms appear.

“When we think about aging, how people age generally comes down to three things. There are the genes, what you’re born with. There’s your environment, which is what you’re exposed to. And then there’s the choices that you make in terms of your life, your health choices.”

**Dr. Jennifer Schrack,**  
Director of the Center on Aging  
and Health at Johns Hopkins University

Survey responses also highlight the importance of cultural and societal shifts in fostering healthier futures. For instance, despite advancements in healthcare, 66% of people don't believe society will eliminate soda consumption due to cultural habits. Similarly, while 66% aspire to live to 85 years or older, nearly 90% worry their health will begin to decline before reaching that age, with 50% doubting they will make it at all.

Ultimately, achieving healthier, longer lives will depend on the balance between medical advancements and fostering cultural values and habits that prioritize health, sustainability, and prevention.



## Conclusion

Generation Beta's future, driven by technological breakthroughs and shifting societal norms, promises transformative changes in education, work, healthcare, and family life. AI will potentially enable personalized learning and healthcare, while flexible career paths and diverse family structures will redefine traditional models. Creativity and emotional intelligence will be critical for balancing innovation with humanity. How this generation harnesses these unprecedented possibilities could shape not only their lives but the future of the world.





# 02

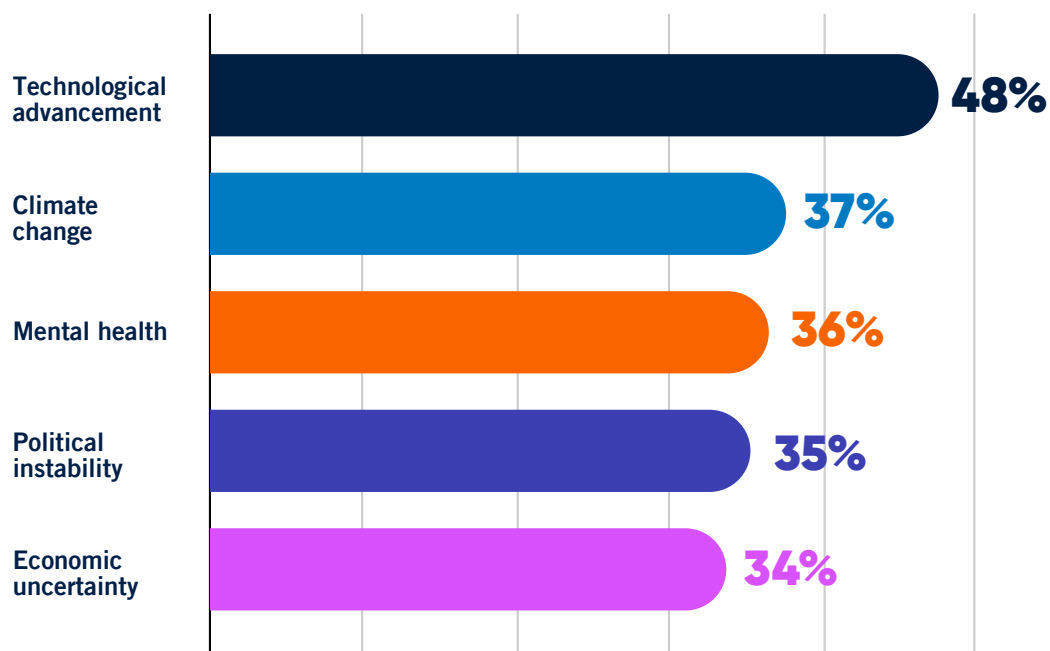
Longevity: Equipping  
Generation Beta  
for a New Era



## 2. Longevity: Equipping Generation Beta for a New Era

Despite optimistic predictions, collective anxieties loom about the forces shaping the lives of Generation Beta.

Looking to the future, people predict that technological advancements (48%), climate change (37%), mental health issues (36%), political instability (35%), and economic uncertainty (34%) will have the greatest impact on Generation Beta.



These challenges—and the opportunities they present—raise critical questions about how parents and society can better equip Generation Beta to thrive in a new era of converging disruptions. From tackling climate change and fostering social connection to navigating economic uncertainty, the path forward will require new tools, knowledge, and resilience to prepare them for the complexities ahead.

## Climate and the environment

There is a lot of hope around the potential for the future of our planet: 61% believe renewable energy will replace fossil fuels by 2050, and 53% expect lab-grown food to replace traditional farming. At the same time, climate change is expected to be one of the most defining and disruptive forces in Generation Beta's life. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation will reshape where and how they live.

One grandparent voiced their concern: *"I think warmer temperatures and extreme weather are going to get worse if we don't find solutions."* A current parent echoed this, lamenting, *"In 70 years, I don't think our children will enjoy the same type of nature we're enjoying now."*

These challenges will not only test Generation Beta's adaptability but also influence migration patterns, housing markets, and even retirement planning. Accommodating these potential realities will require rethinking how communities are built and sustained in the face of environmental uncertainty.

The balance of hope and fear underscores the urgency of equipping Generation Beta with the tools, knowledge, and resources to navigate a rapidly changing planet. Grandparents see themselves as stewards of wisdom, emphasizing the importance of teaching self-sufficiency and sustainable practices.

**"It's important children know how to grow food and be self-sufficient. They'll need these skills to live sustainably."**

**Woman, 46,  
Grandparent**

# 61%

believe renewable energy will replace fossil fuels by 2050.

# 53%

expect lab-grown food to replace traditional farming.

## Loneliness and social isolation

While technology is seen as a generally positive force (58% believe that technology will make Generation Beta's life better), it also raises concerns about loneliness and social isolation. 66% percent of people believe that Generation Beta families will grow more distant as technology and modern lifestyles reduce meaningful in-person interactions.

The integration of automation into daily life compounds these concerns. By 2050, 75% believe fast food drive-thrus will no longer have human workers, and drones will deliver groceries, contributing to a more isolated and automated society.

One expectant parent worries that automation and digital conveniences could exacerbate these issues, noting, "Everything will be automated, but it will be negative because they will lose abilities like socializing with people and communicating with people." This highlights the potential for social isolation not just in family dynamics but also in work and community life. Indeed, the research revealed that "mental health" is believed to be one of the top three factors expected to have the greatest impact on Generation Beta's life. Addressing these challenges will require intentional efforts to foster human connection and ensure that the social costs of technological advancement do not outweigh its benefits.

# 58%

believe that technology will make Gen Beta's life better.

# 66%

believe that Gen Beta families will grow more distant.

## Economic and financial instability

**Financial uncertainty is another pressing concern, especially for a generation of parents shaped by the Great Recession.**

While 55% believe that Generation Beta will be wealthier than their parents, 61% also predict they will face more financial uncertainty. 60% even believe that the government will stop printing cash because Generation Beta won't use it, highlighting the potential for seismic changes in financial systems. Economist Dr. Juliet Schor noted that while a stable monetary system is possible, *"the value of any particular asset, like land, 20 or 30 years from now is uncertain."*

The future of financial security remains in question, with social safety nets under strain: "Social security is going to be gone by the time we age into it," predicted one

parent. In fact, 72% believe the government will raise the minimum retirement age to 75 years old, making it necessary for most people to continue working until they are much older.

These findings underscore the critical importance financial preparedness will play in the lives of Generation Beta, including starting early to build personal savings and robust retirement planning, as future generations navigate a rapidly evolving and potentially unstable economy.

# Renewed practical focus

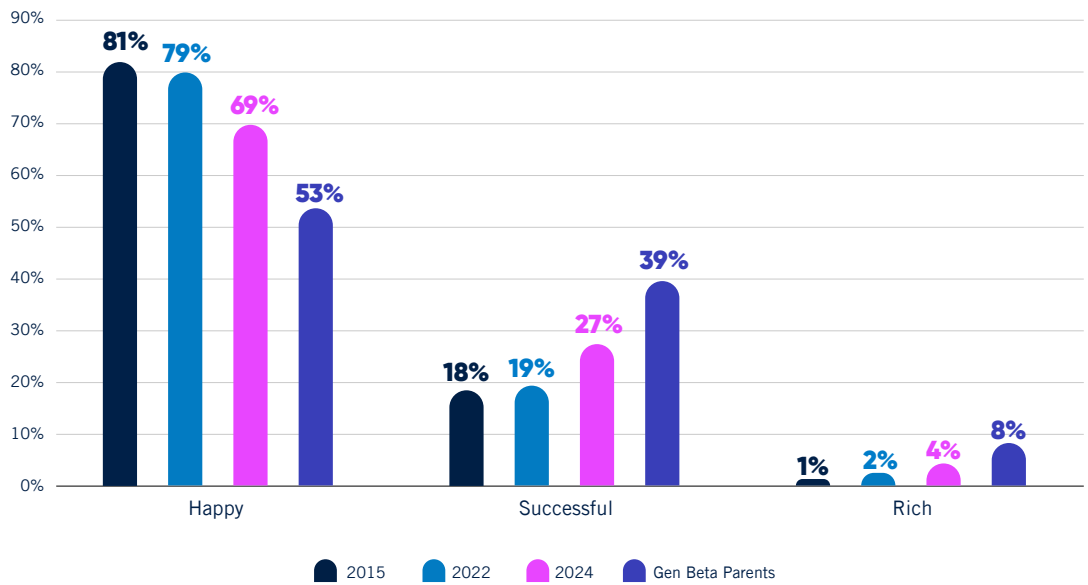
# 82%

are already planning their child's education.

Raising Generation Beta comes with a heightened focus on preparing them for the complexities of an ever-changing world.

Determined not to repeat the financial challenges of the past, prospective Generation Beta parents are taking proactive steps to secure their children's futures. A striking 82% are already planning their child's education, and the same percentage are considering where their children will attend college. For these parents, education is seen as a cornerstone of opportunity, with 91% agreeing that a good education is one of the most valuable gifts they can provide.

**If your children could only be one, is it more important for them to be happy, rich, or successful?**



The data shows a significant shift among prospective Generation Beta parents, with 39% prioritizing their children's "Success" over "Happiness," a big departure from the last decade of parents' emphasis on "Happiness" as the top priority. Which begs the question, does this mark the end of the "everyone gets a trophy" era?

**"Generation Beta is going to be adapting to the world much quicker than we've ever seen. That's why the resiliency and adaptability that they're bringing is going to be one of their major skills because they're going to need it."**

**Ana Flores, Consumer Behavior Strategist,  
Founder of WeAllGrowLatina**

What will education look like in the future? On the one hand, education will be more high-tech than ever. However, people also predict a return to hands-on, practical, and skills-based learning. Recognizing the evolving nature of work and skills needed for the future, 81% believe that trade schools will make a comeback, ensuring that children have practical skills for an uncertain world. In fact, 85% of prospective Generation Beta parents believe education will prioritize problem-solving skills to prepare Generation Beta for challenges that don't exist yet.

Despite the strong emphasis on tech-driven education, it would be too harsh to suggest that parents are losing focus on the practical power of human values and empathy. On the softer side of education, 75% believe kids will need to have more time to play and experiment in schools.

When we asked parents and prospective parents the top two lessons they would want their children, grandchildren, or other loved ones to learn, they said:

# 31%

## Treat others with kindness and respect

"I hope that one skill isn't lost in the future is empathy towards others. On social media and TikTok, when you can scroll all the time, you lose empathy for people because you get mass information constantly. You feel like, 'Oh, another thing happened in the world.' I hope for my child that, just because there's a lot of stuff happening, if someone talks to you about something, you can empathize with them."

**Woman, 27, Parent**

# 26%

## Cherish family and nurture those relationships

"I hope that they can own their own home and be financially successful, but I'll teach them more about being successful in their community, and it centers around people."

**Man, 30, Current Parent**

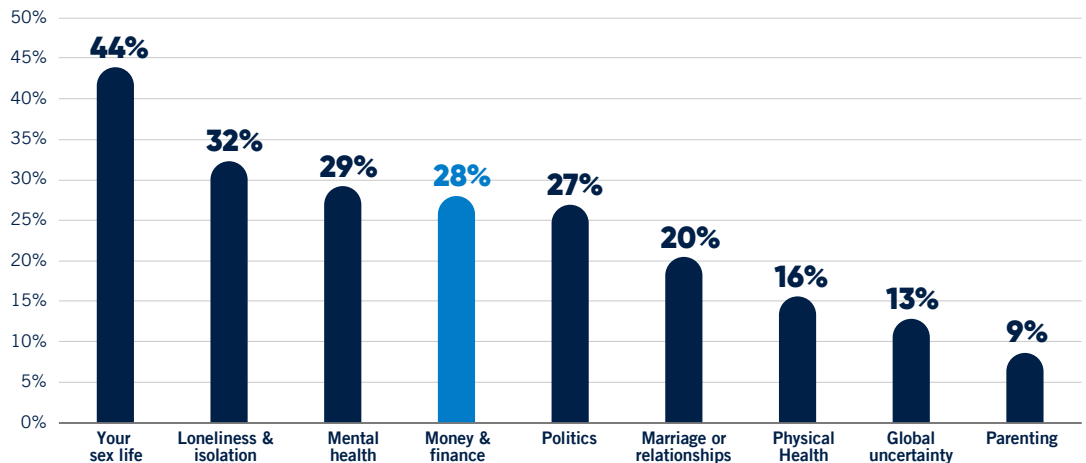
As education evolves to balance advanced technology with practical skills, the challenge will be to create a system that not only equips Generation Beta for the demands of an uncertain future but also instills the core values needed to foster meaningful connections and community.

## Money hurts

Money has become one of the most emotionally charged topics of our time—fueling stress, straining relationships, and shaping self-worth in ways we often hesitate to admit. For many, this stress is deeply personal, with 39% saying money keeps them up at night—a figure that rises to 54% among 18- to 24-year-olds.

Discussions about money reveal stark gender differences. Women are more likely to view “not saving” as a major relationship red flag (45% of women vs. 33% of men), yet they find it harder to discuss finances compared to men. For many couples, money is a frequent source of conflict, with 39% admitting they’ve had more fights about money than any other topic. This figure rises to 65% among Generation Beta parents. In fact, 28% of people say talking about money is just as hard as discussing mental health and even harder than broaching political conversations.

### Which of the below do you find difficult to talk about?



Changing social dynamics around money are fueling what some call “money dysmorphia,” a distorted perception of financial well-being shaped by overexposure to wealth and ambition online. Social media has created unrealistic benchmarks, with 85% agreeing that everyone looks richer on social media than they are in real life. This distortion is especially pronounced among younger people, as 57% of 18- to 24-year-olds believe their friends are richer than they are, compared to 39% of people overall.

## Financial preparedness

**The pervasive emotional impact of money in people's lives has, in turn, created a demand for better financial education and preparedness in the future.**

With 82% of people thinking today's schools don't adequately prepare students for a rapidly changing financial landscape, there's a strong push to prioritize financial education in schools. It's the number one subject current and future parents think Generation Beta should learn, outranking even high-profile subjects like AI and climate solutions.

To equip Generation Beta for the future, families must break taboos around money by fostering open dialogue and teaching essential financial skills at home. As Joe Saul-Sehy, financial advisor and creator of the "Stacking Benjamins" podcast, noted, *"Believing that we can't teach our kids about money because we're not perfect with it is something we need to put out of our minds."* By normalizing discussions about money, families can build a foundation of confidence and resilience that will help Generation Beta navigate the challenges of an increasingly complex financial landscape.

**"I think personal finance is going to be something that people will demand in the public school system, and over time people will continue to demand better and better financial education in schools."**

**Joe Saul-Sehy,  
Financial Advisor, Creator of  
"Stacking Benjamins" Podcast**

## Starting early

**Perhaps one of the reasons that financial education is such a top priority for prospective Generation Beta parents is that it's shaped by their regrets about not saving earlier.**

The number one regret among these parents is "not saving more for retirement," with 70% wishing they had started earlier. This regret outweighs other common reflections, such as not spending enough time with loved ones, prioritizing health, or pursuing personal passions.

The importance of starting earlier is further highlighted in real-life stories. One parent shared, *"I am teaching my kids to start saving earlier than I did."* Another noted, *"Definitely saving and investing early, and having a what-if fund, because you never know, the job can get rid of you at any second, and then what do you have to fall back on?"*

# 70%

wish they had started saving earlier.



Determined to avoid repeating their mistakes, this new generation of parents is taking a proactive approach to securing their children's financial futures. A notable 80% of prospective Generation Beta parents agree that, in an ideal world, parents would begin saving for their child's retirement from birth, opting for vehicles designed to provide long-term income. Given the opportunity, the average amount parents and grandparents say they would be willing to invest in a retirement account at birth is \$3,143.

Parents also recognize the value of teaching their children about financial responsibility early on. When we asked parents what would motivate them to open a retirement fund for their children, the number one answer was "teaching my child financial responsibility." In fact, 62% believe that one of the most important things they can teach their children is managing money and finances. As one grandparent noted, *"Teach them the value of money and saving money. I grew up with a 401(k) and investments, but with job hopping and living in the moment, I keep saying, 'You're going to have to play catch-up.' My job is teaching them about money."*

**"Start early. That's the key, and you can't start early enough in terms of putting money aside to support whatever it is you know you want to invest in."**

**Lata Reddy,  
Senior Vice President, Inclusive Solutions  
at Prudential Financial, and Chair  
of The Prudential Foundation**

With growing awareness of the importance of early saving, these parents are reimagining financial security—not merely as a reaction to past challenges but as a proactive, generational shift toward equipping Generation Beta with the tools, habits, and resources necessary to navigate an increasingly uncertain economic future.

**62%**

believe one of the most important things they can teach their children is managing money and finances.



of Gen Beta parents agree that, in an ideal world, parents would begin saving for their child's retirement from birth.

# The values of a new generation

As Generation Beta faces these multifaceted challenges, the values instilled by their parents will play a critical role in shaping their approach to the future. These traits and values, influenced by Millennials and Gen Z, are anticipated to define how this generation navigates a rapidly evolving world.

Generational researchers will often come to associate a particular set of values or characteristics with a generation. It's impossible to fully know who Generation Beta will become as they grow up, but it's interesting to explore what people anticipate that they will be like.

Predictions for Generation Beta reveal a mix of optimism and caution. They are expected to be more innovative (29%), creative (27%), and adaptable (23%) than previous generations. However, people also foresee that they will suffer from a greater overdependence on technology (53%), entitlement (36%), and materialism (28%).

These traits will likely be shaped by their parents—primarily Millennials and Gen Z—whose experiences with technology, social movements, and global crises (e.g. 9/11, the Great Recession, COVID-19) have instilled values of inclusivity, adaptability, and social responsibility<sup>1</sup>, often tempered by anxiety about the future.

As Generation Beta develops their identity, understanding and nurturing their potential for creativity, adaptability, and innovation will be crucial in helping them address future challenges.

**“They won’t have the advantage I had of being a ‘90s kid. There’s a paranoia, afraid to go full blast on anything unless hiding behind a screen and an avatar.”**

**Man, 35,  
Expecting Parent**

## Conclusion

Though Generation Beta faces the prospect of longer life spans, largely due to medical and technological advancements, environmental, social, and financial challenges loom large. Especially among prospective Generation Beta parents, there’s a renewed focus on equipping Generation Beta with practical skills, empathy, and financial literacy to navigate uncertainties ahead. They are preparing proactively, anticipating the need to blend high-tech education with hands-on learning and fostering resilience through open dialogue.



<sup>1</sup> Deloitte (2024). *Deloitte 2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey*. Deloitte. <https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-shared/docs/campaigns/2024/deloitte-2024-gen-z-millennial-survey.pdf?dlva=1w>

# 03

Retirement:  
Reimagining Retirement  
for a New Generation



# 3. Retirement: Reimagining Retirement for a New Generation

Retirement, as we know it today, may become a relic of the past for Generation Beta—83% of people believe that retirement will “look completely different” for Generation Beta, and a further 57% of people believe many current financial products were designed for the past, not the present or future, highlighting the need for innovation and forward-looking solutions.

**83%**

believe that retirement will look completely different.

## Retirement today marks a new forward-looking chapter

Retirement for people today marks the beginning of a new chapter filled with promise rather than just the final stretch of someone’s journey.

82% are looking forward to life after retirement, and 72% say retirement is about looking forward and making new memories as opposed to looking back and remembering a life well lived. Additionally, 70% believe that for Generation Beta, retirement will last longer and people will be healthier into old age, reflecting an optimistic view of how extended life spans might shape future retirement experiences.

When we ask people if they could come up with a new name for retirement, we received many that have the potential to redefine our perception of what retirement could look like. Here are some of our favorites: “reirement,” “delayed gratification,” and “freedom unlimited.”



believe that for Gen Beta, retirement will last longer and people will be healthier into old age.

## Retirement as self-care

In this context, the concept of “me-retirement”—a flexible, self-care-focused retirement—has gained traction among today’s parents. The majority (61%) believe that retirement should be a time to focus on oneself, as opposed to focusing on others and supporting one’s family.

In line with this perspective, 55% believe retirement is about spending all the money you’ve made in your life, as opposed to saving money for the next generation to inherit. One grandparent shared, “[Generation Beta] is supposed to be self-sufficient. My ex-husband’s parents saved every dime for him—that’s their whole life’s savings—but when you factor in inflation, it’s not a lot of money.” This sentiment underscores the increasing expectation for future generations to take charge of their financial independence.

However, this self-focused approach to retirement doesn’t preclude hopes for intergenerational success. As one grandparent explained, “This will be my fourth grandchild; Papa can only do so much! My sons have good heads on their shoulders, and I’m hoping they do good by their kids.” This highlights a balance between self-prioritization and ensuring the next generation is equipped to thrive financially.

## A more fluid retirement than ever

In anticipation of many more working years in the future, people believe there’s potential for retirement to evolve into a more flexible and dynamic concept: **67% say retirement can happen at different stages throughout your life, as opposed to only happening once later in life.**

This reflects a growing preference for “mini-retirements,” where individuals take breaks or pivot to new opportunities at various points in their careers. Supporting this shift, 66% believe it’s likely that by 2050, 40 years before Generation Beta is set to turn 65, retirement will be fluid as people will constantly go in and out of it.

This growing demand for flexibility is also influencing financial planning. 82% predict that Generation Beta will expect much more adaptable and personalized retirement products.

# 55%

believe retirement is about spending all the money you’ve made in your life.

**“Retirement will be a thing of the past. People can go on vacation whenever they want, so they won’t wait until they’re retired.”**

**Woman, 25  
Expecting Parent**

Financial independence and purpose will likely redefine how Generation Beta approaches retirement. Joe Saul-Sehy explains, “This idea of ‘I’m retiring’ versus ‘I’m starting a new phase of life,’ coupled with the fact that people are starting a new job every 4.2 years, begins to crush the idea of normal retirement. For Generation Beta, it’s going to be more of what really lights my fire.”

As retirement becomes less about stepping away from work and more about embracing new phases of life, future generations will prioritize purpose-driven experiences and financial flexibility. This transformation suggests that retirement planning will also need to adapt, offering innovative solutions to meet these evolving expectations.

“Nearly all of us hope to live better lives, longer. Spending a moment today to imagine our future selves and take a small step or two to care for them is key to success. We are focused on reimagining the next generation of financial tools designed to protect the life’s work of those we serve.”

**Dylan Tyson,**  
President of Retirement  
Strategies at Prudential

## Retirement preparedness is a concern

Among the top challenges predicted for Generation Beta in saving for retirement are the rising cost of living (38%), an unstable economy (29%), high healthcare costs (28%), savings losing value due to inflation (26%), and the impacts of automation and AI displacing millions of jobs (24%). Additionally, 24% highlight longevity as a key challenge, with longer life spans requiring more extensive retirement savings.

In this context, retirement preparedness for future generations remains a significant concern, with 55% believing Generation Beta will struggle to save enough for a secure retirement and 58% of current and prospective Generation Beta parents doubting that their children will ever retire. Most people today expect to live until 81 but anticipate their retirement savings will run out by age 75, leaving a troubling 6-year savings gap.

Respondents predict that Generation Beta will need approximately \$1.88 million to sustain retirement, yet they acknowledge a \$700,000 shortfall in what they believe they will realistically be able to save. Concerns are even more pronounced among older generations, with many predicting that Generation Beta will need over \$5 million to retire securely.

“For many Americans moving forward, the idea of a retirement where I stop working, I go to the beach, I play golf every day... A lot of us are not going to be able to afford it. What is the second or third career that produces a modest income and occupies us creatively as we hit our 70s and 80s?”

**Paco Underhill,**  
Consumer Behavior Strategist,  
Founder of Envirosell



**\$700K short**



**6-year  
savings gap**

Some parents and grandparents worry about future financial challenges, while others see opportunities for adaptation. As one expectant parent remarked, *“I hope they’re retired by 70, but because of tech and healthcare, they might want to keep working. They might have a lot more time left at 70.”* Another parent emphasized the importance of teaching long-term thinking, saying, *“They will have to fight instant gratification and think more long term—that’s a big key to their financial success.”*

Adding to this challenge, 16% of respondents say they have yet to start saving for retirement, rising to 47% among low-income adults. These figures underscore the need to help people of both future and current generations find financial security in retirement.

The looming gap between rising retirement costs and limited savings underscores the need for early financial education, innovative retirement strategies, and adaptable work models to ensure that Generation Beta is equipped to navigate the realities of a longer, more financially demanding future.

## Protecting their life’s work

For many grandparents and parents, leaving a legacy for Generation Beta goes beyond monetary wealth.

For many grandparents and parents, leaving a legacy for Generation Beta goes beyond monetary wealth. Instead, it is about passing down values, traditions, and meaningful life lessons. This evolving definition of one’s “life’s work” prioritizes emotional legacies and family connections over material possessions. When asked to imagine postcards for their Generation Beta descendants to read on their 70th birthdays, participants shared messages emphasizing relationships, curiosity, and the importance of living a fulfilling life. One such note captured the sentiment: “Dear future grandchild: It’s not about material possessions or ‘likes.’ It’s about experiences and relationships.”

Parents and grandparents wrote a postcard to the future for their child/grandchild to read on their 70th birthday...

The complex block contains four circular callouts, each with a unique color and a small smiley face icon. Each callout contains a quote and a label. The top-left callout is dark blue with a green smiley face icon. The top-right callout is purple with an orange smiley face icon. The bottom-left callout is pink with a blue smiley face icon. The bottom-right callout is cyan with a purple smiley face icon.

**Grandparent**

“My biggest hope as you are baking on the way to being born is that at your 70th birthday you can look back and know that you were loved and supported in life from the moment you were born, and that family bond and love has been passed down to your kids, and your grandchildren as well. A legacy of family support and love.”

**Expectant Parent**

“It’s not about material possessions, or ‘likes,’ or glorifying ‘the grind.’ It’s about experiences and relationships... and probably some good food. Keep that in mind.”

**Expectant Parent**

“Happy birthday to my little old blessing! So proud of your journey and experiences thus far. Hoping you remain happy and amazing, and remember—you are never too old to be present, create new experiences, and dream a new dream.”

**Expectant Parent**

“I hope life has been an amazing journey where you learned many things and took on different opportunities. Enjoy every moment of your life and have fun every day! Take care of your mom ALWAYS!”

Beyond values, respondents highlighted Generation Beta’s potential to accelerate transformative changes in the future, from addressing global challenges—44% believe Generation Beta will solve climate change—to redefining family dynamics, with 68% predicting Generation Beta will have more pets than children. While 60% anticipate Generation Beta will spend less time with their kids due to later parenthood, the next generation is expected to redefine connections and legacy-building in innovative ways, shaping a future aligned with evolving priorities and technologies.

68%

believe Gen Beta will have more pets than children.

44%

believe Gen Beta will solve climate change.

## Conclusion

As traditional paradigms fade, Generation Beta faces a potential retirement defined by fluidity, self-care, and adaptability. With retirement evolving into “mini-retirements” and purpose-driven experiences, the emphasis is shifting from stepping away from work to embracing new phases of life. Yet challenges like insufficient savings and a later retirement age underscore the need for innovative planning and products. Beyond financial considerations, emotional ties and meaningful pursuits are emerging as key priorities. Families must adapt to empower Generation Beta with tools to redefine success and secure a fulfilling retirement.





# Conclusion

Generation Beta will likely face both unprecedented challenges and opportunities, navigating a world marked by constant change and evolving life milestones. Yet they stand poised as a “possibility generation,” uniquely equipped to innovate, adapt, and redefine what success and fulfillment mean in a rapidly transforming world. As traditional markers like starting a family and retirement shift, the need for flexible and adaptive financial planning, education, and tools will be critical.

While people believe the responsibility for financial stability ultimately lies with individuals and families, they also believe that financial services companies have a transformative power to bring about positive change: 81% believe that financial services companies have the power to change the financial system for future generations.

To better equip themselves to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future, Americans are looking for guidance and education on the realities of longevity and retirement, products that offer flexibility to meet changing and evolving needs, and more holistic wellness solutions that will ensure not just their financial wellness but also their physical and mental well-being.

**Visit [prudential.com](https://www.prudential.com) to learn more or find a local financial professional.**



81%

believe that financial services companies have the power to change the financial system for future generations.

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Founded in 2011, MW Truth Central is McCann Worldgroup's brand intelligence unit dedicated to unearthing the macro-level truths that drive people's attitudes and behaviors about life, brands, and marketing. MW Truth Central has over 56 million proprietary data points and is our revolutionary resource, turbocharging our ability to understand humans around the world.

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