About this presentation...

Children and teenagers are amazingly complex creatures. They are influenced by family, faith, culture, peers, teachers, as well as the temperaments they are born with.

The generational aspect is just one piece of the puzzle in understanding our youth.
- Henry Doenlen, M.D.

Parenting the Millennial Generation

Presented by:
Henry A. Doenlen, M.D.
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To all of the children and teenagers who have allowed me to understand their thoughts, feelings, and lives.

About Dr. Doenlen:

Henry Doenlen, M.D. is board certified in Forensic Psychiatry, General Psychiatry, and Child-Adolescent Psychiatry. Dr. Doenlen's practice is focused on providing mental health care for children, adolescents, and their families. He provides psychiatric evaluations and expert testimony for use by the courts and legal system. His writing has been published in professional journals and community periodicals, and he has given numerous lectures and seminars for physicians and community groups. Dr. Doenlen is also a partner of Psychological Associates, P.A.

Today's Presentation

- Millennials amongst us.
  - What is their place in the history?
  - What do we know about them?
- Growing Millennials.
  - How do we grow them?
  - How do they grow?
- Living with Millennials.
  - How can parents relate to Millennials?
  - How can Millennials relate to parents?

Objectives (for continuing education)

- Learn about the differences between the Millennial Generation and prior generations.
- Explore developmental factors involved in Millennial youth
- Understand the intellectual and emotional changes that occur at specific ages
- Adapt to the different way of communication and parenting needed to raise a Millennial child.
I ❤ Millennials

Meet the next great American generation.

Generations within Social Movements

■ A Movement (usually) has 4 generations
  1. **Awakening** – passionate spiritual (Prophet)
     ■ Social order comes under attack by new values.
  2. **Unraveling** – less protected (Nomad)
     ■ Strengthening individualism and weak institutions.
  3. **Crises** – decisive in solving crises (Hero)
     ■ Old social order replaced with a new one.
  4. **High** – overprotected (Artist)
     ■ Strengthening institutions and weak individualism.

The Fourth Turning, Strauss and Howe, 1997

Modern Day Generations

■ Great Power Movement – Late 1860-1942
  - 1860-1882 **Missionary** (Awakening)
    ■ Darwinism debate, gay 90’s
    ■ Literary, educated, evangelical, women’s suffrage.
  - 1883-1900 **Lost** (Unraveling)
    ■ WW1, 1918 flu, roaring 20’s, great depression
    ■ Class differences, prohibition, drugs, gangs, wasteful.
  - 1901-1924 **G.I.** (Crises)
    ■ WW2, America becomes a world power
    ■ Mobilizing, pushy, optimistic, group-oriented
  - 1925-1942 **Silent** (High)
    ■ Korean War, bureaucracy
    ■ Refinement, sensitivity, conformity

Generations, Strauss and Howe, 1991

Millennial Generations

■ Millennial Movement 1943-2029?
  - 1943-1960 **Boomer** (Awakening)
    ■ Cultural revolution, Vietnam War.
    ■ Rebellious, judgmental, spiritualistic, humanistic.
  - 1961-1981 **Generation-X** (Unraveling)
    ■ Gulf Wars, technology boom, capitalist ventures.
    ■ Free agents, self-reliant, pragmatic, entrepreneurship.
  - 1982-2003? **Millennial** (Crises)
    ■ Solve a yet undefined crises, in their own way.
    ■ Intelligent, motivated, connected, group-oriented.
  - 2004?-2029? **15TH Generation*** (High)
    ■ Prosperity, globalization, environmentalism.

*added by Doenlen.

Millennials Rising, Howe and Strauss, 2000

Parenting the Millennial Generation, copyright 2006, Henry Doenlen, M.D.
Who are the “Millennials”?

- **Boomlet** born between 1982 and 2002.
  - 3.3 million births per year during 1970-1980.
  - 3.9 million births per year during 1990-2000.
- **Class of 2000**
  - First high school graduates.
  - Growing up during the exuberant 1990’s.
- **Personality**: motivated, hard-working, indulged, group-oriented, connected
- **Issues**: competition, environment, terrorism

**What crises will they solve?**
The Statistics Are In!
How the Millennial Generation Measures Up

% ever using marijuana declining with the Millennials.

% ever using cocaine declining with the Millennials.

% ever using alcohol still a problem over the last 15 years
U.S. Center for Disease Control

% ever using inhalants declining over the past decade.

Decline in % seriously considering suicide (during the past year).

Decline in % in a physical fight (during the past year).

Ascendancy of Females
- Advanced Placement: M 11.7% < F 14.5%
- High School Dropouts: M 11.3% > F 8.4%
  - National Center for Education Statistics 2004
- Rise of the female hero.
  - Kill Bill, Underworld, Penguins

Gender and Education
17 year olds proficient in:
- Reading: M 74% < F 86%
- Writing: M 14% < F 33%
- Mathematics: M 60% > F 56%
- Geography: M 28% > F 21%
- U.S History: M 12% > F 10%
  - National Center for Education Statistics 2004

Dudes, Dudettes, and Dating
- Girls pursuing boys
  - Not limited to Millennials
  - Competition amongst girls
  - Unreliable boys
    - Easily stolen by another girl.
- Relationship and sexual morals
  - Wait for love, not marriage
  - Cautious about diseases

Slight decline in % ever having sexual intercourse.

Slight increase in % using condom during last sexual intercourse.

Decline in % have been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant.
Growing Millennials
Building the perfect child, the American way

Infant Nutrition
- Prenatal Nutrition
  - Prenatal vitamins
  - CDC Pregnancy Nutrition Surveillance
  - since 1979
- Increase in Breast Feeding
  - Increased education, support, funding
    - Improved mother nutrition
    - 7 CFR 246
- Improved Baby Formula

Increased Breast Feeding

![Breastfeeding and bottle feeding at birth, 1900 to 1998: Mirror trends](image)


Improvements in Baby Formulas
- Nestle boycott of 1977
  - Allegations of poor quality control.
  - Overly aggressive marketing in poor countries
- Infant Formula Act of 1980 (revised 1985)
  - 21 CFR 106 and 107
  - Required testing, labeling, quality control
  - Minimized bacteria and contaminants
  - Nutrients
    - Vitamins A, B₆, B₁₂, C, D, E, K, Niacin, Thiamine, Riboflavin, Folic Acid, Pantothenic Acid, Biotin
    - Chloride, Phosphorus, Selenium, Other Minerals
Early Brain Growth
age 3 months to 24 months

“"It Takes a Village”

- Government concerns and initiatives.
  - Car seats, bicycle helmets.
- Mass Media Culture.
  - Sexual, mystical (Harry Potter).
  - TV watching slightly decreased, Internet increased.
    - 4th grade TV hours/day - 3.3 in yr. 1992, to 3.0 in yr. 2000.
- Consumerism – “I want” generation.
  - Direct advertising to children and teens.
- Law Enforcement.
  - Wasn’t illegal when boomers were teens.
    - Fighting, Saying the “B” word.

Doting Parents

- Older boomers having babies.
- Parenting becoming a primary identity.
  - My name is ____, and I am my kid’s mom.
  - Desire to raise children with more opportunities and a better relationship
  - Efforts to increase “quality time”.
- Single parents, dual income parents.
  - Increased used of day and after-school care.
  - Children worry about parent’s financial stress.

Generational Rebellion

- A generation rebels against the generation that raised them.
- Boomers (age 43-63) seen as hypocrites.
  - Dishonesty in government, business.
    - Talking heads on TV shouting above one another.
  - “Do as I say, not as I did.”
    - "I’m lot letting you do what I did as a teen because I want you to learn from my mistakes.”

Technology

- Importance of Information
- Communication
  - Cell phone, Chat, Blogs (MySpace, LiveJournal)
- Internet – information, products, email
- Computers – word processing, games
- Music Choice
  - Radio music vs. non-popular (MP3) music
  - Rap (hip-hop), Emo, Rock, Metal, Swing, Country/Western, “Indie” (Independent)
Educational Structure
- “Nation at Risk” report, 1983
  - U.S. Department of Education
- Standardized tests, accountability
  - 49 states have standards in core subjects.
- “Zero Tolerance” including 24/7 rules
  - Expulsions for “drugs”, “weapons”
  - Suspensions for disrupting class, “bullying”, “sexual harassment”
- School choice
  - Parochial, Charter, Home

Culture Clash in the Schools
Achievers vs. Slackers
- Achievers
  - Focus on education and success.
- Slackers – Don’t have Millennial attitudes
  - Redneck (Cracker) culture theory
    - Aversion to work, neglect of education, violence, pride, promiscuity, drunkenness, recklessness.
  - Celtic descendents
    - Northern England, Scotland, Northern Ireland
    - Migrated to southern colonies in 1600s and 1700s

Crackers in the Old South

Great Expectations
- 2000 - No Child Left Behind
  - “Together, we will work to make all our public schools excellent, teaching every student of every background and every accent, so that no child is left behind.” – President-Elect George Bush 12/13/00
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Great Expectations
- 2006 - No Child Left Behind Without Advanced Placement Math and Science
  - “Tonight I propose to train 70,000 high school teachers to lead advanced placement courses in math and science, bring 30,000 math and science professionals to teach in classrooms, and give early help to students who struggle with math so they have a better chance at good, high-wage jobs.” – President George Bush 1/31/06
% high school students taking an Advanced Placement exam

SAT Scores

- Baby Boomer Generation
  - Decline in SAT scores from 1965 to 1978.
- Generation-X
  - Low SAT scores from 1979 to 1995
- Millennial Generation
  - Rising SAT scores after 1996
Assumptions
- Equality.
  - Everyone deserves respect.
  - Can lose respect for misbehavior.
  - Best idea wins.
  - Being older or in authority does not guarantee the best idea.
- Fairness is prime value.
- Competition.
  - Social, academic, career.

Attitudes
- We can do anything... as long as it is our way!
- Can’t make a decision... without a cell phone.
- Everyone is special... (taught in 2nd grade) but, some are more special than others. (understood by 6th grade)

Millennial Worries
- About the future
  - American jobs outsourced and exported.
  - Interest in health care fields.
  - Reduced healthcare and other benefits.
  - “Entitlement Generation” when looking for jobs.
- About the environment
  - Energy (Will it be there when I grow up?)
  - Global warming
  - Animal extinction
- Health
  - Bird flu, rapid diseases

Challenge – International Competition
Literacy scores of 15 year olds

Labor force participation rate

Percentage of # of workers divided by # of working age people

Lowest in 15 years!
Adolescent Development, Millennial Style

*It is difficult to live in a house under construction.*
*It is difficult to think with a brain under construction.*

Brain Upgrades
- Concrete Operations - age 6-7 (Piaget)
  - Rule based thinking
- Formal Operations - age 11-12 (Piaget)
  - Abstract thinking
- Integrative Operations – age 16-17 (Doenlen)
  - Integrative thinking – ability to combine separate threads of information into a coherent idea. True adult thinking.

Cortex (gray matter)

Nerve Cell

Brain Cell Proliferation
- Age 10-13.
- Body grows -> head grows -> brain grows.
- Cell proliferation – new neurons.
- New connections (“bushier brain cells”).
  - Many of the connections are useless.
  - Results in thought clutter.
Pruning
- Age 14-16, but continues into the 20’s
- “Clean” out nerve fibers
  - Speer 2000
  - Fewer but stronger connections
- “Use it or loose it”
  - NIMH 2001
- Teens “hardwire” their brain by exercising selected brain cells and allow others to atrophy.
  - Spano 2003

Myelinization
- Age 16-17, continuing into 40’s
- Schwan cells wrap around & insulate axons
  - Faster & more selective conduction
  - Improved integration of multiple stimuli
    - NIMH, 2001
- White myelin covers the gray axons of the cells.
  - Decrease gray matter, increase white matter
  - Decreased capacity for learning
  - Less able to recover from injury
    - Wallis, 2004; Begley, 2000

Brain growth curves
- Blue line is boy average
- Red line is girl average
- Peak is the time of the greatest clutter.
  - Notice that the peak gray matter lasts 3 to 5 years.

Parietal lobe growth
- Visual spatial processing
- Peaks at age 10 (girls) and 11 (boys)
  - Increased used of visualization (“what looks right”) over logic.
  - Concerns about clothes and appearance.

Frontal lobe growth
- Executive processing
- Behavioral decisions
- Peaks at age 11 (girls) and 12 (boys)
  - Cluttered reasoning is ineffective with managing emotions.
Upgrade to Abstract Thinking
- Age 11-12 (Peak growth, pruning begins.)
- Gain abstract thought
  - Impressive increase in depth and color of thoughts. Same life with new understanding.
- Lose imaginative play
- They can talk with the sophistication of an adult, but can’t think like an adult.
  - Clutter causes off-topic thoughts to be inserted into discussions.

Thoughts while pruning (age 14-16)
- Increased focus on specific topics of interest.
- Linear thinking
  - Consider single issue – single outcome without considering related issues and alternative outcomes.
- Passionate
  - Enjoy the intense feeling of being certain, even if wrong.

Temporal lobe growth
- Long term memory.
- Peaks at age 16-17.
  - Ability to learn new material greatly increases.

Upgrade to Integrative Thinking
- Age 16-17 (Pruning well underway, mylanization begins.)
  - True adult thinking
  - Better able to understand parent’s point of view.
- True Empathy
  - Understanding that others really do think or feel differently.
- World View
  - Interest in events outside of personal sphere
- Future View
  - Concerns about future career and success.
Why Do Millennials Talk?
- Connect … DUDE!
- Gather Information … Wazzup?
- Persuade / Manipulate…Come on!
- Validate…Am I right?
- Arrange a gathering.
  - When the teen gets a cell phone call, then has to drop everything to join an activity that is starting now. And the parent has to drive.

Communicating with Millennials
- Millennials are information based
  - Parents are unable to make decisions without having all the information.
- Millennials believe in equality
  - Their ideas are as good as adult’s ideas.
- Millennials make their own decisions
  - Pre-teens and teens can take up to three days to make a decision.

Not being disrespectful, just being Millennial
- Difficulty controlling expression of emotions during argument or discussion.
  - Requires integrative thinking (age 17)
- Difficulty dealing with interruptions.
  - Using words to paint an image.
    - A little here, a little there, filling in the gaps.
  - Interruptions cause frustration, then the explanation re-starts from the beginning.

Strategies for Communication
- Listen without interrupting.
  - Let the teenager finish what they are saying.
  - They’ll feel you have the information needed.
  - They’ll feel respected.
  - They’ll more easily accept the decision.
- When responding, point out the areas of agreement first.
  - Avoid arguing where there is actually agreement.
  - “I listened to you without interrupting, so it’s only FAIR that you listen to me without interrupting.”

Fair
(is a 4 letter word beginning with “F”)  
- “I’m the parent and you are the child” is not relevant to Millennials.
- Disrespect of authority hierarchy.
- Fairness is their central ethic.
  - Everyone gets to eat, be entertained, and sleep in the house, so it is only FAIR, that each contributes to the care and uptake, according to their ability.
Discuss to point of understanding
- Don’t need them to agree.
  - Understanding without necessarily agreeing
  - Watch for a thoughtful face and moving feet.
  - Hypocritical to agree if not sure.
  - Allow at least 3 days to process information.
- Watch out for misinterpretations.
  - Before age 17, can get hung up on words and details, and not integrate the entire discussion
- Use multiple-choice when possible.

Paper and Pen
- Write down a word or two for each issue.
- Allows the child (teen) to keep the issues in the visual field, and so also in the awareness.
- Useful before age 17.

Keep Connected
- Increase accountability.
  - Get your own information.
- Talk to teachers.
  - Check grades on line if available.
- Talk to other parents.
  - “The Matrix” – a collection of parents sharing observations with each other.
- Listen to your teenager.
  - They’ll give information randomly.
Advice for the Millennial Youth

**Parenting is...**

*50% parent raising child*

*50% child raising parent*

Understanding Parents

- You are the center of your parent’s lives.
  - Parent often relate events to the age of their children.
  - **BC = Before Children**
  - **AK = After Kids**
  - Example. Vacation when Billy was age 6. Billy was born in 1992. Vacation was therefore in 1998.

- Parents want you to succeed.
  - Education give you choices.
  - Develop your talents.
  - Be industrious and responsible.

- Parents want you to get along with others.
  - Be respectful.
  - Choose good friends.
  - Be a positive influence on others.

- Parents want you to be healthy.
  - Safe from injury.
  - Free from illness.
  - Lifestyle for a long life.

- Parents want you to be happy.
  - Enjoy your life, relationships, and success.

Helicopter Parents

(hovering over their children)

- Issue for schools & colleges.
  - Parents seen as interfering.
  - Parents not trusting that the school will always act in the child’s best interest.

- Parent’s reaction to child’s issues.
  - Special-needs students (particularly Asperger’s).
  - Teens – take charge, be responsible, make the grade and clear your helicopter parents to land!

Communicating with Parents

- Avoid arguing over what you agree.
- Avoid expanding the argument into unrelated issues.
- Timing is everything.
  - Don’t ask for 30 minutes after parents come home from work.
  - Don’t ask when parents are distracted or in a bad mood.
Bringing JOY to your parents

- Do your best in school.
  - If not your best, just get all A’s.
  - Good grades will make you happy, too.
- Do your share of the family chores.
  - Parents appreciate if you save THEM time.
- Don’t make your parents angry or worried.
  - They respond by increasing supervision.
- Avoid dishonesty.
  - Don’t lie, sneak, or hide the truth.
  - An honest child is a blessing to the parents.
- Project a happy mood.
  - You can brighten up the home.

Judgment Rating

- All parents have one for each child.
- Good judgment = privileges.
  - Higher rating with good grades, accepting parents decisions, law-abiding, dependability (being on time), honesty (even in the face of trouble).
- Poor judgment = supervision.
  - Lower rating with poor grades, lying, sneaking, arguing, recklessness, lateness, drug or alcohol use.
The problem with ANGER
- Why get revenge?
  - Seems fair
  - Don’t feel like a victim e.g. “Kill Bill”
  - Discourage further problems.

The problem with ANGER
- Why get revenge?
  - Seems fair
  - Don’t feel like a victim
  - Discourage further problems.
- Why not get revenge?
  - Can cause more trouble.
    - Intervention by the authority.
  - Creates an ongoing feud.
    - “I got revenge because you got revenge because I got revenge…”

What to do when you are MAD
- M – Mood
  - Become Mellow.
  - Relaxation techniques.

Action on ANGER
- Solve the problem.
- Analyze, Name, Generate, Execute, Resolve.

D – Distraction
- Clear the mind.
- Do a different activity until calm.

Take ACTION on ANGER
- A – Analyze the problem.
  - What is the exact situation causing anger?
- N – Name possible solutions.
  - Think of all the ways to solve the problem.
- G – Generate the plan.
  - Work out the best solution to the problem.
- E – Execute the plan!
  - Follow the plan to completion.
- R – Resolve the issue.
  - Take care of any remaining issues, to restore peace and stability.
We ❤ Millennials

References and other interesting items...

Modern Generational Theory
- Based on cohorts, not families
  - Groups with common characteristics.
  - Cohort lengths 17-33 (average 23) years
- Multiple generations interact
  - 0-22 yrs. - Youth (dependent, learning)
  - 23-41 yrs. - Rising (active, starting families)
  - 42-65 yrs. - Midlife (leadership, parenting)
  - 66-87 yrs. - Elders (stewardship, mentoring)

Generations, Strauss and Howe, 1991

English Late Middle Ages
- Period 1154-1271
  - 1154-1188 *(Becket controversy and martyrdom)
  - 1189-1216 *(Richard Lionheart & King John – poor kings)
  - 1217-1246 *(Magna Carter 1215)
  - 1247-1271 *(Henry III, prosperity, cathedral building)
- Period –1272-1377
  - 1272-1300 *(Edward I’s reforms, 1st parliament 1295, friars)
  - 1301-1326 *(Edward II’s misrule, famine 1315-17)
  - 1327-1352 *(Edward III, black death 1348, 100 Year War 1338)
  - 1353-1377 *(Edward III revival, growth of parliament)
*added by Doenlen

English Reformation
- Late Medieval Period 1378-1482
  - 1378-1409 Great Schism* (2 popes, Wycliffe’s English Bible)
  - 1410-1442 Expansionist* (English gains in 100 Year War)
  - 1443-1460 Arthurian (end 100 Year War, Tudor monarchy)
  - 1461-1482 Humanist (scholars, printing, War of Roses)
- Reformation Movement 1483-1587
  - 1483-1511 Reformation (Protestantism, Anglican faith)
  - 1512-1540 Reprisal (Queen Elizabeth, mercenaries)
  - 1541-1565 Elizabethan (Spanish Armada crises)
  - 1566-1587 Parliamentary (empire building)

The Fourth Turning, Strauss and Howe, 1997
*added by Doenlen
American Establishment

- Colonial Movement 1588-1700
  - 1588-1617 Puritan (Puritan awakening)
  - 1618-1647 Cavalier (Individual liberty and property rights)
  - 1648-1673 Glorious (First generation of native-born colonists)
  - 1674-1700 Enlightenment (First American professionals)
- Revolutionary Movement 1701-1791 – American Generations counted from 1700
  - 1701-1723 Awakening (Christian revival) #1
  - 1724-1741 Liberty (Immigration, Continental Congress) #2
  - 1742-1774 Republican (Revolutionary War) #3
  - 1767-1791 Compromise (Establishing government, 1812) #4

Generations, Strauss and Howe, 1991

American Expansion

- Civil War Movement - Early 1792-1859
  - 1792-1821 Transcendental (Evangelical & abolitionist) #5
  - 1822-1842 Gilded (Industrialization, fortune seeking) #6
  - 1843-1859 Progressive (Civil War) #7
    - No High Generation due to upheaval of the Civil War.
- Great Power Movement – Late 1860-1942
  - 1860-1882 Missionary (Darwinism debate) #8
  - 1883-1900 Lost (WW1, flu, roaring 20’s, great depression) #9
  - 1901-1924 G.I. (WW2, America becomes a world power) #10
  - 1925-1942 Silent (Korean War, bureaucracy) #11

Generations, Strauss and Howe, 1991

Six Generations Alive Today - G.I. to #15

- 1901-1924 G.I.
  - Mobilizing, pushy, optimistic, group-oriented
- 1925-1942 Silent
  - Refinement, sensitivity, conformity

- Millennial Movement 1943-2029
  - 1943-1960 Boomer (Cultural revolution, Vietnam War) #12
    - Rebellious, judgmental, spiritualism, humanism.
  - 1961-1981 X (Gulf Wars, technology, capitalist ventures) #13
    - Free agents, self-reliant, pragmatic, entrepreneurship
  - 1982-2003? Millennial (Intelligent, solve a crises their way) #14
  - 2004?-2029? 15th* (Globalization, environmentalism)

Millennials Rising, Howe and Strauss, 2000

*added by Doenlen
Brain Development References


