

GEN Z ON THE MOVE: UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S CHANGING STUDENTS' BEHAVIOR

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Generation Z refers to the group of students currently in school. They grew up in a world where technology, social media, and instant access to information were the norm. These students are digital natives who have been using smartphones, apps, and online platforms since they were very young. This familiarity makes them very adaptable and creative, but it also makes it hard for them to behave in the classroom. Teachers who want to get this generation to learn, grow, and get involved need to know how these behaviors work.

One thing that sets Generation Z students apart is that they are adept at multitasking. They can easily switch between apps, social media, and schoolwork, but this often comes with a price: they have shorter attention spans, struggle to stay focused for long periods, and tend to want things right away. For teachers, this means that teaching through lectures may not always be the most effective approach. Instead, lessons that involve students, group projects, and learning activities that resemble games can help keep their attention and interest. Teachers can turn potential distractions into opportunities for active learning by adapting their teaching methods to align with the habits and preferences of Generation Z.

Another critical aspect of how students behave today is their emphasis on being open to everyone and expressing themselves freely. Generation Z students are highly aware of issues such as social justice, diversity, and equality. They are more likely than past generations to speak out against authority, share their thoughts, and fight for what they believe in. This can sometimes lead to fights or arguments in the classroom, but it

also provides teachers with an opportunity to help students develop their critical thinking, empathy, and leadership skills. Teachers who promote respectful conversation and provide students with opportunities to express their thoughts can transform these behaviors into positive learning experiences.

Technology and social media also affect mental and emotional health, affecting behavior in complicated ways. Being highly connected can lead to social comparison, stress, and anxiety, but it can also foster collaboration, creativity, and the sharing of knowledge. Teachers need to recognize that factors outside the classroom can also influence students' behavior. For example, a student who has anxiety because of online stress may seem quiet or not pay attention in class. Teachers who pay attention, listen, and offer help can teach students how to manage problems and develop emotional resilience.

Generation Z also has a strong need for immediate feedback and recognition, which is reflected in their behavior. Students who are accustomed to receiving quick answers from digital platforms may become frustrated with traditional grading systems that require a longer evaluation process. Teachers can respond by using formative assessments, interactive quizzes, and digital tools that give instant feedback. Teachers help students learn independently, build confidence, and stay motivated by meeting them where they are.

Despite the challenges, Generation Z has a lot to offer in the classroom. They work well with others, come up with innovative ideas, possess extensive knowledge of technology, and are concerned about social issues. Project-based learning, digital simulations, and community-based tasks leverage these strengths, allowing students to apply what they've learned in real-life situations. Also, students are more likely to be active learners and develop good study habits if they feel like teachers listen to them, understand them, and support them.

To fully understand how students behave today, it is essential to take a broad view. Teachers need to think about more than just academics. They also need to think about emotional, social, and technological factors. Teachers can make learning spaces that are open, flexible, and interesting by understanding the unique traits, problems, and strengths of Generation Z. By doing this, they help students do well not only in school but also in the world outside of school, getting them ready to deal with life with creativity, strength, and confidence.

References:

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