



# NEW SURVEY ON POLITICS FINDS YOUNG PEOPLE INCREASINGLY ENGAGED AND ANXIOUS AS MIDTERMS APPROACH

*The survey also takes a close look at young people's economic outlook and experiences with social media as compared with parents of this age group.*

**CHICAGO**, October 4, 2018 — Young peoples' interest in the midterms is accelerating as the election draws nearer and so are their anxiety levels, according to the latest wave of the MTV/AP-NORC Center Youth Political Polls. The survey also explores young people's experiences with social media, its impact on their lives, and their economic outlook. The fourth in a multiwave series that takes the political pulse of 15- to 34-year-olds, the survey also includes a sample of the parents of 15- to 26-year-olds in order to explore similarities and differences between generations. The survey includes a total of 1,012 young people age 15-34, including 580 young people age 15-26, and 591 parents with children in the 15-26 age group.

"Young people's interest in the midterms has increased from 41 percent earlier this summer to 64 percent today," said Trevor Tompson, vice president for Public Affairs Research at NORC. "It remains to be seen how this excitement translates to voter turnout, but most young people believe that their generation is motivated to make positive change."

Key findings from the survey on politics, technology, and the economy include:

## Politics

- Forty-nine percent of 15- to 34-year-olds say they are generally optimistic when thinking about the future of the United States, and 50 percent feel generally pessimistic.
- Thirty-two percent express approval for President Donald Trump, while 67 percent disapprove of the way he is handling his job.
- Sixty-four percent of young people age 15-34 say they are interested in the election, up from 41 percent earlier in the summer. Feelings of hope and anxiety surrounding the midterms have also increased. Feelings of excitement, pride, and being overwhelmed have decreased. Feeling helpless has neither increased nor decreased significantly.



## Technology

- Fifty-four percent of young people age 15-26 and 53 percent of parents of that same age group say social media has had a mostly negative impact on U.S. society in general. But only 24 percent of parents and 22 percent of young people think social media has had a negative effect on their family.
- Large majorities of parents (88 percent) and young people (77 percent) consider cyberbullying a serious problem. However, while just 8 percent of young people are extremely or very concerned about being a victim of cyberbullying, parents are more than three times as likely to express concern about their children being cyberbullied.
- Both generations approve of social media platforms banning users who share content that could be considered harassment (68 percent of young people vs. 80 percent of parents).
- Forty-seven percent of 15- to 26-year-olds and 51 percent of parents say social media has had a mostly negative effect on the younger generation. Twenty-five percent of young people and 31 percent of parents say it has had a mostly negative effect on the older generation.

## Economy

- About half of young people age 15-26 think they are doing better than their parents' generation when it comes to their standard of living or will do better in terms of their household finances.
- Compared to their parents' generation, young people age 15-26 are more likely to say they received a scholarship, used money from a 529 college savings plan, or received funds from a loan taken out by their parents to pay for college.
- Young people are pessimistic about the prospect of their parents supporting them financially, while parents are more likely to think they can help out their children if needed. While more than half of parents say it's likely they could help their child pay an unexpected bill of \$1,000 or put a down payment on a car, only about 4 in 10 young people agree.



The Associated Press-NORC  
Center for Public Affairs Research

## **About the Survey**

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from MTV and NORC at the University of Chicago. Staff from NORC at the University of Chicago, The Associated Press, and MTV collaborated on all aspects of the study.

This survey is the fourth in a multiwave series that takes the political pulse of the newest generation of voters as the November 2018 midterm elections approach. This is the second in the series that includes a sample of parents of 15- to 26-year-olds in order to make comparisons between the two generations. This nationwide poll by MTV and The AP-NORC Center was conducted August 23-September 10, 2018, using AmeriSpeak®, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. It surveyed a total of 1,012 young people age 15-34, including 580 young people age 15-26. It also surveyed 591 parents with children in this age group.

## **About MTV**

MTV is the leading youth media brand inspired by music, in nearly 180 countries and 450 million homes around the world, connecting with over 350 million fans across all social media platforms. A unit of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIAB, VIA), MTV operations span cable and mobile networks, live events, and the new MTV Studios unit which produces original and reimagined content for SVOD and linear networks based on MTV's library of over 200+ youth titles and franchises.

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The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.

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