

Study: Younger generation doing plenty of reading

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Younger Americans – those ages 16-29 – especially fascinate researchers and organizations because of their advanced technology habits, their racial and ethnic diversity, their looser relationships to institutions such as political parties and organized religion, and the ways in which their social attitudes differ from their elders.

This report pulls together several years of research into the role of libraries in the lives of Americans and their communities with a special focus on Millennials, a key stakeholder group affecting the future of communities, libraries, book publishers and media makers of all kinds, as well as the tone of the broader culture.

Following are some of the noteworthy insights from this research.

There are actually three different “generations” of younger Americans with distinct book reading habits, library usage patterns, and attitudes about libraries. One “generation” is comprised of high schoolers (ages 16-17); another is college-aged (18-24), though many do not attend college; and a third generation is 25-29.

Millennials’ lives are full of technology, but they are more likely than their elders to say that important information is not available on the Internet. Some 98 percent of those under 30 use the Internet, and 90 percent of those Internet users say they use social networking sites. Over three-quarters (77 percent) of younger Americans have a smartphone, and many also have a tablet (38 percent) or e-reader (24 percent). Despite their embrace of technology, 62 percent of Americans under age

30 agree there is “a lot of useful, important information that is not available on the Internet,” compared with 53 percent of older Americans who believe that. At the same time, 79 percent of Millennials believe that people without Internet access are at a real disadvantage.

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