

## TEENS - MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN YOU THOUGHT

A look at Canadian teen's general outlook on life and their "glass half full" perspectives.

Even in the face of an economic crisis, soaring unemployment, and a plummeting stock market, research reveals people are relatively optimistic. More and more they are turning to philosophies, people, and even brands that are delivering a message of optimism and hopefulness. From television programs to talk shows, even political and cultural leaders – the spreading of 'positive sentiment' is evident. Even the commercial world has caught on. From Coke's 'Open Happiness', to Pepsi's 'Optimism' to Wal-Mart's "Live Better" advertising campaign-brands are catching on to society's desire to stay optimistic.

Teens are no exception to this "pursuit of happiness" trend. While teens are often seen as the "bleak," "glass half empty" generation, research is demonstrating something different. Nexopia teen research reveals that 67% of teens describe themselves as "happy and optimistic" most or all of the time and 82% prefer to surround themselves with positive, upbeat types of people.

This report dispels teens as all "doom and gloom" and examines the happier, more positive, forward thinking side of the youth generation.



"Optimism, in even the worst situations, can lighten the mood and cheer up even the saddest group of people. The world would be a dark, somber place without positive people."

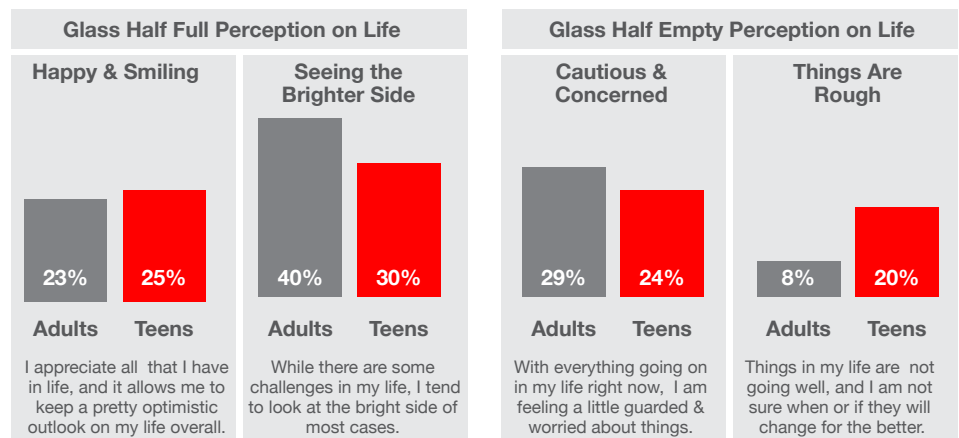
-Teen Respondent

### THE PROOF

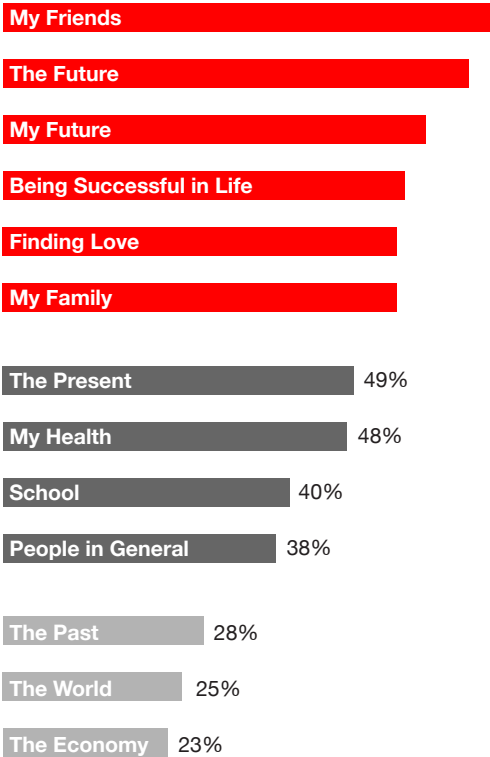
- 67% indicate they are happy most or all of the time
- 82% of teens prefer to hang out with people who have the "glass half full" perspective on life
- 48% of teens tend to buy from or are more likely to buy from companies that have a positive impact on the environment, charities, or are dedicated to the 'greater good'
- 86% prefer music that is upbeat and puts them in a good mood
- 65% are excited for and optimistic about their futures

#### Teen vs. Adult Optimism

Teen's level of optimism is on par, if not higher than their adult counterparts.



## Feel Very/Extremely Optimistic About...



Nexopia Survey n=824

“Well life certainly isn’t perfect- I can’t say I have that much to complain about really. Life is good.”

- Teen Respondent



“Being happy brings a small wave of hope into the world that gets bigger with each optimistic thought. It creates a much better environment for everyone.”

-Teen Respondent

## LEARNINGS, STRATEGIES, & IMPLICATIONS:

### Be Happy. Be Celebratory.

Get on the happy bandwagon and align your brand with a message of hopefulness and optimism. A few suggestions:

- Use your communication, your brand promise, and your customer service to spread a positive sentiment.
- Align your brand with “happy” things, partners, and other experiences.
- Celebrate and promote people who are dedicated to making the world a better/happier place.

### Focus on the Good & Help Fix the Bad.

Research reveals teens are more likely to consider a brand that is actively engaged with and dedicated to the ‘greater good’ (whether it is the environment, poverty, disease, etc). Be a supportive brand- one that stands out as a brand with “a cause”. Embrace the “if you hate something, then change something” mindset and create a movement around your brand. By involving your brand in initiatives for the “greater good” you not only set yourself apart from competitors, you align your brand with optimism and hope- which are powerful brand attributes.

### Focus on the Future.

Research reveals that ‘the future’ is one area teens are most optimistic about. Tap into this positive sentiment by aligning your brand with their optimism for the future.

Brands that fall into categories that are naturally associated with the future can optimize on teen’s positive outlook for the days ahead. For example- universities or colleges and banks can position their brands as ‘the path to a brighter future.’

### Word of Caution- Avoid Cheese.

Be a happy brand, with a positive message- but avoid the ‘cheesy’ side of happy. Make sure your brand is authentic and still has an edge. The youth segment can smell marketing cheese and marketing ploys from a mile away. Be real and avoid clichés in your messaging, partnerships, and actions. for enrollment specific communication (communication to increase enrollment levels). This doesn’t mean abandoning national level PR initiatives and awareness marketing- but focus recruitment marketing primarily at a regional level to get the most bang for your buck.

### About the survey

Results are based on a survey launched in September 2009 (n= 824) and homepage polls with a sample size averaging n=14,000; Key demographics: 42.6% male, 57.4% female 76% aged 13-18, 11% aged 19-23

### Want more?

Nexopia is the leading Canadian social networking site for youth. We reach into the minds of young people- tapping into their attitudes and values, lifestyles and trends, media, products and brands. Our exploratory research includes quantitative surveys and in-depth qualitative research (focus groups, observation, teen panels). These reports are distributed to key Canadian advertising and marketing decision makers with the intent to demystify this niche market and assist with developing relevant and effective communication & marketing strategies.

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