

Not Just a Paycheck:

Building a Workplace Educators Stay For

Presented by: Jeanette Lemieux



DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES**



SPARK
MONTANA

Honoring the People of this Land



- Assiniboine/Nakoda
- Blackfeet/Niitsitapi (Pikuni)
- Chippewa (Ojibway)/Annishinabe
- Crow/Apsaálooke
- Gros Ventre/Aaniih
- Kootenai/Ktunaxa (Ksanka)
- Little Shell Chippewa (Ojibwe)/Annishinabe & Métis
- Pend d'Oreille/Qíispé
- Plains Cree/Ne-i-yah-wahk
- Salish/ Séliš
- Sioux/Lakota & Dakota
- Northern Cheyenne/ Tsetsêhesêstâhase/So'taahe

Group Agreements



Be active - contribute,
ask questions, etc.



Be willing to try on
new ideas



Speak your truth; listen
to understand



Maintain confidentiality



Assume positive intent
and acknowledge impact



Take care of yourself



Have fun!

Our Learning Objectives

1

Recognize and describe the four generations currently in today's workforce and how they may differ in their work styles and preferences.

2

Identify the needs and expectations of your staff and explain how those needs can impact communication, engagement, and performance.

3

Develop at least three strategies that can help create a more positive and effective workplace for your staff.



SPARK
MONTANA

Montana Knowledge Base

MONTANA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE BASE

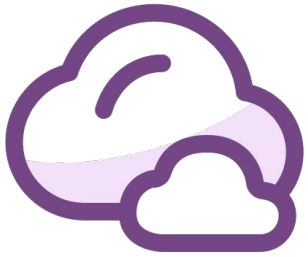
A workbook to guide self-reflection and professional growth
in early care and education (Birth to Age 8)



Professionalism • Child Development • Family and Community Partnerships • Observation, Documentation, and Assessment • Teaching and Engagement • Curriculum and Learning Environment • Personal Dispositions



Content Area 6: Professionalism



Think about a job you really enjoyed... Why did you enjoy it?



Objective 1: Recognize and describe the four generations currently in today's workforce and how they may differ in their styles and preferences.

Baby Boomer Generation

Born: 1946 - 1964

Current Age: 62 to 80 Years Old

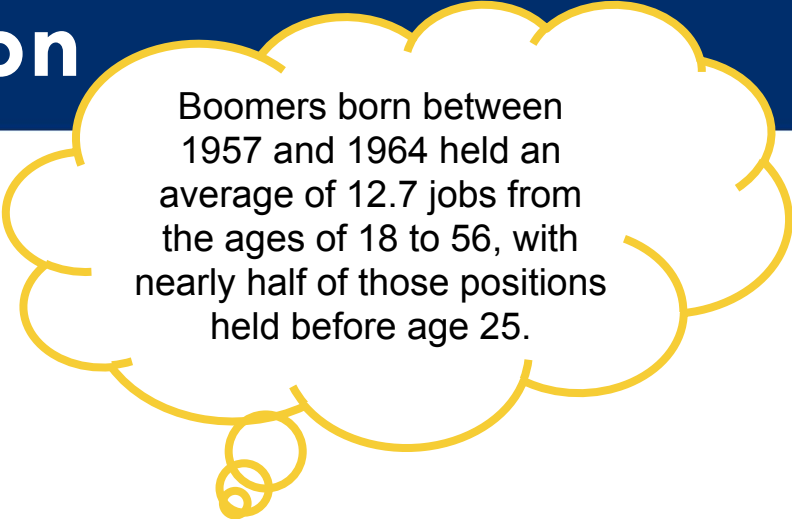
Work Force: 15% to 19%

Significant Influences: Vietnam War, Civil Rights Movement, Space Travel

Work Values/Motivations: Company Loyalty, Teamwork, Acknowledgment of Input & Expertise

Communication Preferences: Phone Calls, Face-to-Face, Meetings

Leadership Expectations: Respect for Experience, Clear Hierarchies



Boomers born between 1957 and 1964 held an average of 12.7 jobs from the ages of 18 to 56, with nearly half of those positions held before age 25.

Generation X

Born: 1965 - 1980

Current Age: 46 to 61 Years Old

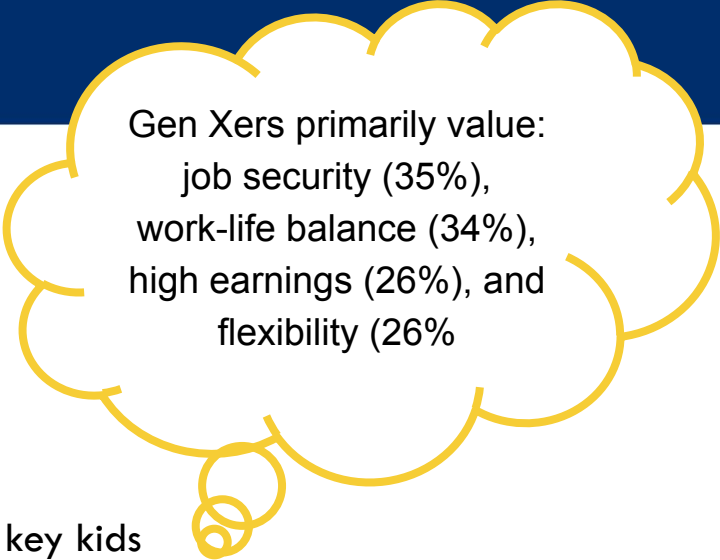
Work Force: 33% to 35%

Significant Influences: AIDS Epidemic, DOT-Com Boom, Latch key kids

Work Values/Motivations: Work-Life Balance, Autonomy, Efficiency, Independence, Adaptability, Skepticism

Communication Preferences: Efficient Method, Emails, Informal, Results-oriented & Purposeful

Leadership Expectations: Competence, Fairness, Feedback



Gen Xers primarily value:
job security (35%),
work-life balance (34%),
high earnings (26%), and
flexibility (26%)

Millennial Generation

Born: 1981 - 1996

Current Age: 30 to 45 Years Old

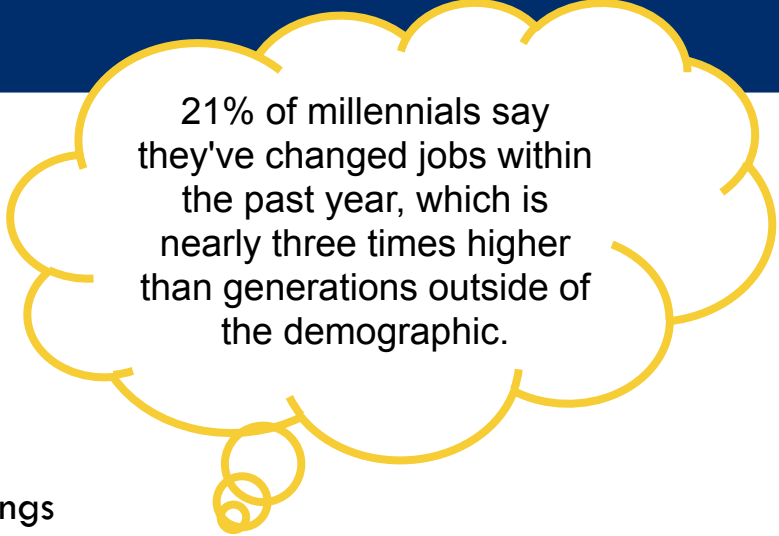
Work Force: 36% to 40%

Significant Influences: Digital Media, 911, School Shootings

Work Values/Motivations: Purpose Driven, Development, Flexibility, Feedback-seeking, Tech Savvy

Communication Preferences: Email, Text Messages, Positive, Motivational, Personal

Leadership Expectations: Coaching Relationship, Transparency, Collaboration



21% of millennials say they've changed jobs within the past year, which is nearly three times higher than generations outside of the demographic.

Generation Z

Born: 1997 - 2012

Current Age: 14 to 29 Years Old

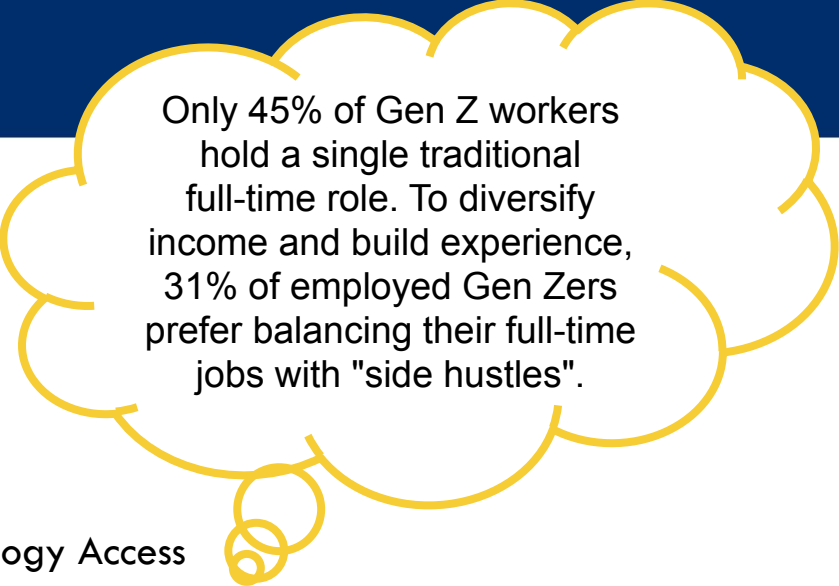
Work Force: 18% to 20%

Significant Influences: The Great Recession, Technology Access

Work Values/Motivations: Diversity, Individuality, Creativity, Regular Public Praise

Communication Preferences: Email, Text Messages, Positive, Motivation, Brief & Personable

Leadership Expectations: Authenticity, Inclusivity, Technological Savvy



Only 45% of Gen Z workers hold a single traditional full-time role. To diversify income and build experience, 31% of employed Gen Zers prefer balancing their full-time jobs with "side hustles".

Who Am I...

I am highly comfortable with technology and often use apps, videos, and online tools to learn new things. I value inclusion, feedback, and opportunities to grow quickly in my role. I enjoy working in teams and sharing new ideas in the classroom.

I value independence and efficiency. I prefer to solve problems on my own before asking for help and I work best when I have flexibility and trust to complete my tasks. I bring experience and stability to the team.

I have many years of experience in early childhood education and take pride in my strong work ethic and commitment to children and families. I prefer face-to-face communication and often serve as a mentor to newer staff.

I enjoy collaboration and meaningful work that aligns with my values. I use technology comfortably to communicate and document learning. I appreciate feedback and opportunities for professional growth and development.

Generation Z
(14-29 years old)

Generation X
(46-61 years old)

Baby Boomer
(62-80 years old)

Millennial
(30-45 years old)



SPARK
MONTANA

Who Am I...

I am motivated by meaningful work and enjoy collaborating with my team to support children's learning. I use technology naturally in my daily work and like receiving regular feedback to help me improve. I am often interested in professional development opportunities and new ideas in early childhood education.

I bring a lot of experience to my role and value consistency, responsibility, and strong relationships with children and families. I prefer direct conversations over digital communication and often take on a mentoring role with newer staff members.

I am independent and practical in my approach to work. I like having the freedom to organize my tasks and find efficient ways to get things done. I am comfortable with technology but also appreciate straightforward, no-nonsense communication.

I am new to the workforce or early in my career and feel very comfortable using technology in all areas of my job. I enjoy learning quickly through online resources and value workplaces that are inclusive, flexible, and open to new ideas.

Millennial
(30-45 years old)

Baby Boomer
(62-80 years old)

Generation X
(46-61 years old)

Generation Z
(14-29 years old)



Questions??

Objective 2: Identify the needs and expectations of your staff and explain how those needs can impact communication, engagement, and performance.

Key Needs

Generation Z

- Clear guidance and mentoring
- Regular feedback and coaching
- Support with challenging behaviors and family communication
- Access to professional development
- Work-life balance
- Modern technology and resources
- A positive and inclusive team culture

Millennials

- Career progression opportunities
- Professional development
- Flexibility
- Recognition and appreciation
- Collaborative team environments
- Adequate staffing and resources
- Trust and autonomy
- Job stability and financial security

Key Expectations

Generation Z

- Managers who are approachable, supportive, and available.
- Regular recognition for contributions and achievements.
- Transparency regarding decisions, organizational changes, and career opportunities.
- Opportunities to have their ideas heard and considered.
- Fast, efficient communication through digital platforms.
- A workplace that demonstrates social responsibility and ethical practices.

Millennials

- Open, honest, and consistent communication from leadership.
- Meaningful and challenging work assignments.
- Regular feedback and performance discussions.
- Fair treatment and equal opportunities for advancement.
- Leaders who value employee input and encourage collaboration.
- Organizations that invest in employee development and wellbeing.

Key Takeaways

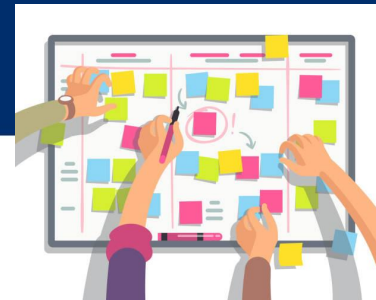
Generation Z

- Seeks frequent coaching and guidance
- Prefers rapid, technology-driven communication
- Focuses on skill development and career exploration
- Expects high levels of inclusion and workplace authenticity

Millennial

- Values autonomy and trust
- Prefers collaboration and relationship-building
- Focused on career progression and long-term growth
- Expects flexibility, recognition, and leadership transparency

What's Sticking with Your Staff



BRAINSTORM

- Respect
- Flexible scheduling
- Work-life balance
- Supportive leadership

CATEGORIZE

- Communication
- Growth & Development
- Recognition
- Flexibility
- Well-Being
- Leadership & Support

CONNECT the Impact

Questions??

Objective 3: Develop at least three strategies that can help create a more positive and effective workplace for employees across generations

Generation in Action

REFLECT

- What strategies are working best for your team?
- What is one workplace challenge?
- What are some strategies that you would like to try?

CHOOSE

- Encourage coaching to support staff growth
- Offer flexible scheduling when possible
- Ask staff for ideas before making changes
- Use multiple communication methods
- Remote work-life balance and wellness

CREATE an Action Plan



Reflection



Name one strategy that you anticipate to be **CHALLENGING**...

Name one strategy that you are currently doing successfully and will **CONTINUE**...

Name one strategy that you will **IMPLEMENT** because of this training...



SPARK
MONTANA

Contact Our HelpDesk (It's in Montana!)

406-481-3728

support@sparkmontana.com

and live chat on our website:

sparkmontana.com

Knowledge Center

Visit our Website:
www.sparkmontana.com

Just launched: the Knowledge Center has resources selected just for you

[Visit Knowledge Center](#) →



[Events](#)

[Knowledge Center](#)

[Fingerprinting](#)

[About](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Help Desk](#)



Start Searching!

You can find it all here.



Click below to browse our entire Knowledge Catalog!

KNOWLEDGE CATALOG

Knowledge Center Featured Topics



SPARK Montana Services



Help Desk:

- 406-481-3728



TA/Coaching



Cohort Learning



Professional Learning
Communities



Resources:

- Knowledge Center



Training:

- Online (24-hr access)
- Live Digital
- In-Person



SPARK
MONTANA

References

- Adkins, A. (2026). *Millennials: The Job-Hopping Generation*. Gallup. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/231587/millennials-job-hopping-generation.aspx>
- Buffett, J. (2025, August 25). *Generation X in the Workplace: 2022 Study*. Zety>Career Advice. <https://zety.com/blog/generation-x-in-the-workplace>
- CTAM. (n.d.). *The state of Gen Z*. <https://www.ctam.com/media-and-entertainment-trends/the-state-of-gen-z/>
- DeMaria K., Page I., Reuss K., & Zemper Z. (2024). *Changes in the U.S. Labor Supply*. U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (2024). https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/opder/DASP/Trendlines/posts/2024_08/Trendlines_August_2024.html
- Focus People. (2024, January 24). *Gen X Workplace Benefits*. <https://www.focuspeople.com/gen-x-workplace-benefits/>
- Forsyth W. (2023, November 19). *What's important to Gen X in the workplace*. GLOBACARE <https://www.globacare.co.uk/guides/gen-x-in-the-workplace>
- Hyman M., Powder M., & Pietsch P. (2022). *Retention Strategies for Generation X and Generation Z Federal Employees*. Partnership for Public Services. <https://ourpublicservice.org/know-the-facts/resource-library/reports/retaining-my-generation>
- Momentum Leadership Group. (n.d.). *Momentum Leadership Group*. <https://www.momentumleadershipgroup.com/>
- Mosley, K. Dr. (2026, June 4). *Leading Across Generations: Strategies for a stronger, more collaborative team* (webinar). Early Childhood Investigations Webinars.
- Precourt, N. (2025, June 1). *Generation Z and the workforce: Navigating unique challenges*. National Career Development Association. https://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/page_template/show_detail/594023?model_name=news_article
- Randstad. (2025, September 8). *New research finds Gen Z's average job stint is 1.1 years—but it's not job-hopping, it's growth-hunting*. <https://www.randstad.com/press/2025/genz-workplace-blueprint/>

Training Survey



Let us know how we did by
completing the course
evaluation using the QR code
or the link in the chat box!





This training was created by SPARK Learning Lab through a contract with the Early Childhood Services Bureau using Child Care and Development Block Grant funding.





SPARK

MONTANA