



# GENYOUth<sup>®</sup>

EXERCISE YOUR INFLUENCE™

Inaugural Youth Survey on Trends in Health and Wellness

**Are Youth Underserved by Technology  
to Support a Healthier Lifestyle?**

Presented in  
partnership with:



**Youth want to manage and take control of their well-being – but apps, devices, websites, social media, and other tech tools that could help them are lagging behind.**

**GENYOUth** empowers students to create a healthier future for themselves and their peers. GENYOUth convenes a network of private and public partners to raise funds for youth wellness initiatives that bolster healthy, high-achieving students, schools and communities nationwide. We believe that all students are change-agents, who deserve the opportunity to identify and lead innovative solutions that positively impact nutrition, physical activity, and student success.

Visit [www.GENYOUthNow.org](http://www.GENYOUthNow.org) to learn more.

There's plenty of research about Generation Z's heavy reliance on technology. Also known as the iGen, young people born after 1996 are social media-driven digital natives. There's also research linking screen time with the health hazards of a sedentary lifestyle. But it's not clear whether and how technology actually is supporting – or could support, rather than hinder – young people's health and well-being.

GENYOUth's Inaugural Youth Survey on Trends in Health and Wellness hears directly from middle and high school-aged students about whether and how they use technology for healthy living. Our overriding question: Is technology currently supporting and encouraging – or is it under-serving – the health and wellness of this tech-savvy generation? This brief includes top-line findings of interest and importance.

GENYOUth's Inaugural Youth Survey made possible by:



And in counsel with:



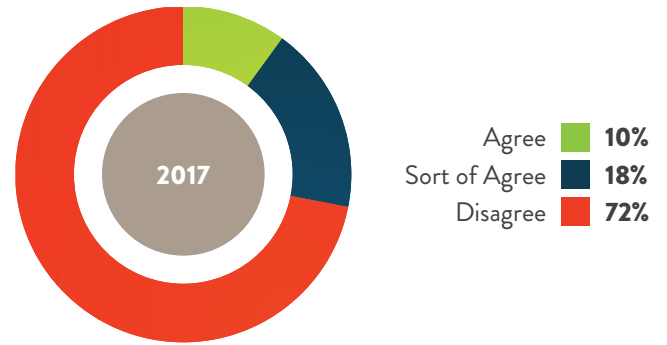
## Key Findings

### HOW DO YOUTH FEEL ABOUT THEIR HEALTH?

**Good news:** Today's youth care about their health and understand that what they do today will have consequences for their future.

- The vast majority of youth (**72%**) feel they're old enough to think about their health – in fact, only **10%** think they are too young to worry about their health.
- **82%** believe that taking care of themselves now will pay off in the future.
- **73%** say they feel in control of their own health and wellness.

I'm too young to worry about my health and wellness.



GENYOUth's Inaugural Youth Survey would not have been possible without the initial support of our advisory committee, which convened in June 2017 at GENYOUth's offices in New York.

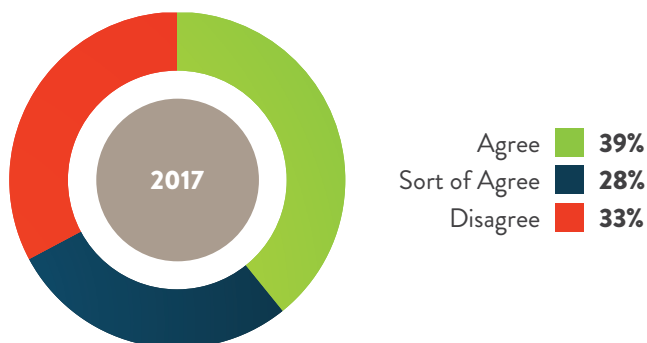
### We would like to thank the following participants:

**Keith-Thomas Ayoob, EdD, RD, FAND** – Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; **David M. Bersoff, Ph.D.** – Senior Vice President, Head of Thought Leadership Research, Edelman Intelligence; **Denise Broady** – Chief Marketing Officer, WorkForce Software; **Katie Brown, EdD, RDN, LD** – Chief Global Nutrition Strategy Officer, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation; **David Cooperrider, Ph.D.** – President and Chief Executive Officer, Cooperrider and Associates; University Distinguished Professor, Case Western Reserve University; **David Duguid** – Vice President, Knowledge & Insights, Dairy Management, Inc.; **Arianna Huffington** – Founder, Thrive Global; **Bob Hill** – Marketing Lead, Ergotron; **Joe Jordan** – Chief Marketing Officer, Domino's; **Juliana Stone** – Director of Partnerships, Thrive Global; **David Mounts** – Chief Executive Officer, Inmar Inc.

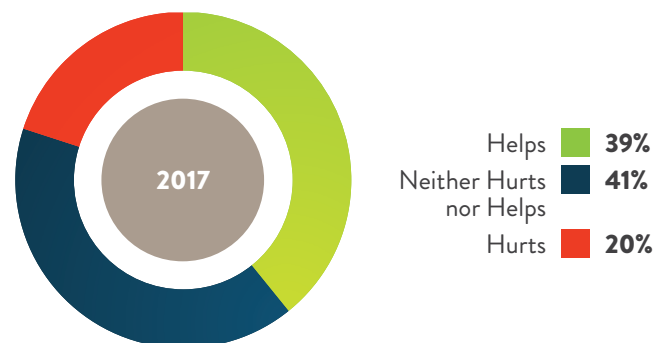
**Less good news:** A third of kids are stressed about their health and wellness – and neither school nor technology are helping.

- Nearly one in three young people (**29%**) are stressed about what he or she eats and two out of five (**38%**) stress over their fitness level.
- **45%** feel that they don't get enough sleep.
- **42%** feel stressed out a lot of the time.
- Only **39%** say that they can learn what they need to know about health and wellness from the classes at their school. And only **39%** say that technology in general helps their health and wellness. Both of these percentages are lower among high school versus middle school students.

I can learn what I need to know about health and wellness from the classes at my school.



Is technology hurting or helping your health and wellness?



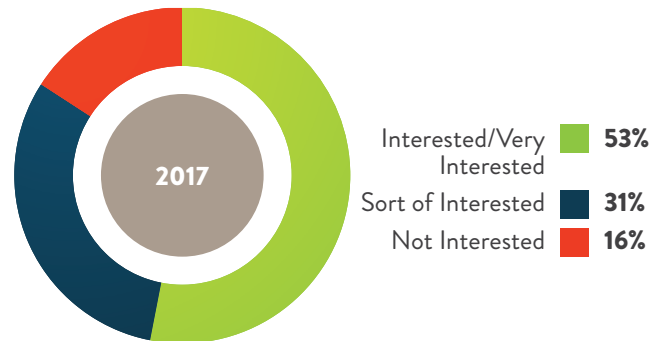
## WHAT ABOUT TECHNOLOGY AND KIDS' HEALTH?

- Only **1** in **10** young people today uses technology effectively to enhance their health and well-being. Yet the majority of kids are interested in technology to support their wellness.
  - **11%** of survey respondents are able to use technology to enhance their health. This “embracer” group feels technology is helping, not hurting, their health and wellbeing – and they feel technology is one important element to improving their wellness.
    - “Embracers” also are very interested in trying new things; **61%** say they’re the first to try new things compared with only **34%** of the rest of the student population.
  - By contrast, **65%** of respondents use technology or apps as part of their social and entertainment life – compared to only **29%** who say that they use technology and apps as part of their health and wellness routine.
  - **45%** of students believe that technology can help relieve stress.
  - And **53%** of respondents are interested or very interested in technology that focuses specifically on health and wellness – especially things like apps, fitness trackers, websites and social media related to their health and well-being.
- The #1 cited reason for not using the many types of technology the survey asked about: youth just aren’t interested in them.
  - **42%** say that new health-related apps or devices are not designed with “people my age” contributing to the creative, product development phase, but they should be if they are expected to use such resources in their daily routine.
  - Perhaps this is why the technology that survey respondents like best for their own health and wellness is YouTube. Why? They can hear voices like theirs and issues they care about.

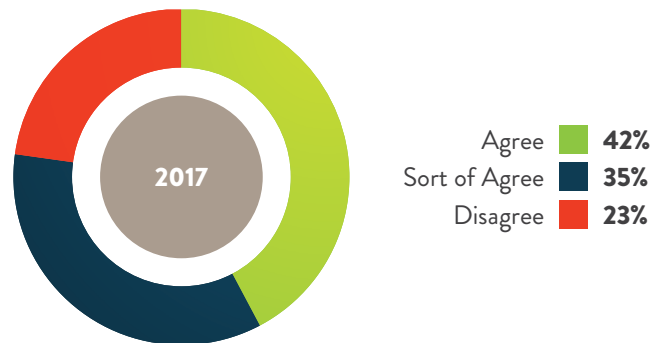
## WHAT'S THE PROGRAM DIFFERENCE?

- Students in GENYOUth programs (Fuel Up to Play 60, AdVenture Capital) are more health conscious and more interested in technology to support their well-being than are control group students.
  - They’re more likely to say that they’re a leader at their school trying to make it a better place; that they use sports/exercise as a way to connect with others; that they try to eat healthy; and that friends and peers come to them for their opinion on things.
  - They’re also more likely to say their school is a healthy place – in fact, a majority of GENYOUth program affiliated students (**52%**) say their school promotes a healthy environment compared to a minority (**42%**) of control group students.
- But even these health conscious youth haven’t figured out how to use technology to support their wellness.
  - Only **12%** of GENYOUth program students – and even fewer (**8%**) of control group students – say they’re incorporating health and wellness technology today.

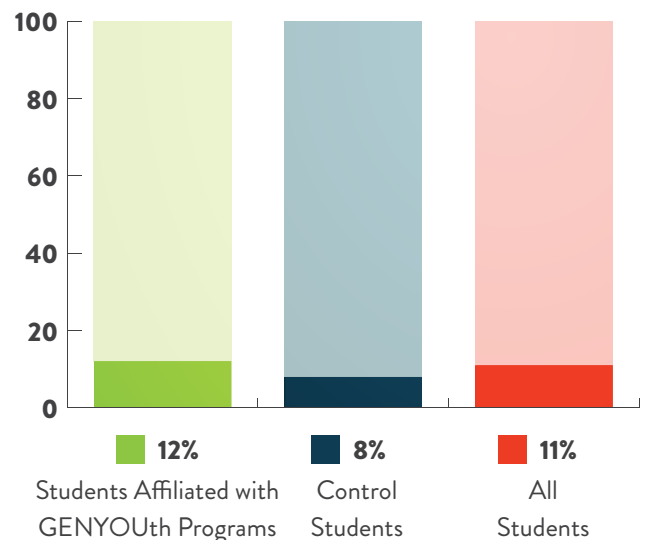
### How interested are you in technology that focuses on your health and wellness (things like apps, fitness trackers, websites and social media related to health and wellness, etc.)?



### New health-related apps or devices are not designed with people my age in mind, but they should be.



### Percent of students who embrace technology to support their health and wellness.





## Drilling Deeper on Survey Responses

How do survey results vary based on where youth live and their age, gender and race/ethnicity? Below are areas where significant differences emerged.

### **By gender...**

- Girls report being stressed out about their health more than boys. Boys are more likely to say they're too young to worry about their health.
- Both boys and girls get their health and wellness information from friends, family and social media, but girls get more information from celebrities, while boys get more information from pro-athletes.
- Interest in health and wellness tech is slightly higher among girls than boys.
- Girls are more likely than boys to say that current health and wellness technology is not developed with people their age in mind.

### **By age...**

- Younger (middle school-aged) students are more likely than older (high school-aged) students to believe that their school has a healthy environment.
- Older students are more likely to say that taking care of their health and wellness is too expensive.
- Older students are more influenced than younger students by shopping websites and YouTube.

### **By race/ethnicity...**

- Regardless of their race/ethnicity, students generally have similar levels of interest in, and use of, technology for health and wellness.
- However, students of color are more likely to agree that "technology is one of the most important things that helps me improve or support my health and wellness."
- Students of color are more likely to rely on digital media (social media, news websites, YouTube) as trusted sources of information.

### **By geography...**

- Urban students use technology more than students in suburbs, towns and rural areas.
- Urban students are more likely to say that current health and wellness technology is not designed with people their age in mind.
- Rural students are more likely to say they're too young to worry about their health.
- Students across all regions and urban/rural classifications show similar levels of interest in and use of health and wellness technologies.

## The Bottom Line

- Today's youth care about their health now and in their future. Technology available to young people today could, or should, be doing more to support their health and well-being.
- Health and wellness related technology available to young people today is not something they feel is compelling. Yet there's an appetite among youth for health and wellness technology designed to achieve their goals.
- Unmet demand and need represents the opportunity – and, perhaps, a responsibility given GenZ's near-universal reliance on technology – for navigating education, health/public health and marketing sectors.

## What This Means for...

**Developers, designers and manufacturers of technologies.** The unmet demand among youth for health and wellness technologies clearly represents an opportunity to involve them in the creation, design and marketing of new products and services geared to kids and teens. Learn more about harnessing and leveraging youth voice for business good and social good at [www.GENYOUthNow.org](http://www.GENYOUthNow.org).

**Educators and schools.** Encourage students to envision and even create their own technology solutions for better health and wellness as part of your school's STEM, coding, makerspace and project-based learning initiatives. Also, take advantage of programs like Fuel Up to Play 60 ([FuelUptoPlay60.com](http://FuelUptoPlay60.com)) and AdVenture Capital ([AdCapYouth.org](http://AdCapYouth.org)), which can help students develop and strengthen their leadership and social entrepreneurship skills.

**Parents.** Survey results show that youth rely on their families as a trusted source for information – so encourage your children to eat well and move more, and be a role model for making healthy choices yourself.

**Youth.** Let companies know what you like, what you need and how they can improve their offerings for you and your peers. Develop and use your talents to design your own solutions! Fuel Up to Play 60 ([FuelUptoPlay60.com](http://FuelUptoPlay60.com)) has starter ideas (and funding) for things you can do with other students and staff to create a healthier school – and AdVenture Capital ([AdCapYouth.org](http://AdCapYouth.org)) has a project planner to help student social entrepreneurs create healthy solutions.

**Make your voice heard in GENYOUth's future youth surveys; visit <https://tinyurl.com/GYResearchPanel> to join!**

**Notes on Methodology:** Online survey conducted October 6 to November 13, 2017, with a nationally representative sample of middle, junior and senior high school students, ages 11 to 18, including 1,315 youth affiliated with GENYOUth programs and initiatives (e.g., Fuel Up to Play 60 and AdVenture Capital) and 501 youth in a control group. Results were statistically weighted to ensure a representative group by gender, age, geography and school/neighborhood income level. Survey results have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.