

DETOXIFYING MASCULINITY



The New Way To 'Be A Man' According To Gen Z

Gen Z is challenging the status quo by redefining gender, not only for young women with empowerment but also for young men who want to distance themselves from past generations' toxic masculinity, instead embracing their emotional and caring sides.

Teen boys are testing new social norms, but the outdated messaging around what it means to "be a man" in advertising is leaving them feeling frustrated, misunderstood, and isolated by the brands and media trying to reach them.

men then & now



from tough guy

"My dad would probably say someone like John Cena [is his role model] because he is a very strong, muscular guy who just clearly displays his definition of masculinity."

Sam, 16



to smart guy

93%

of teen boys aged 13-17 believe being smart is an important part of being masculine today, making it the top characteristic of masculinity to them

"When I was younger I always thought being masculine was about who was the strongest or who had muscles. Today, being masculine is all about respect and being mature, the way one interacts with other people with firm ideals."

Louis, 20



from provider

"My father would probably describe masculinity as someone who provides for their loved ones, working long hours, and often sacrificing time he can spend with family for his job."

Gade, 17



to caring contributor

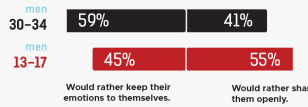


of Gen Z young men think it's okay for a woman to be the primary earner in a family



think it's okay for a man to be the primary caregivers for their children

from reserved to real



not your father's masculinity

3/4

of teen boys believe there isn't just one definition of masculinity today

role model behavior



"Kelly Slater represents masculinity to me because he works hard in noble humanitarian efforts and is respectful to everyone."

Julian, 17



"The Weeknd is very masculine to me. His songs convey how important it is to have a support system in my life."

Cade, 17



"Chance the Rapper represents masculinity to me because he cares a lot about his family and his city."

Bruno, 17

9 in 10

teen boys believe that being caring and being family oriented are important parts of masculinity today

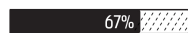
6 in 10

teen boys say that being sensitive is an important part of masculinity today

Photo Credit: Kelly Slater, (Byun Lee); The Weeknd, (Anton Mak); Chance the Rapper (DJ Akisany).

how media mans up

brand brush-off



of teen boys are less likely to buy from a brand that portrays masculinity in a way they disagree with

ad appeal



of teen boys are more likely to buy from a brand that portrays masculinity in a way they relate to



of teen boys are more likely to pay attention to advertising that aligns with their definition of masculinity

"No brands best reflect my perception of masculinity. All brands are still too invested in the idea that there is only one way to be a man, which is messed up."

Blake, 19

Top Messages Boys Hear About Masculinity In Entertainment

- Boys will be boys
- Be tough
- Be a man
- Suck it up
- Don't act like a girl
- Don't cry

61%

of teen boys say it's hard to find messages in entertainment and advertising that reflect how they feel about being a man today

Whistle Sports and Cassandra conducted an online survey among 500 U.S. men aged 13-24 and aged 20-34, nationally representative by age, region, and race. The survey was conducted May 1 to May 8, 2018. In addition, Whistle Sports and Cassandra conducted an online qualitative discussion among 15 U.S. Gen Z men aged 16 to 20, selected to be geographically and racially diverse. The online discussion took place April 25 to April 29, 2018.



CASSANDRA