



Gen Z Deep Dive: eharmony Explores How the Social Media Generation Navigates Love, Sex, and Relationships

eharmony's **Dating Diaries report**—a series of timely consumer studies that reveal how Americans *really* feel about their love lives—is back! This time, our report is **diving deep into Gen Z**, the first generation to start their love lives on dating apps and social media.

How has this unique upbringing shaped their approaches to dating, sex, and the forces that influence their love lives? And how much does Gen Z differ from other generations regarding dating and relationships, or how similar are they actually? For example, while the generation is known for being social media savvy, **38% of Gen Z singles find being an influencer a turn-off**. Plus, **only 11% of single Gen Z respondents trust social media with questions about their love lives**, while 23% of Millennials trust social media over friends, family, therapists, or other resources.

This report goes beyond the swipes, the likes, and the DMs, to uncover all there is to know about the digital native generation.

Hashtag Romance: Social Media's Impact On Dating

It's no secret that Gen Z spends a lot of time on social media and dating apps (*49% spend at least one hour per day on social media*). But with this influx of social media usage, comes fatigue — **more than half of single Gen Z respondents report currently experiencing social media fatigue (56%)**.

Gen Z love stories start with a double tap. Gen Z grew up alongside the rise of social media, which has directly impacted how they date and find new partners. In fact, **57% of single Gen Z respondents say they've met at least half of their romantic partners via dating apps/social media**. Given this, it's important to curate your digital presence wisely. **The most common social media turn-offs for Gen Z singles are:**

- Bad taste in memes: **42%**
- Being an influencer: **38%**
- Using GIFs regularly: **32%**
- Not having an active social media presence: **31%**
- Sliding into DMs before meeting up in real life: **30%**

Hard launch vs. soft launch? The most popular choice may surprise you. 25% of single Gen Z respondents wait a few months before sharing details about their relationship on social media, and 21% wait until they're in an exclusive relationship to do so. And surprisingly, **13% of Gen Z singles don't share anything about their relationship on social media**.

Gen Z vs Millennials. While Millennials grew up during the tech revolution, Gen Z grew up with the internet at their fingertips. This has directly impacted the way they trust the internet and digital mediums. In fact, **when single Millennials have dating questions, nearly a quarter (23%) trust social media over friends, family, therapists, or other resources, compared to just 11% of Gen Z**.



Scrolling overload. While 60% of single daters don't think dating app fatigue is a thing, **Gen Z is most likely to report experiencing this (48%)**. And of those experiencing dating app fatigue, 49% of Gen Z cited "it's hard to tell who is genuine and who isn't" as the biggest contributor to their fatigue.

"It takes a lot of time and effort to date so it's natural to feel fatigue at one point or another," shares Minaa B., an eharmony relationship expert. "One of the best ways to make dating a positive experience is to ensure that you're connecting with people who are aligned on important things such as your values and interest in dating. If you're looking for a serious relationship, it's important to use a dating app that aligns with your goals. eharmony, for example, specializes in connecting people who are looking for real love through their Compatibility Quiz. The Quiz identifies a baseline of compatibility with questions about communication styles, likes and dislikes, personality, etc., to help you match with someone who will truly 'get' you."

Sex Life, Labels, and Stigmas: Generational Gaps and Similarities

As temperatures rise, so do our chances for a sizzling romance. 50% of singles report going on the highest number of dates in summer. And **53% of Gen Z singles report being more likely to casually hook up with someone in the summer** compared to other times of the year. **Here are the trends single Gen Z daters are most likely to embrace this summer.**

- Situationships (*undefined relationships between a casual hookup and commitment*): **38%**
- Hot girl summer (*confident state of mind*): **37%**
- The relationship effect (*spending less time with friends/family because of a relationship*): **23%**
- Sex boom (*focusing on sex*): **20%**
- Soft launch (*a subtle inclusion of the person you're dating into your online presence*): **23%**
- Expirationships (*relationships that will expire at the end of summer or season*): **21%**
- Villain era (*rejecting societal pressure to "play nice"*): **18%**

"As the weather heats up, so do the sex drives of single daters, leading to their attraction to summer love or 'SumLuv,'" shares Laurel House, an eharmony relationship expert. "'SumLuv' flings can turn into 'SumMore' if your mindset shifts and both you and your partner want something more enduring and long term. There's a strong potential for this shift because 'SumLuv' daters tend to be more authentic when they think the relationship is short term. This can lead to creating a strong connection with the feeling of being truly seen."

When it comes to sex trends and stigmas, the generations view things differently. For example, when having sex with a new partner for the first time, **Gen Z is most likely to have unprotected sex (26%)** compared to other generations, including Millennials (16%). Plus, 45% of Gen Z singles are comfortable dating more than one person at the same time.

- **Gen Z likes to keep things fresh in the bedroom.** Nearly half of Gen Z singles have used more than six sex positions so far this year (46%), compared to 40% of Millennials.
- **The "three date rule" is so yesterday.** 65% of singles (all generations) would have no issue dating someone seriously after sleeping with them on the first date.
- **Millennials prioritize sex over Gen Z.** 91% of Millennials in relationships have sex at least once a week, compared to 78% of Gen Z.



- **STD/STI and HIV stigmas are still present in all generations of singles.** Almost 2/3s (64%) of singles (all generations) would not date someone with an STD/STI.

“Gen Z tends to be more sexually free than Millennials, who are taking a “slow burn” approach to dating, and feel confident exploring their sexuality with fewer boundaries and limitations,” explains House. “While outdated trends like the ‘three date rule’ no longer apply, it’s important to set clear expectations before starting a sexual relationship. If you’re someone who feels emotional attachment after having sex then maybe a slow burn relationship is the best approach for you. Be honest with yourself and your partner to avoid confusion and heartbreak.”

Emotional connections are the new foreplay. Before having sex, 23% of singles are looking to feel sexual chemistry, and 22% want to feel an emotional connection. An equal share (19%) wants to feel physically safe with someone and to know there’s potential for a long-term relationship.

- **Gen Z:** Emotional connection (25%), sexual chemistry (19%), physically safe (18%).
- **Millennials:** Sexual chemistry (24%), Emotional connection (23%), potential for long term relationship (20%).

From whispers to emojis, where do we turn to find new things to try in the bedroom? Gen Z singles are more likely to utilize social media than any other age group (41%) when it comes to learning new things to try during sex. While overall, singles from all generations are most likely to learn about new things to try during sex from their friends (39%), partners (37%), porn/erotica (34%) and social media (32%).

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About “The Dating Diaries” Report

The Dating Diaries: Social Media, Labels and Gen Z 2023 report was commissioned by eharmony and conducted by Harris Interactive. The survey was fielded online between April 24th, 2023 and May 4th, 2023 and surveyed over 2,000 participants. Participants qualified if they were aged 21+ and were either married, cohabiting, in a relationship, or were currently dating. Results were weighted to be nationally representative by age, gender, and region.

About eharmony

Los Angeles-based eharmony has helped over 2 million people find real love. As one of the original dating platforms, eharmony has been at the forefront of creating meaningful relationships based on its innovative Compatibility Matching System. The company operates in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. For more information visit www.eharmony.com or download the app available on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).