



**ZERO TO THREE**  
Early connections last a lifetime

## Millennial Parents: Closing the Parenting Information Gap Using Multimedia Tools

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ZERO TO THREE, Washington, DC

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### Agenda

- Who Are Millennial Parents?
- What do Millennial Parents Think, Believe, and Practice When It Comes to Parenting?
- Engaging with Millennials: Examples of ZERO TO THREE's multimedia parent engagement strategies



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### Who are the Millennials?



- Born between 1980 and 2000.
- 40% of Millennials, from a cohort of 80 million, are parents today—translating to **more than 32 million parents**.
- Age of first-time mothers is rising—now 26 years of age

SOURCE:  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/daffron/2017/08/21/look-into-the-life-of-millennial-parents-why-dont-they-leave-the-nest/>  
<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/05/09/5-questions-and-answers-about-american-moms/>

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**Most Diverse Generation** 



- Half of the Millennial generation is non-white.
- By the time Millennials' childbearing years come to an end, America will be a "majority minority" country.

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**Being a Good Parent: A Valued Life Goal** 

- BabyCenter reported that nearly 80% of Millennial moms agree with the statement that it's important to be "the perfect mom," a higher percentage than both Gen X and Boomer mothers.
- 52% of Millennial parents said "being a good parent" was one of the most important goals in their lives
- As compared to: 30% of whom said having a successful marriage was one of their most important lifetime goals.



<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/05/04/more-than-a-million-millennials-are-becoming-moms-each-year/>

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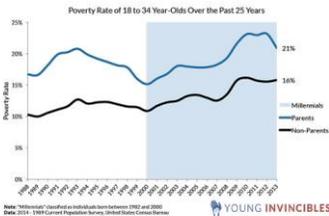
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**Many Millennials Are Struggling Financially** 

- About 20% of parents between the ages of 18 and 34 live in poverty (Young Invincibles, 2015).



<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffromm/2017/08/21/a-look-into-the-lives-of-millennial-parents-what-brands-need-to-know/#43df00156cf>

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### Millennials are digitally connected.



*"The very first thing... is we go online and we Google. I don't think that's a good thing. It's convenient..." (Emilio, Chicago)*

- 94% of Millennial parents in our survey reported owning a smartphone.
- 74% use it to access the Internet many times a day.
- New parents are 2.7 times more likely than non-parents to use a smartphone as a primary device.
- 3 in 5 Millennial moms turn to online video when conducting parent-related searches.

SOURCES: ZERO TO THREE, 2018. First Things First: <https://summit.firstthingsfirst.org/Media/Default/docs/2017-presentations/CAC/CA20180303engaging10Millennial100parents%20Online.pdf>  
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### More Parenting Information Than Ever Before!



## Information Overload

- Amount of child-rearing information can be daunting to parents
- Quality of information is inconsistent (Child Trends, 2018)
- A majority of moms and dads (58%) say there is so much parenting information available that it's hard to know whom to trust. (ZERO TO THREE, 2016)
- 63% of parents say they are "skeptical of people who give parenting advice and recommendations if they don't know my child and my situation specifically." (ZERO TO THREE, 2016)

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### What Is the Role of Libraries?



What can libraries do to cut through this information overload?



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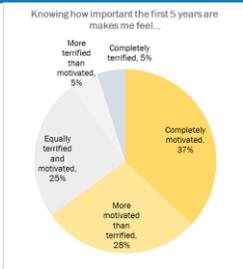
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And Today's Parents Know the Early Years Matter!



ZERO TO THREE, Tuning In Parent Survey, 2016.

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What have Millennial parents told us?



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Our Survey Work Focuses on Millennial Parents



[www.zerotothree.org/parentsurvey](http://www.zerotothree.org/parentsurvey)

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Key Findings From ZERO TO THREE's *Tuning In Parent Research*



- Parenting Can Be Learned
- The "Missing" First Year
- The Expectation Gap
- The Discipline Dilemma
- The Daddy Factor

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Parents believe parenting *can* be learned.



**69%** of parents say that if they knew **more positive parenting strategies**, they would use them.

**54%** of parents wish they had more information about **how to be a better parent**.

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Developmental Dilemmas



- What developmental or behavioral issues do you ask about most? Or do you see them struggle with most?
- How does a lack of information translate to parenting choices?



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**There is an Expectation Gap.**



Skill	Age of Acquisition	Parents' Responses
Can share and take turns with peers	3 to 4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% - 6 months or younger</li> <li>• 23% - 1 year</li> <li>• 28% - 2 years</li> <li>• <b>29% - 3 or older</b></li> </ul>
Can resist the desire to do something parents have forbidden	3.5 to 4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18% - 6 months or younger</li> <li>• 18% - 1 year</li> <li>• 20% - 2 years</li> <li>• <b>44% - 3 or older</b></li> </ul>
Can control his/her emotions	3.5 to 4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24% - 1 year or younger</li> <li>• 18% - 2 years</li> <li>• <b>58% - 3 or older</b></li> </ul>

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**Parents Face a Discipline Dilemma...**



More than half of all parents agreed:  
 “Figuring out the most effective way to discipline” and  
 “Managing my child when he/she misbehaves”  
 are their biggest parenting challenges.

*“I was never disciplined, and I want my daughter to know there are consequences... I wish I would have gotten discipline... I want to be the main person in my daughter’s life to discipline her, and to know that there are consequences to everything she does.”*  
 (Windy)

*“I feel like you’re cheating them if you don’t [discipline] because I feel like you could go out here in the world and do anything and expect no repercussions.”*  
 (William)

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**Parent Don’t Want to Use Harsh Strategies**



- **Almost a third (30%) of all parents say: “I spank even though I don’t feel okay about it.”**
- Of those parents who say they spank their children frequently—several times a week or more—fully **77% do not count it as “one of the most effective methods of discipline.”**

*“I’ve spanked my daughter before. It hurts. Every time I whoop her I cry; I go to the bathroom and cry, it just kills me.”* (Roshawndra)

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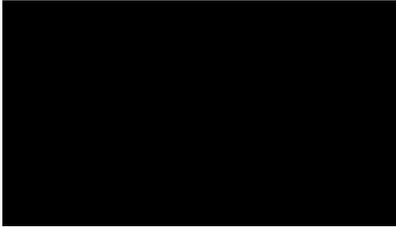
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In Their Own Words



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Parents want to learn effective discipline methods.



*"If your kids are afraid of you, they're not going to come and tell you stuff...I know my son, he'll be scared that...mom's going to beat me up... I don't want them to have that kind of fear. I do want them to respect me. (Jasmine)*

- 58% wish they knew more effective ways to discipline their child.
- 60% want to have more patience
- 47% want to do better at controlling their own emotions and reactions

*"If I could learn [something] besides the no's, and timeouts don't work...if there is another way they can listen to me without a spanking, I would prefer not to spank them." (Sandy)*

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Ceci Vlog Series



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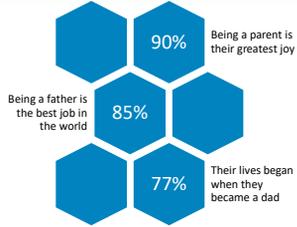
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Millennial Dads are more than babysitters. ZERO TO THREE



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In Their Own Words ZERO TO THREE



*"The biggest thing I hate, [is when people say] 'Oh, you're babysitting your kids?' They're my kids. I can't babysit my kids... How do you babysit what you brought into this world?" (Damien, Dallas)*

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Millennial Dads are doing it differently... ZERO TO THREE

- Show more affection (52%)
- Participate more in playtime and other quality time (47%)
- Read more to their child (46%)
- Say "I love you" more (54%)

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Engaging Dads in the Library Setting 

• If you could run any program or develop any tool to engage dads/father figures in library services, what would you do?



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Daddy Matters Series with La Guardia Cross 



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La Guardia Cross – Partnering with Media Influencers 



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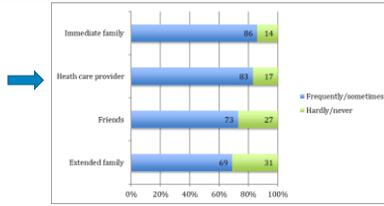
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Personal Networks: Critical Sources of Parenting Info



www.zerotothree.org/babystepsconnections



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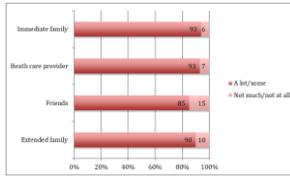
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Trust Ratings High for Frequently-Used Sources



Social networks and health care providers also the most TRUSTED sources of information for parents



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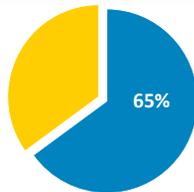
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Parents Trust Other Parents



- 65 percent of survey respondents said that including experiences and stories from parents would make them more trusting of the information provided.



www.zerotothree.org/babysteps

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### How Can You Bring Parent Voices Into the Library?



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### Case Study: Watertown (MA) Free Public Library



- Librarians observed a story time for infants aged 0-12 months, and then talked with families about:
  - Why they come to the library
  - What they like
  - What improvements they'd like to see
- Librarians then identified family needs and brainstormed programming ideas, focusing on two themes:
  - The desire of families with young children to connect to one another
  - Families' desire to get/share information in nonjudgmental settings
- Libraries are now dedicating part of story time sessions to family conversations around child-rearing questions.

See the Public Library Association's *Ideabook* for more ideas on family engagement:  
<https://globalfrp.org/Articles/Ideabook-download-form>

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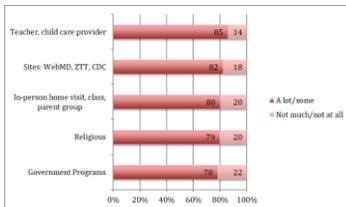
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### Parents Trust a Wide Network of Info Sources



[www.zerotothree.org/files/parentconnections](http://www.zerotothree.org/files/parentconnections) Copyright © 2013 ZERO TO THREE. All rights reserved. 36

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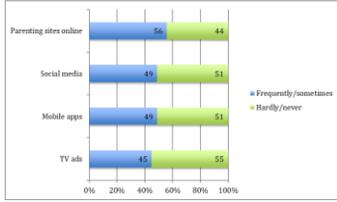
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### Millennial Parents Rely on Diverse Digital Info Sources



Parents are connected to a range of online information sources



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### New Improved Babies on the Homefront App



<http://babiesonthehomefront.org/>

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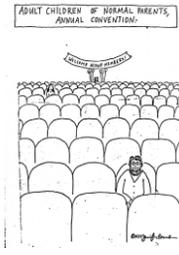
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### Parenting is all On-The-Job Training



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Thank You for Attending!



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