

A Quick Look at Baby Boomers

While not everyone who is in middle-adulthood is a baby boomer, all baby boomers (those born between approximately 1946-1964) are currently in middle adulthood. Although every individual is unique, this snapshot of the baby boom generation will provide some food for thought as you plan for ministry by and with mid-life adults.

Health

- Cancer is the leading cause of death
- About two-thirds are overweight
- About one-fourth currently smoke, and half of those have tried to quit in the past year.
- Lower back pain is the most common health condition followed by high blood pressure and arthritis.

Life Events

- 88% have been married at least once
- 40% have gotten a divorce
- 29% have remarried
- 36% have lost a job
- 49% have experienced their father's death
- 30% have experienced their mother's death
- 35% have become a grandparent

Employment

- Comprise 43% of the U.S. workforce
- 87% of men are in the workforce
- 75% of women are in the workforce
- In approximately 70% of boomer couples, both spouses are employed
- Comprise the majority of chief executives, computer systems managers, physicians, engineers, clergy, and teachers
- Approximately 8% are self-employed, slightly more than the total adult population
- 1% make minimum wage or less

Households

- Approximately 60% are headed by married couples
- The average size of household is about 2.5 people
- Over 60% of younger boomers have children under the age of 18 in the household.
- One third of older boomers have children under the age of 18 in the household.
- Among older boomer women (age 55-59), nearly 18% live alone

Spending

- Are the nations biggest spenders
- Spending on health care has increased rapidly
- Are the nations biggest debtors

Attitudes

- Are more similar to younger adults than older adults in their assessment of their personal lives
- Consider family and friends the most important and satisfying aspects of their lives with their religious and spiritual lives being the next most important
- Report less satisfaction with their personal finances and their work lives than other aspects of their lives
- Female baby boomers are more likely to report a high degree of satisfaction with their spiritual lives than are male baby boomers
- Race and ethnicity play a larger role in shaping baby boomer attitudes toward life than do age, gender, income, or education

Frequent Issues

- Aging parents
- Work and preretirement
- Death of a parent
- Parenting school-aged children
- Adult children returning home

Sources

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