



Vegan to Velveeta: Gen Z and the Era of “Food-Choice Autonomy”

The Hartman Group’s Gen Z 2018 report finds that busy household schedules mean that teens do much of their own food prep and often eat alone for every meal except dinner (and occasionally at dinner, too).

Bellevue, WA — With the oldest just entering their 20s, the vast majority Gen Z are young and with parents or parent working, these kids are left alone at home, often after school, to face a daily daunting dilemma: what to eat? According to The Hartman Group’s [Gen Z 2018](#) report, today’s teens are not afraid of the kitchen.

“Busy household schedules mean that teens do much of their own food prep and often eat alone for every at-home meal except dinner, though, occasionally at dinner, they’re on their own too,” says Laurie Demeritt, CEO of [The Hartman Group](#), which studies and advises on all aspects of food and beverage culture. “Because of these circumstances, today’s teens have a lot of sway over what they eat within their own homes — especially snacks.”

With so much autonomy at home and easy access to information and instruction, Gen Z are actually quite confident in the kitchen. A practical generation, they see cooking as an accessible life skill available to anyone with an internet connection.

Today’s teens often put together their own breakfasts, select their own lunches, and make their own snacks. Seven in ten (70 percent) of Gen Z say they have “total control” over what they eat for snacks. Dinner tends to be the meal most likely eaten with family and thus likely planned and cooked by parents and subject to others’ desires.

Autonomy over food choice means that many teens have a personal set of food and beverage options, sometimes things that no one else may touch.

Older teens tend to prepare more of their own food. They often have whole sections of the pantry that belong just to them. These items have been specifically requested and occasionally even directly purchased by teens and are not meant for others in the home to eat.

About Gen Z 2018 Report

The Hartman Group’s [Gen Z 2018](#) report explores this generation’s values, attitudes, and approaches when it comes to food and beverages, eating and cooking, health and wellness, sources of information and inspiration, food retail, and restaurants. Gen Z 2018 focuses on Gen Z teens aged 12-20, with relevant comparisons to older generations: Millennials, Gen X, and Baby Boomers.

About The Hartman Group

Since 1989, The Hartman Group has been translating consumer behavior and food culture into strategic growth opportunities for our clients. We are 100 percent focused on the food and beverage marketplace and our clients’ interests. We deliver smart, strategic and tactical advice, engaging collaborative experiences and comprehensive research and analysis that lead to positive outcomes for our clients. For more information, visit www.hartman-group.com

Press contact:

Blaine Becker, Sr. Director of Marketing
O: 425.452.0818 E: blaine@hartman-group.com