

GEN ALPHA: THE FOOD-CONFIDENT CONSUMERS

New research finds majority of kids enjoy cooking

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The food retail industry should be ready to engage with the next generation of at-home chefs. Research from the Y-Pulse Youth Lifestyle Monitor delved into the rising culinary confidence of young people ages 8 to 18 who are becoming self-assured cooks. The research and consulting practice's report cited food media, chefs, food and nutrition professionals, and parents as important influences for these Generation Z and Alpha age groups.

In a Y-Pulse survey of 8- to 18-year-olds, the majority (85%) reported that a parent in the household prepares most of the meals. Yet more than half (56%) reported that they enjoy cooking for their family.

Entertainment is playing a major role in kids' culinary education. The Youth Lifestyle Monitor reported more than half (56%) of K-12 kids are watching the Food Network and "Tasty"-style videos. Forty-six percent said they tried to cook some of the meals they saw on videos and social media platforms, and 58% liked to cook for themselves.

In fact, kids have become more than the audience for cooking shows; they have become the talent. Young consumers have increasingly taken on the role of influencer in today's food culture. As reported by Y-Pulse, a review of social media platforms showed a growing trend of cooking shows hosted by kids, for kids on various platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Facebook. These shows often focused on simple and fun recipes that children can easily follow and recreate at home.

"Today's food-savvy Millennial moms are influencing a new generation of kids who are self-assured when it comes to



Successful grocers will need to understand the importance of engaging young tastemakers.

cooking and critiquing food," noted Sharon Olson, executive director of Chicago-based Y-Pulse.

Meanwhile, members of Gen Z in their early to mid-20s are having a significant impact on the beverage category as this up-and-coming consumer group's demands are propelling innovation in flavor profile, packaging, and product formats, according to the "State of the CPG Beverage Alcohol Industry" report from Circana.

Among all food and beverage departments, beverage alcohol has experienced the least inflation in recent years. This stability presents an opportunity for beverage marketers to emphasize value, enhance in-store experiences, and increase engagement through store apps and social media channels, the report said.

The Y-Pulse studies referenced included The School Meal Innovation Lab, the "Youth Lifestyle Monitor" series, ongoing School Nutrition Leadership Roundtables, and "Get The Skinny on Marketing to Kids and Modern Parents."