

# COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES PART 1

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**WAVE 168:** CONDUCTED OCT 27 - 29 4 - 9

**WAVE 167:** CONDUCTED OCT 20 - 22 10 - 15

**WAVE 166:** CONDUCTED OCT 13 - 15 16 - 22

**WAVE 165:** CONDUCTED OCT 8 - 10 22 - 27

**WAVE 164:** CONDUCTED SEPT 29 - OCT 1 28 - 33

**WAVE 163:** CONDUCTED SEPT 22 - 24 34 - 39

**WAVE 162:** CONDUCTED SEPT 15 - 17 40 - 45

**WAVE 161:** CONDUCTED SEPT 8 - 10 47 - 51

**WAVE 160:** CONDUCTED SEPT 1 - 3 52 - 57

**WAVE 159:** CONDUCTED AUG 25 - 27 58 - 63

**WAVE 158:** CONDUCTED AUG 18 - 20 64 - 69

**WAVE 157:** CONDUCTED AUG 11 - 13 70 - 75

**WAVE 156:** CONDUCTED JULY 28 - 30 76 - 81

**Stagwell** and **The Harris Poll** have partnered to conduct research to monitor the pulse of the American Consumer.

The executive summaries on the pages that follow provide insight into current consumer attitudes and behavior and can be used to help navigate the changing industry landscape. We hope this information proves useful to you and your team as you address these changes in real time and strategize for your next moves.

As always, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Positively,

**Ryan Linder + The Stagwell Family**

Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP



# Wave 168

## WAVE 168 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **October 27 - October 29, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,112** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

Topic:

## FED'S FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION RATTLES MIDDLE-CLASS AMERICANS: BLOOMBERG-HARRIS POLL

### Introduction:

In our third installment on The Middle Class [with Bloomberg](#), we find that despite roaring growth and a resilient job market, more middle-class Americans are worried about the state of the economy than a year ago. Here's what else is on their minds:

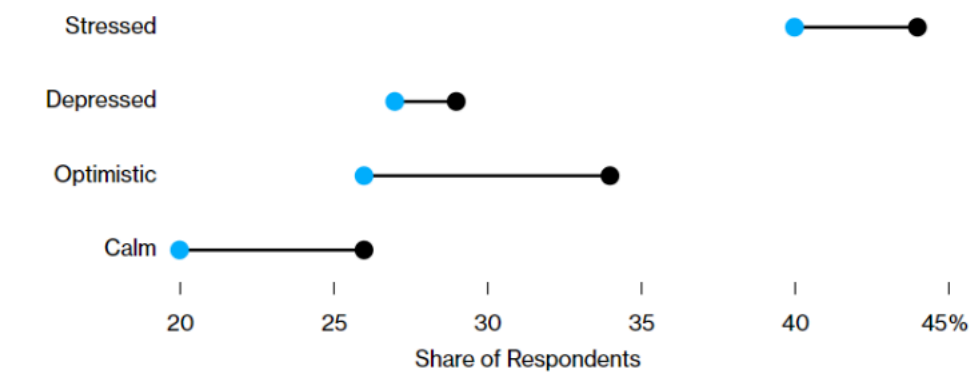
- Finances aren't changing for the better: 6 in 10 (61%) middle-class Americans said their personal financial situation was worse or unchanged from a year ago. Only (12%) said they were in a "much better" circumstance.
- Three-quarters also say they are paying more and more for goods and services, and two-thirds said higher prices for household essentials are hurting them financially.

- And over a half (57%) reported higher borrowing costs were hurting their household finances.
- These strains contributed to downbeat sentiment about pocketbook issues: Some (44%) said they were stressed about the economy, up from (40%) a year ago and (39%) in March.

### Consumers Feel Stress About the US Economy

While gains were seen in optimism about the economy, stress rose too

● Fall 2023 ● Fall 2022



Source: Harris Poll | Bloomberg

Harris Poll/Bloomberg study of 4,166 Americans Sept 29-Oct 8, 2023

### Implication:

Economists aren't sitting at kitchen tables with middle-class Americans. For most, their paychecks are still chasing their bills, and they feel they're falling further and further behind. And even rising wages aren't enough, as (63%) report that stagnant wages also hurt their finances and (42%) that their costs are rising faster than their wages.

Section:

# 02

Topic:

## OLDER AMERICANS DOWNVOTE AI HIRING: INDEED-HARRIS POLL

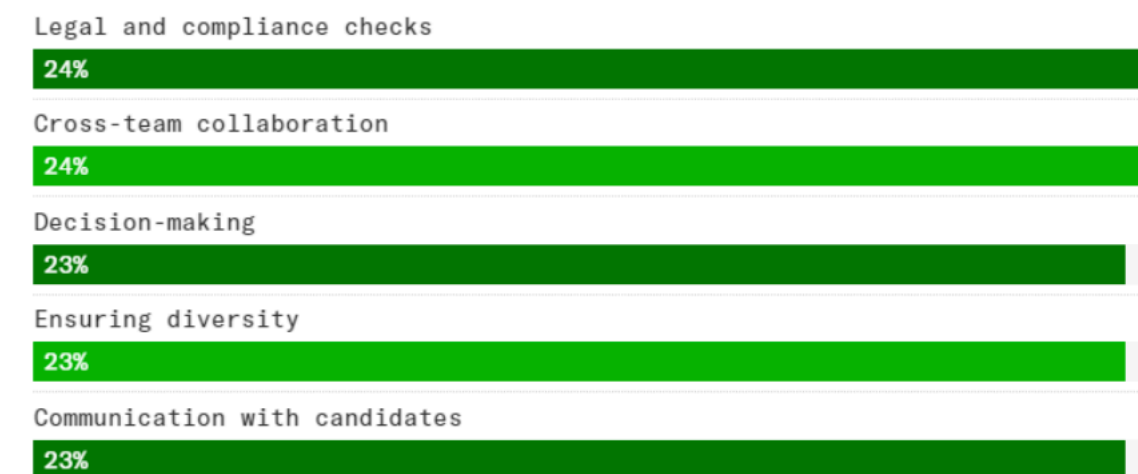
Introduction:

With record numbers of [retiring Boomers causing a labor shortfall](#), our new poll with Indeed [in Fast Company](#) finds hiring managers are likely alienating older job applicants with their automated HR tools.

- Employers are leaning into AI for hiring help: (87%) of employers surveyed said they view automated hiring positively, with almost half of large employers saying they consider it a positive.

### What employers want from automated hiring

Employers who use automation feel many stages would benefit from integrating automation in the hiring process, most notably when conducting:



Source: Indeed / Harris Poll



- The majority (54%) of job seekers or recent job switchers say they feel "valued" by some degree of hiring automation (e.g., regular updates about the status of their application, faster responses to inquiries, etc.)
- Yet older workers bristle at AI: (71%) of those 18 to 35 said using automation made them feel more valued vs. only (43%) of those 36 and older.
- A similar variation exists in automation's impact on company perception: (55%) of younger job seekers said automated hiring processes make a company appear more innovative, versus only (33%) of older users.
- But watch out for bias: Nearly half of all employed U.S. job seekers (49%) believe AI tools used in job recruiting are more biased than their human counterparts, in a separate Harris/American Staffing Association Workforce Monitor survey.

Implication:

Older job applicants can remember when hiring was a human-driven affair. So, what should still involve human interaction? Communication updates, interview scheduling, and networking assistance topped the list. Hiring managers should blend AI with relationship building since (84%) of U.S. employees say it's a significant loss when older employees retire without passing on their years of knowledge to younger employees – a "brain drain."

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## OLDER AMERICANS LOVE THEM SOME HEALTH TECH: ELEVANCE HEALTH-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

While older Americans may question AI hiring, many want the ability to utilize more digital methods in managing their health, according to our poll with Elevance Health in [Fierce Healthcare](#).

- Seniors are happy with their virtual healthcare: The majority (89%) of adults 65 and older who have used virtual primary care for any healthcare need have been satisfied with their experience.
- In addition, (78%) of those 65+ agree that virtual primary care can be a great way to increase access to healthcare for people who may otherwise be unable to visit a provider in person.
- And four in ten (40%) 65+ are likely to use virtual primary care in addition to the care they receive from their current health provider in the next five years.

**Implication:**

"Older adults are adopting digital health tools at a higher rate than ever before. This adoption has considerable potential to support these individuals in accessing healthcare, helping them maintain their autonomy and independence as they age, as well as promoting their health and well-being" (Fierce Healthcare).



Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## SOCIAL STOREFRONTS ARE THE NEW TREND THIS HOLIDAY SEASON: NOGIN-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

As we enter the holiday season, Americans are ready to shop. Despite a janky economy, (37%) of holiday shoppers plan to spend more on holiday gifts than last year in a [new webinar I conducted recently with The OAAA](#). Interestingly, more purchases are coming directly from social media advertising this season, according to our recent Harris Poll [with Nogin](#).

- Social media is the new storefront: 7 in 10 (70%) online shoppers say they've made purchases directly through social media ads – including more than half (56%) of online shoppers aged 65+.
- And they expect to keep doing it: (29%) of those who make purchases through social media ads say they are making more purchases that way this year than they did last year.
- Social media advertising as a channel is valued for convenience, personalization, and incentives, especially for younger audiences: Younger online shoppers are more likely to be influenced by personalized recommendations than their older counterparts (18-44: 22% v. 45+: 12%).

- And incentives: Free shipping (81%) and discounts (68%) top the list of things online shoppers say would inspire them to purchase online.

**Implication:**

"As we approach the holiday season, the data underscores the need for retailers to provide online consumers with the right mix of incentives and personalized experiences," says Jonathan Huberman, CEO at Nogin. "For D2C brands, this translates to a golden opportunity: optimizing their e-commerce approach using intelligent, AI-driven strategies that cater to individual shopper preferences. By doing so, they can not only boost sales but also cultivate enduring customer relationships that thrive well beyond the holiday frenzy."

A satellite view of Earth at night, showing the curvature of the planet and the glowing lights of cities and continents. The text "Wave 167" is overlaid in the center.

# Wave 167

## WAVE 167 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **October 20 - October 22, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,128** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## STREAMING AHEAD CAN HURT YOUR LOVE LIFE: ROKU-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

In a new Harris study with Roku, [in the New York Post](#), streaming ahead is practicing infidelity by another name to many couples.

- Streaming cheating is unforgivable: One in five (21%) adults in relationships say they've gotten angry when their partner "cheats" and watches an episode of their show on their own.
- Fake binging is also a thing: About a quarter (23%) of couples admitted to pretending to enjoy a show simply because their partner or spouse likes it.
- Streaming logins are a relationship must-have: Nearly one-third (29%) of single Americans have a two-streaming service standard and won't date anyone who doesn't subscribe to at least two streaming platforms.
- A quarter (26%) of streamers would instead give up sweets for a week, and a fifth (18%) would willingly stub their toe instead of learning of a spoiler to "The Bear" or "Lessons in Chemistry."

**Implication:**

These findings are a peek into how streaming is weaving into our romantic tales and, perhaps, becoming a character in our love stories. So, whether you're a serial show-pretender, a staunch anti-spoiler, or someone who uses streaming as a conversational lifeboat, you're not alone.

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## THE HIDDEN MIDDLE: THE GLOBE AND MAIL-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

There is ample reason to believe the U.S. is divided. Still, in new Harris research [with The Globe and Mail](#), my co-CEO Will Johnson suggests the noisy rancor of the country's public discourse masks a more optimistic social cohesion.

- Agree to disagree: About (76%) of Americans see the good in those they disagree with, and (71%) have friends who don't share their views.
- It's all an exaggeration: Nearly six in ten think some of the cultural wars are either overblown or missing the mark.
- The cohesion is evident with brand reputation: Two of the most respected companies in the U.S., according to the [2023 Axios Harris Poll 100](#), are Patagonia and Chick-fil-A, each on two ideological ends of the spectrum, yet respected by most Americans for living up to their values.
- And while (83%) of Americans are unsettled by the normalization of trauma from gun violence and terrorist attacks – nearly seven in ten are hopeful that today's chaos will motivate change.

**Implication:**

"Taken together, it suggests large majorities of Americans remain largely unswayed by the ferocity of public debate on the issues that dominate the country's political sphere. "What I see when I look at the data is a much more nuanced, complex picture of Americans – and, I think, a more optimistic view as far as how we all feel about one another," says Johnson.

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## INFLATION'S HIDDEN HEALTH BURDEN: NATIONWIDE- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

As inflation continues to eat into real wages for most Americans, many are losing confidence in their ability to afford their health expenses, according to new Harris research [with Nationwide](#).

- Nearly two in ten (18%) American adults have postponed health care such as a medical procedure, physical exam, or renewing prescriptions in the past twelve months to save money.
- And to find additional savings, (10%) say they are considering downgrading their health insurance plan because of high inflation, including a fifth (19%) of Gen Z.
- Americans can't afford medical surprises: We found more than half of Americans (51%) say they could not pay off an unexpected \$5,000 health care out-of-pocket expense.
- Will I outlive my healthcare? More than one quarter (26%) expect AI advancements in health care to add more than a decade to their lifespan, yet, (59%) aren't confident in their ability to afford health care costs as they age.

**Implication:**

While many adults feel confident they will be able to maintain good physical health, almost half of those who are retired regret not taking better care of their health to save on healthcare costs in retirement. Additionally, adults may need to be more accurate in their assessment of the need for healthcare specialists in retirement, and that may impact healthcare costs in retirement. (Nationwide)

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## RISING HOME VALUES (AND ANGST): FAR-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Rising home values aren't dampening economic anxiety for many homeowners, we find with Finance of America Reverse (FAR) in [Reverse Mortgage Daily](#):

- Despite that (86%) of U.S. homeowners say their home value increased from 2022 to 2023, nearly the same number (79%) are still as anxious now about the state of the economy as they were last year.
- Add in increasing spending stress: (41%) of homeowners feel anxious about their discretionary spending, up from (32%) in 2022, while (40%) their ability to pay off debt, up from (36%) in 2022.
- This leaves nearly a third (32%) to say they were likely to use a home equity loan, a slight increase from 28% in 2022.
- However, knowledge around home equity loans is unequal: Only (42%) of women know that home equity can help supplement income in retirement, compared to (65%) of men.

**Implication:**

"Homeowners' concerns about the economy remain high, and they are more apprehensive about their ability to pay for certain costs when compared to last year, yet many aren't looking to their housing wealth to help pay for expenses," FAR said in a statement. "The survey also found a lack of knowledge about financial products like reverse mortgages that could offer potential solutions."



# Wave 166



## WAVE 166 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **October 13 - October 15, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,079** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## NOTHING'S LEFT THIS & EVERY MONTH: BARRON'S-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Many Americans are living in financial distress, at least some of the time. That's the message of a new Harris poll [with Barron's](#), and it might not be suitable for economic growth.

- About two-thirds (65%) of working Americans say they frequently live paycheck to paycheck – as about (30%) of households report that they run out of money at the end of every month, while (35%) say they don't have money left at the end of most months.
- Most Americans are affected: About (78%) of Americans earning less than \$50,000 a year report they live paycheck to paycheck. Yet (51%) of Americans who make over \$100,000 a year say they still run out of money.
- Living paycheck to paycheck isn't new: About (66%) of those surveyed in March 2020 said they were spending down their wages, according to research from [Reality Check: Paycheck-To-Paycheck series](#).

**Implication:**

"While the number of people living on the edge financially has an immediate effect on household well-being, there are also longer-term economic costs, including higher debt levels and uneven retirement readiness. Those trends could also dampen overall economic growth" (Barron's).

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S MY JETS: VIVID SEATS-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

In a new Harris study [with Vivid Seats](#), a surprising number of American fans chose their sports teams over love.

- Nearly half (45%) of Americans say a romantic relationship is more likely to last if both partners are fans of the same sports team.
- And it might even be a dealbreaker: Over a fifth (21%) of sports fans say they would break up with a significant other if they refused to root for their favorite team.
- Taken to the extreme, 1 in 10 sports fans would even go as far as to miss their wedding to see their favorite team play in the playoffs or a championship game in person – while a fifth (19%) would miss a medical procedure.

**Implication:**

It's clear that fandom has reached new heights in 2023 and that when it comes to relationships, forget complementary zodiac signs and look for complementary fandoms. As for some, the heart-pounding moments on the field overshadow even matters of the heart.

Section:

# 03

Topic:

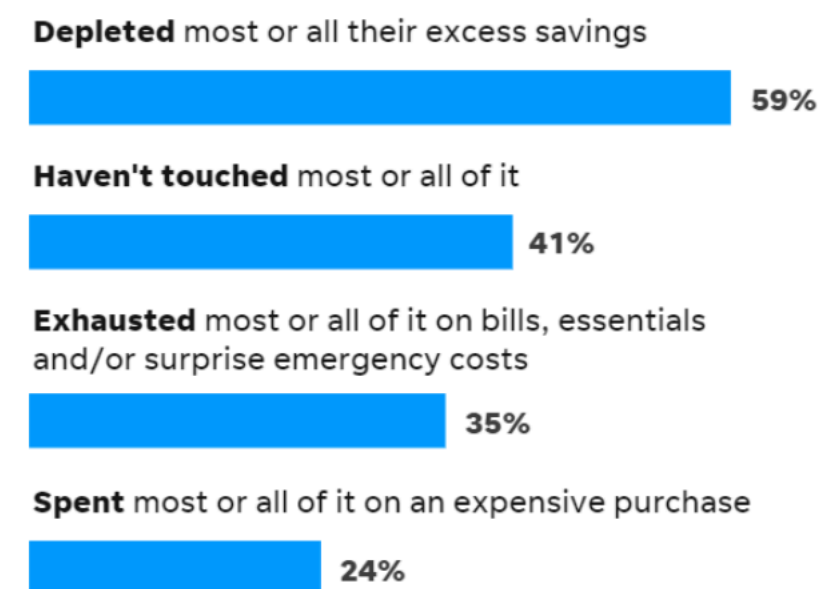
## DRIED UP PANDEMIC CASH: USA TODAY- HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Remember revenge spending? According to a new Harris study [with USA Today, that's pretty much in the past](#). Americans whose COVID cash reserves are running low say they've been forced to or will have to reduce their spending, such as dining out, non-essentials, etc.

- Over seven in ten (71%) of Americans built excess reserves during the pandemic, but (59%) of those savers say they've depleted most or all of that money.

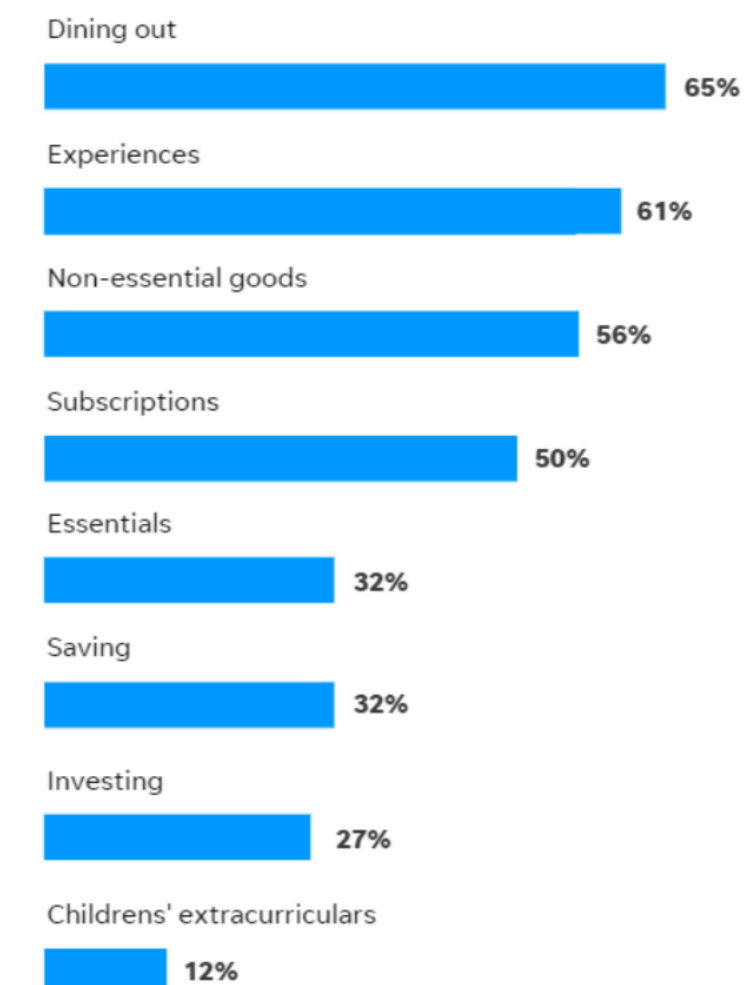
Among those able to put away extra during the pandemic, beyond their pre-COVID savings rate, they:



SOURCE The Harris Poll survey conducted September 2023

- Among that group, (90%) have pared back their spending or plan to do so, compared with (62%) who still need to deplete their COVID funds.
- Of those slashing spending, (65%) are dining out less, (61%) are cutting back experiences, and (56%) are buying fewer discretionary goods.

Thinking about their spending, those who depleted their excess pandemic savings and have/plan to reduce their spending are cutting back on:



SOURCE The Harris Poll survey conducted September 2023

Implication:

"The pandemic-related savings and government aid that have helped prop up the U.S. economy over the past three years are dwindling, posing new strains for low- and moderate-income households and hazards for a nation at risk of slipping into recession by early 2024" (USA Today).

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## RETIREMENT REGRETS: TRANSAMERICA INSTITUTE-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

As a tsunami of Boomers move into their golden years, our new study [with Transamerica Institute](#) finds many common mistakes in preparing for retirement are leading to confidence cracks in one's ability to live the retired life they imagine.

- Being overly optimistic about retirement ages: Two-thirds of 50+ workers (66%) expect to retire after age 65 or do not plan to retire. In stark contrast, (58%) of retirees retired before age 65, and the median retirement age was 62.
- Forgetting about life expectancy: When asked the age they plan to live, (47%) of retirees and (39%) of age 50+ workers say they are "not sure."
- Claiming Social Security too early: 63 was the median age when retirees started receiving Social Security, with (31%) beginning at age 62 choosing to bear the reduced benefit. Just (4%) of retirees waited to receive benefits at age 70, the maximum age that brings higher benefit payments.
- Failing to plan long-term care: Only (14%) of retirees are confident they can afford long-term care if needed, and almost half (46%) indicate that they plan to receive care from family and friends. 3 in 10 (31%) don't have any plans for long-term care.

**Implication:**

"Many pre-retirees and retirees are experiencing pitfalls that could be potentially mitigated through improved planning," said Catherine Collinson, CEO and President of Transamerica Institute. There is room for more planning as fewer than one in four aged 50+ workers and retirees have a financial strategy for retirement in the form of a written plan (23% and 19%, respectively).



# Wave 165

## WAVE 165 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **October 8 - October 10, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,061** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## AMERICANS SIDE WITH STRIKING WORKERS (WITH SOME RESERVATIONS): AXIOS-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

From actors to autoworkers, [more than 450,000 workers have participated in 312 strikes](#) in the United States this year, according to Cornell University's Labor Action Tracker. In a new Harris Poll survey [featured in Axios](#), the American public is a strong union supporter and especially sympathetic to striking auto workers.

- Background: The UAW is on strike against two Ford plants, two GM factories, one Stellantis plant, and all 38 parts distribution facilities at GM and Stellantis.
- Three-quarters (76%) of Americans generally support unions, especially in the auto sector.
- Among those familiar with the strike, (83%) of Americans believe automakers need to be more generous and share more of their profits with their workers.

- But unsustainable for whom? (76%) Americans agree that the gap between auto company executives' compensation and auto worker labor rates is unsustainable. Yet over half (56%) also say that what the UAW demands is unsustainable for the automakers. (This suggests Americans want a fair resolution without higher car prices passed onto them).

**Implication:**

"The [United Auto Workers](#) president on Friday reported "significant progress" in contract talks with the Detroit Three automakers and said the union would hold off on expanding its strike for now. The decision signals that the union and the automakers are moving closer to deals ending a historic, weeks-long strike involving about [25,000 workers](#) at General Motors, Ford and Stellantis" (Axios).



Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## THE WORKPLACE'S HAPPINESS CRISIS: YOH-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Is a job just a job? In a new Harris Poll study [with Yoh](#), only a quarter (28%) of employed Americans say they love their job and would not leave their company for any reason. As for the other two-thirds, many have compelling reasons to pack up and move on.

- Show me the money: (26%) of employees would leave their current job in the next twelve months if they received a higher salary and better benefits.
- Need for upskilling: (14%) believe it would benefit their career long-term to leave their current job for a new one.
- Burned out: In a recent Harris Poll [with the American Heart Association](#), (82%) of employees say they at least sometimes feel burned out in their professional role, with a quarter (25%) saying they think this way often or always.
- Actively looking: (14%) say they would like to leave their current job for a new one in the next 12 months.

**Implication:**

"The findings from our latest survey serve as a valuable reminder that just because the economy may be trending upward, employee sentiment may not follow suit," said Emmett McGrath, President of Yoh. "Companies should have a finger on the pulse of their workforce and avoid assuming the best when it comes to their feelings, perceptions, and attitudes."

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## HOME RESILIENCY BARRIERS RISE AS CLIMATE-DRIVEN EVENTS LOOMS: APCIA-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Recent natural catastrophes underscore the importance of mitigation and resiliency for homeowners. Yet, a recent Harris survey with The American Property Casualty Insurance Association (APCIA) in [Insurance Business Magazine](#) finds that many homeowners help ensure their home's resiliency.

- Most homeowners (75%) will upgrade certain home materials to meet building code standards, enhancing their properties' resilience.
- Yet, three-quarters (74%) of these owners report encountering obstacles when trying to bolster their homes' resilience against natural disasters.
- The primary hurdle is financial, with nearly half (46%) citing cost as a significant barrier, while a fifth (20%) either need to know where to commence or what steps to take.
- Looking beyond their front yard: (80%) of homeowners support efforts to restrict development in storm/wildfire-prone areas to curb rebuilding and repair costs.

**Implication:**

"Millions of people are increasingly at risk for natural disasters as more communities are built in hazard-prone regions, and communities face the intensifying impacts of climate change," says Karen Collins, APCIA property and environment vice president. "So it is essential for homeowners, communities, and policymakers to prioritize resiliency and mitigation."

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## THE HIDDEN RISKS IN VENMO: NERDWALLET- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Mobile payment apps are so commonplace that "Venmo" has become a verb as most Americans use mobile payment apps, and plenty are keeping cash in these apps despite the balances not having FDIC insurance, according to our latest research [with NerdWallet](#).

- Most mobile payment app users leave money sitting in their apps: More than two-thirds of mobile payment app users (68%) maintain a balance in their apps, keeping up to \$316, on average, with nearly a fifth (18%) of users saying they've kept \$500 or more in their app before transferring.
- Nearly half of those who don't use mobile payment apps (46%) say they don't use them because they don't trust the security of those apps, while (14%) say it's because the funds in the apps aren't federally insured through the FDIC.
- Double-check who you're sending money to: Nearly one in ten (8%) mobile payment app users say they accidentally sent money to someone they don't know.

**Implication:**

"Mobile payment apps can be a convenient, fast, and easy way of sending money and paying for items," says Elizabeth Ayoola, a personal finance expert at NerdWallet. "It's essential that users of those apps understand the potential downsides of using them, such as transaction fees and the risk of losing money if the mobile app isn't federally insured."



# Wave 164

## WAVE 164 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **September 29 - October 1, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,105** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## CAN'T BUY THE AMERICAN DREAM: USA TODAY-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

For many young Americans, achieving the financial stability of their parent's generation feels impossible, leaving many miles behind previous generations, according to our latest research [with USA TODAY](#).

- It's a whole new world: Two-thirds of Americans believe younger people face hardships today that previous generations didn't.
- Causing younger Americans to feel like they are trailing: Two-thirds (65%) of Gen Zers and three-quarters (74%) of Millennials say they believe they are starting further behind financially than earlier generations at their age.
- Most younger Americans (73%) have had to adjust to what the American Dream means to them.
- Owning a home isn't a vital part of the American Dream anymore: Younger Americans were less likely to say financial success and the American Dream meant owning a home (Gen Z: 52%, Millennials: 53% v. Boomers+: 64%).

**Implication:**

Gen Z is telling us they can't buy into that American Dream the way that their parents and grandparents thought about it - because it's not attainable; who thinks there's "an entire generation that feels like they're coming of age in sort of this fractured, divisive world" where traditional systems no longer work for them.

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY: USA TODAY-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

In a new Harris Poll [with USA TODAY](#), employees are stuck between who they want to be outside of work while dealing with the increasing economic pressures forcing their hand.

- Nearly eight in ten (79%) employed Millennials care more about who they are outside of work (used Gen Z: 69%, Gen X/Boomers+: 73%).
- Most employees across all ages also agree that their work doesn't determine their overall value as a person (Gen Z: 74%, Millennials: 79%, Gen X: 82%, Boomers+: 77%).
- Still, no one can escape the economy: (70%) of employees said that the only thing that matters about a job today is the salary.
- And a similar number (69%) said they've chosen a career for the financial security it offers, something three-quarters of younger employees agree with (Gen Z: 75%, Millennials: 77% v. Boomers+: 54%).

**Implication:**

Even as many workers, especially younger ones, attempt to redefine what work-life balance and success look like to them, only some people are free of looming economic pressures. This retrenchment reflects worsening uncertainty over the economy, where (46%) of Americans are worried about losing their job.

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## THE LATEST CLIMATE CONSEQUENCE – PAIN AT THE GROCERY STORE: ACTION AGAINST HUNGER-THE HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Previously, [we found](#) that climate change was infiltrating America's dreams. Now, it's grocery stories. A new Harris survey [with Action Against Hunger](#) provides insight into how climate change impacts food security, including rising food prices in the U.S. and growing food shortages worldwide.

- More than seven in ten (72%) Americans say climate change is already contributing to rising food prices in the U.S., with more Hispanic, Black, and female Americans agreeing (84%, 84%, 81%).
- This is problematic as over 3 in 4 (78%) Americans say rising food prices make it harder for them to afford groceries.

- And it's not just happening in the U.S.: (72%) of Americans believe climate change is already creating shortages of critical foods in low- and middle-income countries.
- A call to action: (77%) of Americans agree that the U.S. government must do more to combat climate change to prevent food prices from continuing to rise, and (57%) even think richer countries like the U.S. should help low-income countries pay for the costs of adapting to climate change.

**Implication:**

"This research shows that the American public is already feeling the impacts of the climate crisis, from our local grocery stores and dinner tables to our wallets," says Dr. Charles E. Owubah, CEO of Action Against Hunger. "The climate crisis is a hunger crisis, and now is the time to scale up sustainable solutions to help those who are most vulnerable. Advocacy is one key to lasting change, and policymakers must understand how much Americans care about hunger as an urgent issue."



Section:

# 04

Topic:

## THE SENIOR EMPLOYMENT SURGE: EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS

**Introduction:**

American companies are most commonly looking to hire full-time, entry-level workers, with many seeing an increase in older applicants, according to a recent study [with Express Employment Professionals](#).

- U.S. hiring managers are searching for full-time talent, and many (79%) report a rising tide of older workers vying for entry-level roles compared to three years ago.
- You do need experience: Furthermore, (60%) of these hiring managers prefer hiring older candidates over younger ones for entry-level positions.
- Older Americans looking to continue to work isn't too surprising, as previous research [with Age Wave](#) found that (59%) of pre-retirees and retirees say they want to work in some form during retirement.
- In another Harris study [with Transamerica Institute](#), less than a fifth (17%) of workers 50+ say they can maintain a comfortable lifestyle in retirement.

**Implication:**

"Retirees and pre-retirees have limited financial means," Catherine Collinson, CEO and president of Transamerica Institute and its Center for Retirement Studies, said in a statement. Collinson says many retirees and pre-retirees need more financial security due to the increasing societal pressure that workers self-fund a more significant portion of their retirement income than in the past.



# Wave 163

## WAVE 163 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **September 22 - 24, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,123** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## SIGN YOUR PRENUP TO SAY YOUR VOWS: AXIOS-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

According to new Harris data with Axios, half of U.S. adults are open to signing a prenup, indicating preconceived notions about romance and matrimony be damned.

- By the numbers: (50%) of U.S. adults said they at least somewhat supported using prenups. That's up from last year [when we found](#) that (42%) of polled adults support using prenups. Today, about (20%) of married couples have a prenuptial agreement.
- Younger generations, in particular, are embracing prenups: Over two in five Gen Z and Millennials who are engaged or have been married said they entered a prenup before (41% and 47%, respectively).

**Implication:**

The push for prenups could include several factors. Americans are getting hitched [later in life](#), and they often have individual assets – and debt – to consider before marrying. Meanwhile, even if you factor in the [recent wedding boom](#) that pushed the marriage-to-divorce rate down, (40%) of marriages end in divorce nationally.

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## AMERICANS GROW MORE WARY OF A.I.: MITRE-HARRIS POLL

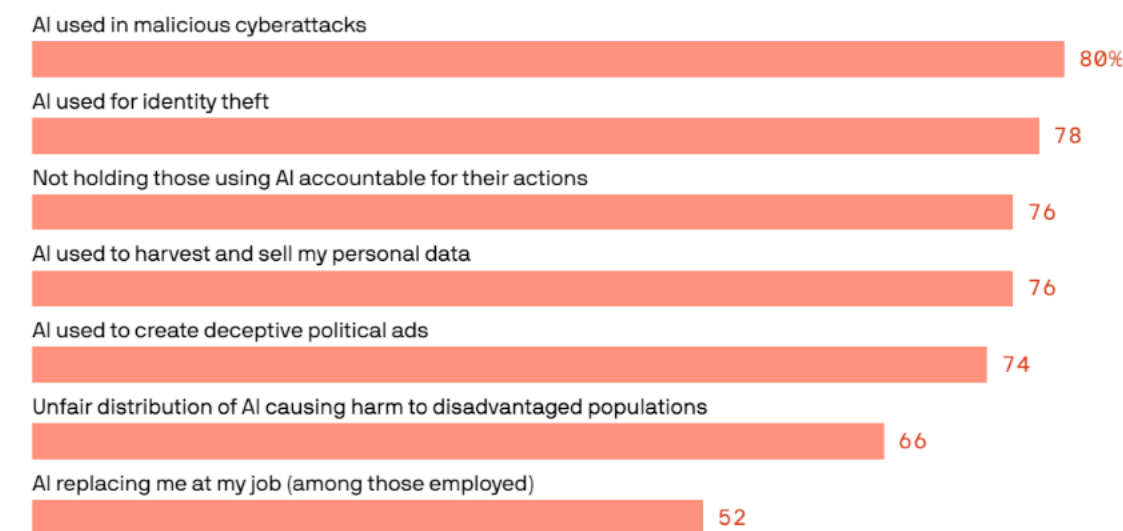
**Introduction:**

Most Americans don't believe the current and potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) outweigh the risks, according to our research with MITRE [in Axios](#).

- Over half (54%) of Americans said they were more concerned about the risks of AI than they were excited about the potential benefits.
- At the same time, just (39%) believed today's AI technologies are safe and secure – down 9 points from the previous survey in November 2022.
- Respondents were more concerned about AI being used in malicious cyberattacks (80%) and identity theft schemes (78%) than they were about it being used to cause "harm to disadvantaged populations" (66%) or replace their jobs (52%):

Share of adults who say they have select concerns about AI

Survey of 2,063 U.S. adults taken July 13 to 17, 2023



Data: Mitre-Harris Poll 2023 AI Survey; Chart: Axios Visuals

Harris Poll-MITRE, 2023

**Implication:**

"While the public has started to benefit from new A.I. capabilities such as ChatGPT, we've all watched as chatbots have spread political disinformation and shared dangerous medical advice," said Douglas Robbins, vice president of engineering and prototyping at MITRE. A.I. operators and the tech industry are eyeing new regulations and policy changes to secure their models and mitigate the associated security and privacy risks. Our data highlights the growing support for these regulatory efforts.

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## BACK AT HOME WITH MOM & DAD: BLOOMBERG- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Moving out and living alone is often seen as a marker of adulthood. But pandemic lockdowns, decades-high inflation, soaring student debt, and a shaky job market have pushed many young people back under their parent's roof, according to our new research [with Bloomberg](#).

- Over three-quarters (78%) of Americans say it's more complex than ever for younger people to be able to live on their own – and almost nine in ten say people shouldn't be judged for moving back home.
- For those aged 18 to 29 living back at home, (41%) say it was to save money or that they couldn't afford to live on their own anymore (30%).
- And of those currently living back at home, over a quarter (28%) report saving \$1,000 or more a month, while (23%) save between \$500 to \$999.
- And (70%) even agree they wouldn't be where they are today financially if they hadn't lived at home.

**Implication:**

For many, the American Dream is more like an American illusion, with nearly three-quarters of those surveyed saying younger people are stuck navigating a broken economic situation that prevents them from being financially successful. "We're in an economy where it's harder to live independently," said Carol Sigelman, professor of social psychology at George Washington University. "Adults recognize that it's tough these days."

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## WAGE GROWTH OUTPACES INFLATION, BUT AMERICANS AREN'T FEELING IT: USA TODAY- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

After trailing inflation for over two years, average U.S. wage growth turned the tables in May, giving consumers more purchasing power and bolstering the economy. However, according to our latest poll [with USA TODAY](#), most Americans aren't feeling it.

- Half (52%) of employed Americans reported a pay increase last year.
- Of those who received a raise, (70%) said it eased their financial stress from inflation and allowed them to make additional purchases they couldn't before (67%), afford household bills (41%), living costs (38%), investing (31%). However, (18%) said the pay increase needed more to afford something comfortably.
- And over three-quarters (78%) said they would need another raise to feel fully confident in their financial health.

**Implication:**

After trailing inflation for over two years, average U.S. wage growth turned the tables in May, outpacing price increases, giving consumers more purchasing power and bolstering the economy. But while the development means Americans have a little more breathing room, most say they still need to catch up to the hefty price run-up and are spending warily (USA TODAY).



# Wave 162



## WAVE 162 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **September 15 - 17, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,096** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

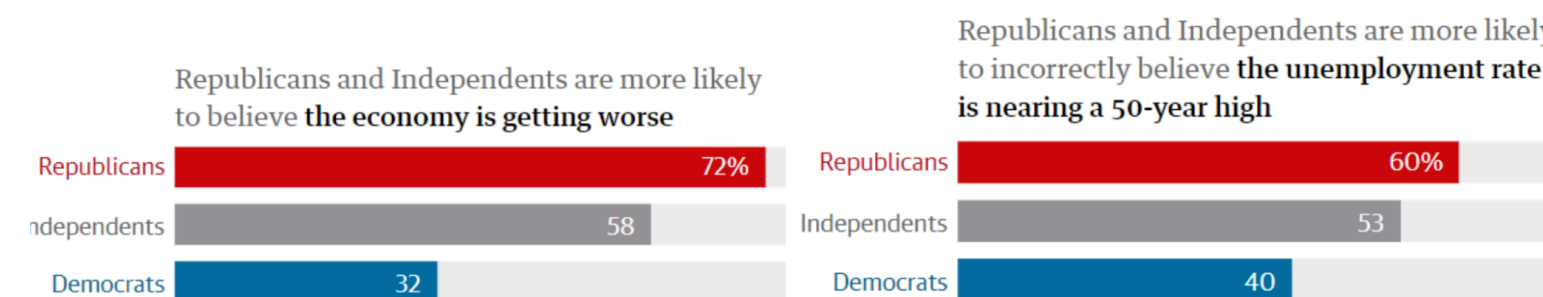
Topic:

## AMERICANS DON'T BELIEVE THE GOOD ECONOMIC NEWS: GUARDIAN-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

According to a Harris Poll with The Guardian, Americans don't trust the government's economic news – or the media's reporting of it.

- Two-thirds of Americans (65%) believe that **the economy is worse than the media makes it out to be** rather than better (35%) – something even half of Democrats believe (49% v. GOP: 82%, Independents: 66%).
- **And Americans are failing an economic pop quiz:** More Americans (wrongfully) believe the **U.S. economy is shrinking** (59% v. growing: 41%) and that the unemployment rate is **nearing a 50-year high** (51% v. low: 49%).



Harris Poll-Guardian Sept 2023

- While Democrats and Republicans are split on whether **Bidenomics is improving the U.S. economy overall** (60% v. 12%), both parties agree it **isn't being implemented well** (62% v. 58%).
- Nearly 7 in 10 (68%) Americans **said it's difficult to be happy about positive economic news** when they **feel financially squeezed** each month (Republicans: 69%, Democrats: 68%).

Implication:

All these perceptual-reality gaps underscore Biden's difficulty in claiming credit for economic gains. Americans either view the economy through their politics or aren't feeling it in real life, or both.

Section:

# 02

Topic:

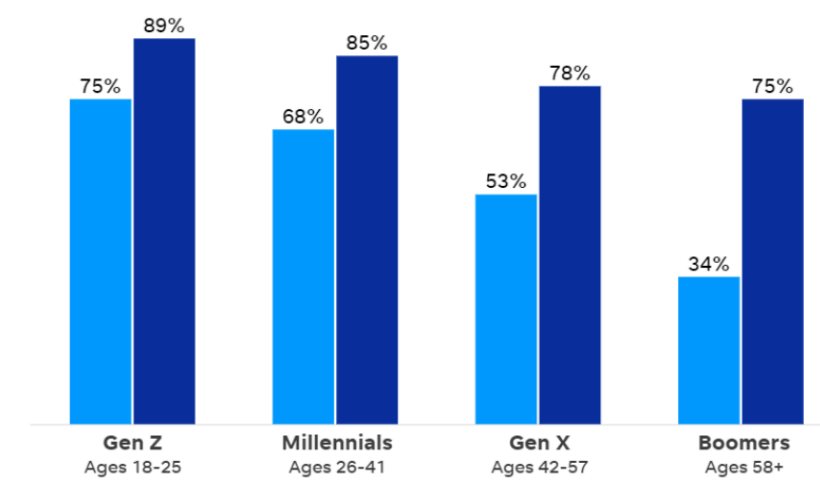
## GEN Z ARE SAVING AND SPLURGING: USA TODAY-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In a new Harris study [with USA Today](#), Gen Z is both big spenders and savers.

- Most (89%) of Gen Z have **saved money on something in 2023**, more than any other generation – such as **opting out of social events** to save (36%).
- **Yet they're also not shy about splurging on items:** (75%) of Gen Z spent **a lot** on something in 2023, also more than other age groups.

Generation Z is both **splurging** and **saving** more than other generations this year



SOURCE The Harris Poll survey conducted in May 2023 among 2,102 adults

- While a majority of Gen Z feel good about managing their bills each month (73%), they don't harbor feelings of long-term security, as (67%) doubt they will feel financially secure anytime soon.

- And (60%) fear they are **one financial emergency away** from being **completely underwater**.

Implication:

More than any other generation, Gen Z also spends in a way that reflects "eco-conscious values" that align with "budget-conscious values," said Libby Rodney, chief strategy officer at Harris Poll. While it may seem paradoxical, it makes perfect sense that Gen Z shoppers are both savers and spenders, Rodney said, noting that pinching pennies on necessities allows them to splurge on luxury items.

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## IT'S STILL TWITTER TO ME: AD AGE- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

In our latest research [with Ad Age](#), the Twitter name is not going away quietly in the minds of its users.

- While 8 in 10 (79%) U.S. X users **know about the rebrand**, (69%) **still refer to the platform as Twitter and posts as “tweets.”**
- And while most X users still say that their engagement is **“time well spent”** (59%), half (49%) said that X’s content is **generally “more negative now than before Elon Musk’s acquisition.”**
- **Yet X is beating out Threads:** For those users on both X and Threads (Meta), 7 in 10 (69%) users **prefer X.**
- **It's not like Twitter's name doesn't have baggage:** According to the 2023 Axios-Harris Poll 100, the then-named **Twitter ranked near the bottom at 97th in reputation**, just one spot higher than 2022 (#98th).

**Implication:**

“X, formerly Twitter, isn’t just any company. Twitter was, and X is, a powerful and influential driver of culture and conversation,” said Jamie Gilpin, chief marketing officer at Sprout Social. “It’s even turned never-before-heard terms like ‘tweet,’ ‘retweet,’ and ‘hashtag’ into common vernacular. Twitter becoming X is as much of a culture shift for consumers as it is a rebrand for the company.”

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## AI HOOKS ITSELF INTO GEN Z CONSUMERS: ROKT-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

New Harris data with Rokt [in Ad Age](#) shows how Gen Z envisions A.I. improving e-commerce.

- Overall, (63%) of global respondents (U.S., U.K., France, Germany, Australia, and Japan) say that, **due to inflation**, they now spend **more time online searching for lower prices, relevant deals and offers**.
- **Gen Z globally sees the role A.I. could play:** (88%) of Gen Z consumers think **A.I. can improve online shopping**, and over half (55%) are interested in A.I. assistants **making online shopping more convenient** (e.g., simplifying product discovery, anticipating their needs and desires, etc.).
- **Personalization is a must:** When shopping experiences **aren't personalized**, 20%–29% of global consumers say they will **walk away from their cart, the brand, or the experience**.
- **Forget online shopping, Gen Z stepping into virtual shopping:** Additionally, (51%) of Gen Zers say they are interested in augmented reality and virtual reality shopping experiences.

**Implication:**

"Brands and retailers across categories are scrambling to identify how they can best use A.I. to elevate their e-commerce customer experience and drive revenue," said Elizabeth Buchanan, Chief Commercial Officer at Rokt. "This research provides decision makers with a roadmap for creating new strategies and implementing advanced tech, such as A.I., to significantly help improve the online shopping experience in ways that will surprise and delight shoppers."



# Wave 161

## WAVE 161 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **September 8 - 10, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,117** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## AMERICAN WORKERS CALL OUT AI: AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

**Introduction:**

According to our new research [with the American Psychological Association](#), employee worries about artificial intelligence and surveillance at work.

- While many employees are concerned about **AI replacing their jobs** – 38% of Americans say AI might make some or all of their job duties obsolete – even more are troubled by employers using AI to track them on the job.
- The majority (51%) of employees across different workplace settings said they were aware **their employer uses technology to monitor them on the job**, including office workers (49%), manual laborers (49%), and customer/client/patient services workers (55%).
- **Work surveillance results in poor employee morale:** Employees reported that technology tracking made them **feel micromanaged** (51%), **uncomfortable** (46%), and **emotionally exhausted** (39%) in the past month.
- And workers who reported being monitored **believed they were not valued at work** (26%) compared with workers who did not report being watched (17%).

**Implication:**

"Employers interested in investing in artificial intelligence systems must also invest in their employees, educating them about the role of AI and providing opportunities for feedback," said Arthur C. Evans Jr., Ph.D., APA's CEO. "The workplace is changing rapidly. Open and honest communication from employers can help relieve employees' anxieties about the unknown and improve overall well-being, associated with higher organizational performance."



Section:

# 02

Topic:

## ARE EV'S ABOUT TO MOTOR? VINFAST-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In new research [with VinFast](#), gas vehicle drivers are ready to embrace electric vehicles and get on the road.

- While just 1 in 10 (9%) Americans **currently drive an electric vehicle today**, a staggering (54%) of gas-powered vehicle drivers **would be interested in making an EV their next purchase or lease**.
- **Skipping gas costs is a big motivator:** (62%) of drivers interested in purchasing or leasing an EV **would do so to save money on gas**.
- This could be especially helpful as our polling also found that (75%) of Americans **expect gas prices to rise** over the next few months.
- **As is a general concern for the environment:** (70%) of drivers agree that EVs are essential in creating a green future, and (58%) of drivers interested in purchasing/leasing an EV are motivated to do so to help the environment.

Implication:

The move to EVs driven by concern about the environment shouldn't be of too much surprise, as our America This Week tracker shows that over 7 in 10 Americans (71%) report concern about climate change, with 4 in 10 being very concerned. But also, [the extended and revamped EV tax credit](#) under the Inflation Reduction Act may also influence interest.

Section:

# 03

## Topic:

# THE BIAS IN AI: AMERICAN STAFFING ASSOCIATION- HARRIS POLL

## Introduction:

Weeks after the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission released guidance on how to incorporate AI into a job search while still adhering to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, current job seekers aren't convinced bias isn't seeping into the search according to research [with the American Staffing Association](#) (ASA).

- Nearly half of employed U.S. job seekers (49%) believe artificial intelligence (AI) tools used in job recruiting are more biased than their human counterparts.
- **Rules for thee, but not for me:** At the same time, the study found that 2 in 5 (39%) **current job seekers have used AI tools** to assist in applying for a job.
- Usage varies based on race/ethnicity among U.S. residents, with (36%) of Hispanic and (34%) of Black U.S. adults **saying they have used AI when applying for a job** (v. White: 17%).
- **Overall unease about AI and jobs has grown:** Compared to six years ago, more U.S. workers agree that **automation could easily replace their jobs** (47% v. 2017: 27%).

## Implication:

"Job seekers may feel comfortable using artificial intelligence tools in their job search, but that does not equate to trusting AI to make fair hiring decisions," said ASA CEO Richard Wahlquist. "As AI tools become more widely deployed, it's critical that hiring managers work to increase transparency and accountability in their hiring processes and use tools that meet current and emerging antibias standards."

Section:

# 04

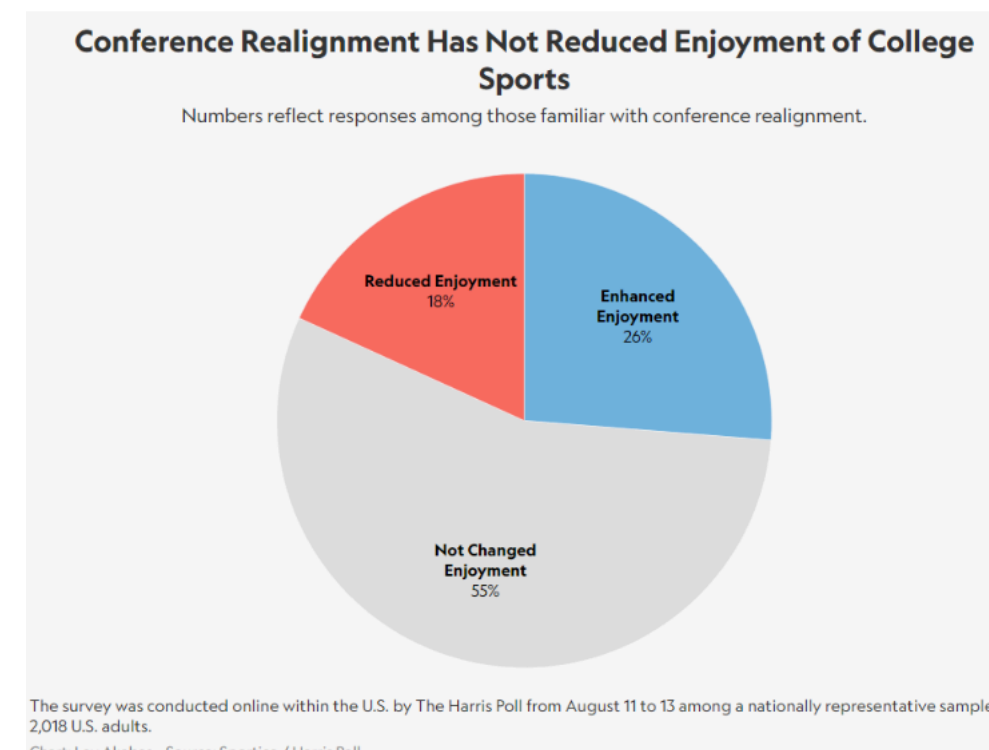
**Topic:**

## IS CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT BAD FOR COLLEGE FOOTBALL: SPORTICO-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

With the latest conference realignment hollowing out the Pac-12 (It's the Pac 2 now with Oregon State and Washington State), our new research [with Sportico](#) finds many Americans are ok for now but hold longer-term fears about the changes:

- Most (55%) U.S. adults familiar with conference realignment **didn't feel it impacted their enjoyment of college sports.**



Harris Poll and Sportico Aug 11-13, 2023

- However, more than two-thirds (68%) who follow college sports agreed that **conference realignment is a problem in college sports** – with over a quarter (27%) strongly agreeing.
- At the same time, (60%) agreed that **college sports would be better off if the wealthier and more powerful conferences were spun off** from the NCAA.

**Implication:**

The prospect of emerging super conferences like the Big Ten and SEC separating from the rest of Division I has been a growing topic of conversation over the last several years. In 2020, the [Knight Commission](#), the NCAA-friendly college athletics reform group, proposed the creation of a new governance entity funded by College Football Playoff revenues that would oversee all aspects of FBS football.



# Wave 160

## WAVE 160 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **September 1 - 3, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,055** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

Topic:

## GEN Z HOURLY WORKERS IN THE RED

Introduction:

We know younger Americans are finding today's economy tough. But in our new survey with Funding Our Future and DailyPay [in Essence](#), most Gen Z hourly workers find it nearly impossible to manage their finances.

- (85%) Gen Z hourly workers say **inflation has negatively impacted their finances** in the past year.
- And (96%) find **managing their finances stressful**, which has **hurt their physical and/or mental health** (75%).
- Over four in ten saved less than a year ago, and a fifth (19%) are **forced to rely on payday loans to pay bills** when cash is low.
- **No relief:** Nearly nine in ten (86%) Gen Z hourly workers believe the economy will stay the same or decline in the next year.

Implication:

“The youngest members of our labor market are experiencing significant financial stress, which has a detrimental impact on their health and the opportunity for a secure future,” said Lettie Nocera, Senior Manager of Funding Our Future. “We must continue to advance innovative solutions that meet the evolving needs of all American workers.”

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## AMERICANS ASK, WILL SOCIAL SECURITY BE AROUND FOR US? NATIONWIDE- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Social Security [turned just 88](#) this past year. Yet Americans are growing less confident that the program isn't headed for demise, according to new Harris research with Nationwide in [Fortune](#).

- Nearly half of younger Americans don't think they'll "get a dime" of the Social Security benefits they've earned (Gen Z: 45%, Millennials: 49%).
- Three-quarters (76%) of both Gen Z and Millennials **anticipate they will need to work in some form during their retirement** as Social Security will not be enough support.
- **But even Boomers+ worry:** (75%) of Americans over 50 fear **Social Security will run out** during their lifetime. (In 2014, it was 66%).
- **And without Social Security, some are without a lifeline:** (21%) of 50+ say they have **no source of retirement income** in addition to Social Security, up from (13%) in 2014.

**Implication:**

"Retirement has become even more expensive of late, as many experts say that living comfortably into your golden years now requires [more than \\$1 million](#) as people live longer and the cost of living remains relatively high. That makes the endangered program all the more important. A [2022 Social Security Trustees report](#) signaled that this generation's worries are not outlandish – estimating that in 2034, retirees will only receive (77%) of their benefits if Congress does not update the program" (Fortune).

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## THE LOOMING CLOUD OF STUDENT LOANS: CREDIT KARMA- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

The Supreme Court's decision to strike down President Biden's plan to forgive a portion of federal student loan debt means those borrowers will be resuming payments after a three+ year hiatus. According to a new Harris survey with Credit Karma [on CNET](#) and [Yahoo!](#), this is grim news for borrowers who don't feel confident being able to juggle student loan payments.

- Even while they have not been making student loan payments, most (53%) of federal student loan borrowers say they struggle **to pay other bills** (e.g., auto loans, mortgages, credit cards, etc.).
- Also, more than half (56%) of these borrowers say they must **choose between making their student loan payments or paying for necessities** (e.g., rent, bills, groceries, etc.), but they cannot afford both.
- And nearly half (45%) **expect to go delinquent on their student loan payments** once forbearance ends, leaving (44%) to **think the return on investment for higher education in America isn't worth the expense.**

**Implication:**

"Federal student loan borrowers will face a new normal as payments are set to resume after a 3+ year hiatus," said Courtney Alev, consumer financial advocate at Credit Karma. "While many borrowers were able to get ahead in other areas of their finances during forbearance, others struggled to stay on top of other bills and expenses, likely due to inflation and today's high cost of living."



Section:

# 04

Topic:

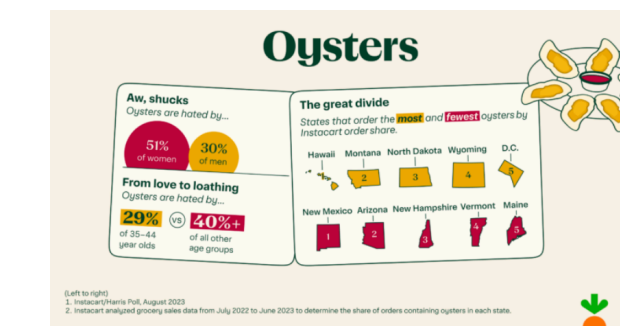
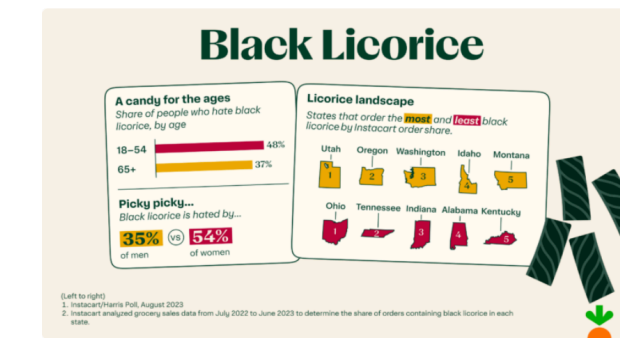
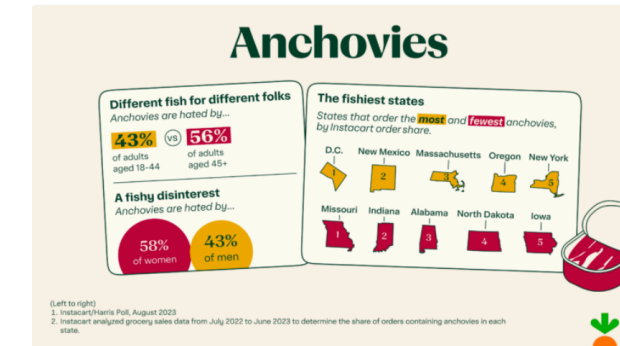
# LOVE IT OR LOATHE IT – AMERICA’S MOST POLARIZING FOODS: INSTACART-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

What’s worse, okra or olives? We partnered with Instacart to find America’s **most hated** (anchovies) to **least hated** (mayo) foods:



- **Hold the anchovies:** Our survey found that half of Americans hate anchovies, making the small, oily fish the most hated polarizing food on our list.



- **Licorice’s dark secret:** This may not come as a surprise, but there’s a generational and gender divide when it comes to this candy – more below:

- **The world is your oyster:** What’s also curious is that three of the five top states that order the most oysters are entirely landlocked, while three of the five states that order the fewest oysters are located in New England:

- **What are the top reasons Americans think a food could be polarizing or controversial?** Smell (66%), strong flavor (57%), texture (57%), visual appearance (47%), type of flavor (47%), and even how it makes one feel after eating it (32%).

Implication:

It’s surprising to see Americans giving the most love to mayonnaise. Some, however, take the white stuff to the extreme: [Titan’s rookie quarterback Will Levis parlayed his viral love for mayo into a lifetime deal with Hellmann’s](#) after he was captured stirring mayo into a cup of coffee. To each his own...



More mayo please? Titans rookie Will Levis' love for mayonnaise leads to lifetime deal  
usatoday.com



# Wave 159

## WAVE 159 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **August 25-27, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,117** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

Topic:

## AMERICANS OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORT CORPORATE DIVERSITY: BLACK ECONOMIC ALLIANCE/HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In our new study with the [Black Economic Alliance](#) (BEA) and referenced in President Biden's Washington Post Op-Ed and the New York Times' [DealBook Newsletter](#), Americans believe diversity is essential to corporate performance, culture, innovation, and profitability.

- **Americans want a diverse workforce:** Eight in ten (81%) agree that **corporate America should reflect the diversity** of the American population (Black: 90%, Gen Z: 84%).
- And over three-quarters of Americans (78%) support businesses **taking active steps to ensure companies reflect the diversity** of the American population (Black: 88%, Gen Z/Millennials: 83%).

- When thinking about the effects of racial diversity on business, Americans overwhelmingly agree there would be **positive impacts** on the ability to **understand a broader set of customers** (87%), **to innovate** (84%), **profitability** (79%), and **employee retention** (79%) to name a few.
- **Americans overestimate the amount of Fortune 500 Black CEOs:** On average, **Americans think (19%) of the 500 largest companies** have a Black CEO. Yet, when provided with the actual representation (approx. 2%), a substantial majority (71%) said **this number needed to be increased**.

Implication:

"This poll's message is clear: Americans of all races, political ideologies, and generations agree that racial diversity is good for business," says BEA CEO Samantha Tweedy. "Americans overwhelmingly agree that diversity initiatives in the workplace make companies more profitable and innovative. At this moment, business leaders should double down on efforts to make sure their companies reflect the racial diversity of the American population." See the full results [here](#), and please share them with other corporate leaders.

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## AMERICANS SHARE EXCITEMENT, WORRIES ABOUT NEW TECH: HUMAN FLOURISHING LAB- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

It's the old-age stereotype that older generations are out of touch with technology, and younger ones are both dependent and naive about its potential risks. According to research with Human Flourishing Lab and my co-CEO Will Johnson's Op-Ed in Fortune, Americans across generations have much in common regarding their technological hopes and fears.

- **Americans of all ages share a curious, open-minded, and trusting attitude toward new technologies:** Most respondents (78%) are interested in learning **how new technologies such as AI, robotics, and virtual reality work**. A similar number of people are interested in trying out such new tech (Gen Z: 88%, Millennials: 89%, Gen X: 78%, Boomers+: 69%).
- Additionally, over (80%) of each generation agrees that it is **essential to keep an open mind about new technologies**.

- **However, there is a longing for quieter times:** Two-thirds (67%) said that they wish they could **go back to a time before everyone was "plugged in,"** with Millennials and Gen X most wistful (74%, 73% v. Gen Z: 60%, Boomers+: 61%).
- **And a wariness about tech's downsides:** A narrow majority of Americans (52%) claim that new technologies are **more likely to drive people apart** than bring them together, and (85%) worry that young people are **too technology-dependent**.

**Implication:**

"Although Americans appreciate technological invention and innovation, they are mindful of ways it could undermine human agency and psychological well-being. But the best way to approach technology is largely how we are: with interest, optimism, skepticism, and a healthy dose of nostalgia," says Johnson and Clay Routledge, the VP of Research and Director of Human Flourishing at the Archbridge Institute.

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## COLLEGE APPLICANT ANXIETY RISING: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING- HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

A new Harris study with The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) in [Higher Ed Dive](#) sheds light on college applications' anxiety.

- The poll conducted among students aged 16 to 22 found that more than three-quarters (76%) of students said that completing college **applications felt like "such a decisive moment" in their lives** – and for more than half (52%), the **most stressful academic experience to date**.
- The majority also felt pressured to apply to many colleges (52%) and specific colleges they weren't interested in (48%).

- **But, admissions don't always feel fair:** (42%) of students consider college admissions **to be rigged** (v. fair: 58%), and (74%) believe the admission process is **significantly biased**.

**Implication:**

NACAC's survey also illuminates student opinion about campus diversity and fairness of college admissions, topics that have taken on new importance following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling this summer deeming race-conscious admissions unconstitutional – finding that nearly 3 in 5 (58%) support race-conscious admission practices, with three-quarters (76%) believing student body diversity is essential for colleges.

Section:

# 04

Topic:

## BETTING ON AI: INSIDER-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In a recent interview [with Business Insider](#), our Harris Poll Chairman (and Stagwell Chairman/CEO) Mark Penn advises why he's betting on artificial intelligence and how brands should handle thorny social issues.

- **Don't fear AI:** While our America This Week tracker found that Americans familiar with ChatGPT believe the tool **is likely to replace jobs** such as content creation and PR (75%, 72%), Penn instead believes **that AI tools will make creative jobs more efficient** and accessible such as to those who couldn't afford a copywriter before.
- **Imbalance leads to public backlash on social issues:** Penn details that many companies have excellent communications and marketing teams but **only sometimes have teams skilled on topics and a balanced group of professionals** from both sides of social issues.
- **Consumers can see through virtue signaling:** (68%) believe that when a company **speaks out today on social issues, it's a marketing ploy** rather than an authentic opinion (32%) – which explains why (78%) of Americans **wish their preferred brands to stay out of politics.**

Implication:

"There is no cookie-cutter answer to these questions," says Penn. "It depends on your mix of stakeholders, your values as a company, and what you do and do not stand for."



# Wave 158



## WAVE 158 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **August 18-20, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **1,989** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

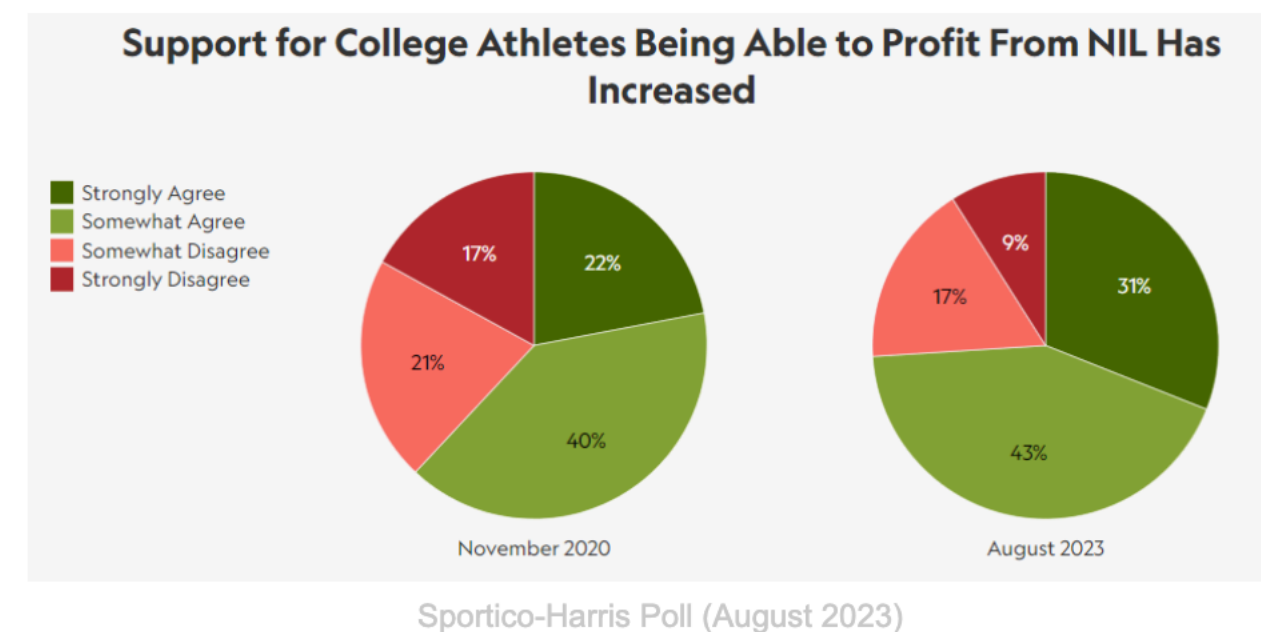
Topic:

## IT'S TIME TO PAY COLLEGE ATHLETES: SPORTICO-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

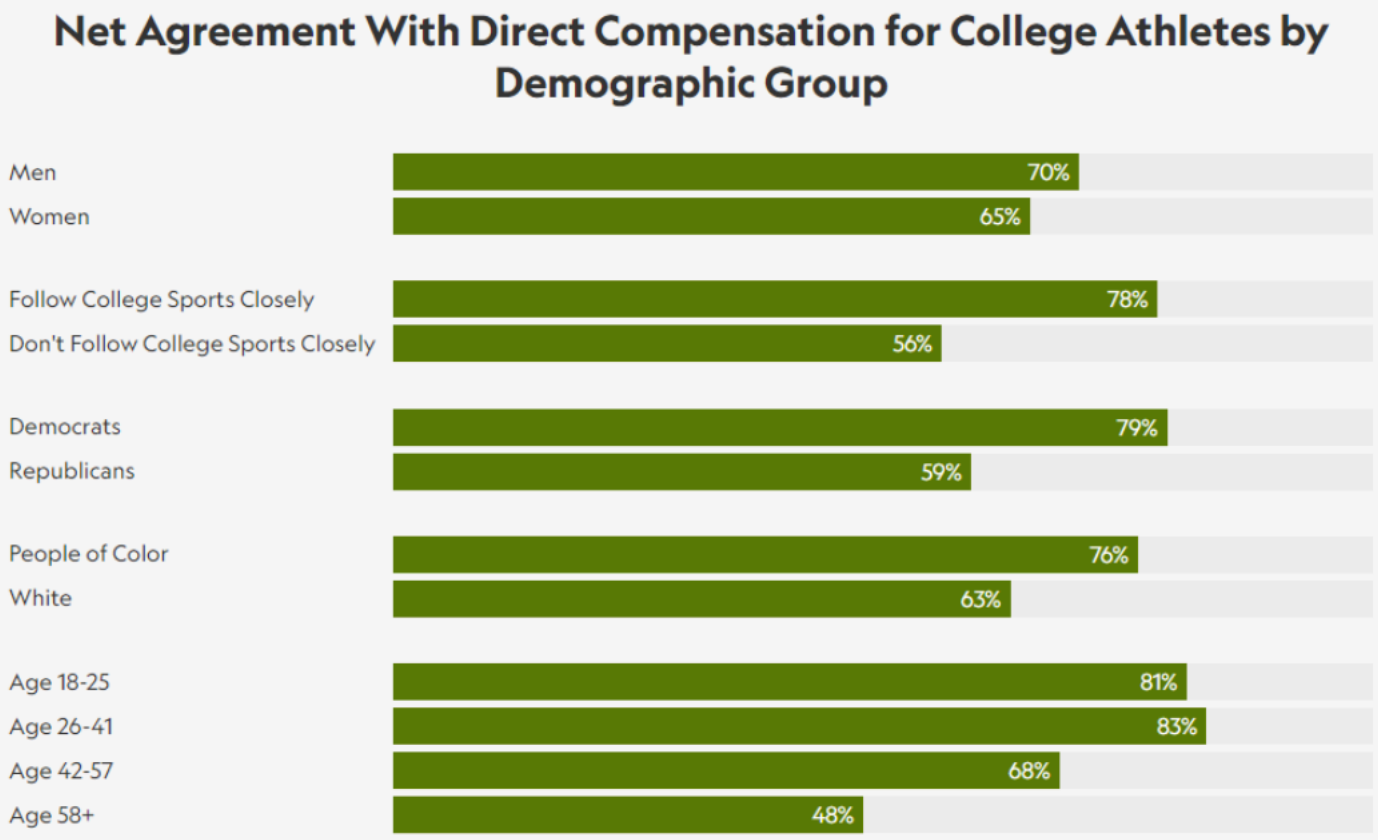
Two years after collegiate athletes were granted the opportunity to earn money from their [name, image, and likeness](#), Americans are ready – if not eager – to do away with the remaining NCAA restrictions that uphold the notion of amateurism, according to our latest poll [with Sportico](#).

- More Americans today (74%) support athletes' right to earn from their NIL than in November 2020 (62%), when Sportico and The Harris Poll last surveyed the question, about eight months before the NCAA's interim NIL policy took effect:



Sportico-Harris Poll (August 2023)

- While mainly advocating deregulating the NCAA's college athlete earning restrictions, (80%) of Americans also agree that college sports need to have uniform NIL standards.
- But it's also time to "show me the money": Two-thirds (67%) of Americans believe college athletes should be able to receive direct compensation from their school, and slightly smaller majorities support athletes' rights to obtain employee status (64%) and to bargain as a labor union collectively (59%).



Sportico-Harris Poll (August 2023)

Implication:

Over a dozen pieces of NIL legislation have been [proposed](#) in Congress. Yet NCAA's president Charlie Baker has publicly asserted that most college athletes do not want to become employees and that it is his prerogative to keep it that way. This position is increasingly out of step with the country amid major college conference realignment to secure massive TV revenue for member schools. [According to one estimate](#), annual payouts to Big Ten schools in a new deal could reach over \$60 million in television revenue alone. Total conference payouts could reach \$90 million per year. There might be some money lying around to pay players.

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## OLD AGE ENTERS A NEW AGE: AGE WAVE-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

The old saying goes that age is all in your mind. A new poll [with Age Wave](#) confirms substantial shifts in Americans' perceptions of aging and longevity.

- We have entered a new age of aging: (79%) of adults aged 50+ think today's older adults are more active, open-minded, and curious (58%) than the previous generation.
- The definition of "old" has also changed: While age 60 was once considered "old" in their grandparents' time, now 80 is the median age considered "old" today.
- The importance of youthfulness has been replaced by usefulness: (83%) of those 65+ say it's more vital for them to feel valuable than youthful in their retirement years.
- Leaving many to evolve their sense of what retirement should look like, as (59%) of pre-retirees and retirees say they want to work in some form in retirement.

**Implication:**

The survey gives a crucial snapshot of our refashioned sensibilities regarding retirement, health, and longevity and the importance of leaving a legacy. "Aging has finally come of age," said Ken Dychtwald, Ph.D., psychologist/ gerontologist and founder and CEO of Age Wave. "Understanding our evolving perceptions of aging is more urgent than ever, as people over 65 make up an increasingly large portion of the U.S. population each year."

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## **BACK TO SCHOOL STRESS WEIGHS ON MANY PARENTS: UNDERSTOOD.ORG -HARRIS POLL**

**Introduction:**

As children around the country return to school, new Harris research [with Understood.org](#) shows that not all parents feel at ease with their kids out of their hair and back in the classroom.

- Many American parents brace for stress this school year: Over half (53%) of parents with children under 18 say that back-to-school season is the most stressful time of the year.
- Nearly 9 in 10 (87%) report that back-to-school season causes stress or anxiety.
- And it's exacerbated for parents of children with learning and thinking differences (e.g., neurodivergent, dyslexic, etc.), who are more likely to report feeling stressed (39% v. 28%), unprepared (19% v. 12%), scared (17% v. 9%), and lonely (10% v. 3%).

**Implication:**

"The reality is that contrary to what we see in popular culture, back-to-school season is often a challenging time for most parents," said Dr. Andrew Kahn, Understood.org's associate director of behavior change and expertise. "Back-to-school season presents a series of stressors for every parent, and for parents of a child with learning and thinking differences, it can be extremely isolating."

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## **BUSINESSES CRUNCHED BY RETIRING BOOMERS: EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS**

**Introduction:**

Just a few years away from the last Baby Boomers entering the expected retirement age, U.S. employers are facing a compounded crisis of labor shortage and losing older, experienced workers, according to a recent survey [with Express Employment Professionals](#).

- 8 in 10 (81%) of U.S. hiring managers say employees have retired from their companies in the past two years, with a third of these employees having retired between ages 60 to 64 (33%) or 65 to 69 (33%) – on par with the ages at which hiring managers believe employees should retire at (60-64: 26%, 65-69: 24%).
- Over 8 in 10 (84%) U.S. employees say it's a significant loss when older employees retire without passing on their years of knowledge to younger employees – a "brain drain."
- When knowledge transfer fails, workers can be left learning how to do a job independently, with nearly half of U.S. employees (47%) experiencing this.

- Companies are acting on the brain drain: The majority (66%) believe their employer is taking the proper steps to ensure they don't experience a "brain drain."

**Implication:**

"Baby Boomers are an essential part of the economy, and succession planning for their exit now should be a top priority," said Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller. "This is the perfect opportunity for baby boomers to train younger employees before they enjoy a hard-earned retirement, knowing their companies are in good hands."



# Wave 157

---

## WAVE 157 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **August 11-13, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,018** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

Topic:

## THE GEN Z/ BOOMER DIVIDE ON CLIMATE: FAST COMPANY-HARRIS POLL

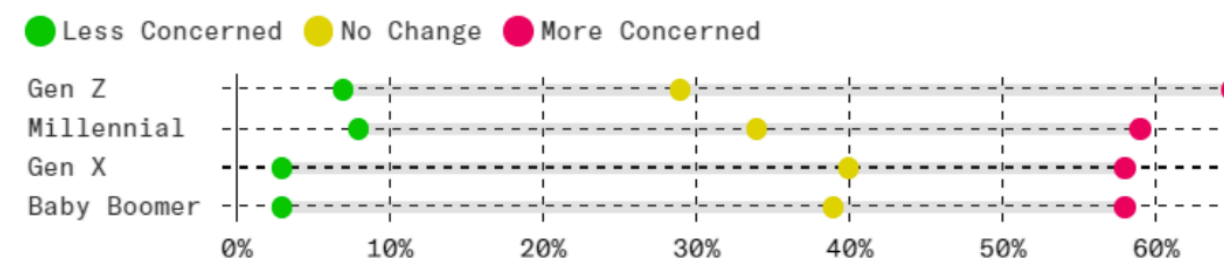
Introduction:

Recently we explored how climate change has [woven itself into the American dreamscape](#). New Harris research [with Fast Company](#) details how extreme weather like the tragedy in Lahaina has nearly everyone unsettled—but divided on the root cause.

- Worry crosses all ages: Those with deep concerns about extreme weather spanned four generations – Gen Z (65%), Millennials (77%), Gen X (76%), and Boomers+ (75%) – with a majority of each group saying they are more concerned about extreme weather now than they were a year ago.

### Concerns about extreme weather are growing

Compared to one year ago, are you currently more or less concerned about extreme weather?



Source: Fast Company-Harris Poll, July 2023

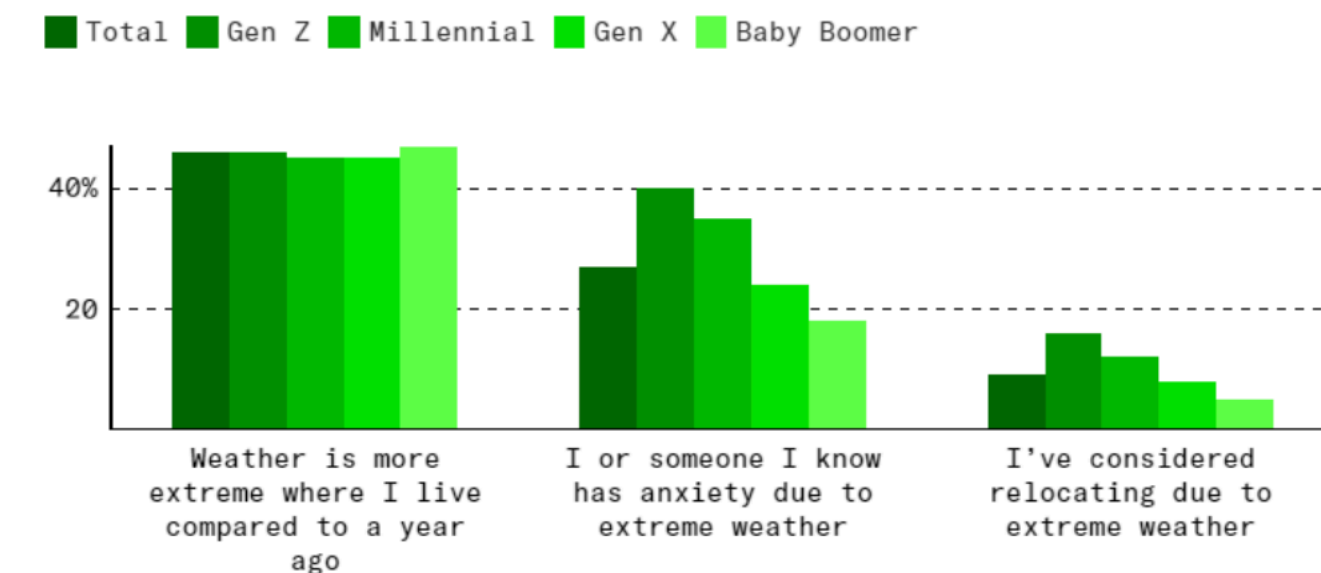


Fast Company-Harris Poll July 2023

- But younger Americans connect extreme weather with climate change: Concerns are highest among Gen Z (82%), then Millennials (77%) and (72%) of Boomers+. But Gen Z is the most concerned in every category when the language "climate change" is used, while Boomers+ are the least concerned.
- And younger Americans (Gen Z: 40%, Millennials: 35%) said they or someone they know have experienced anxiety over extreme weather (v. Gen X: 24%, Boomers+: 18%).

### Weather and anxiety are getting worse

Percentage of Americans who said the following climate-related situations were true for them



Source: Fast Company-Harris Poll, July 2023



Fast Company-Harris Poll July 2023

### Implication:

From the hottest month in history to air-quality disruptions stemming from unprecedented expanses of fires, extreme weather is disrupting daily life and the American economy and costing lives. That younger people cross their respective ideologies to connect severe weather to climate change is a hopeful sign for future consumer adoption of more clean energy practices built today from the [\\$225m cleantech](#) investments in Biden's Inflation Reduction and Chips Act.



Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## THE NEWEST COMPANY MUST-HAVE IS CHILDCARE: KINDERCARE-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

New Harris research [with KinderCare Learning Company](#), once a niche perk, child care benefits are now essential in employer's efforts to attract and retain employees, especially Gen Z talent, who seem far more willing than older generations to switch jobs, move away, take a pay cut or even pause their career if it means finding affordable, quality child care.

- As Gen Z ages into parenthood, they see childcare as the most important benefit: More Gen Z parents (30%) rated childcare benefits slightly above health insurance (29%) when considering whether to stay or leave their current job, while (Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomer) rated health insurance as most important.
- Willing to leave for childcare benefits: (43%) of Gen Z parents would switch jobs for financial assistance to cover childcare costs (v. Millennials: 33%, Gen X: 26%, Boomer+: 21%) and (52%) would switch jobs for on-site childcare.
- And the need for childcare is forcing big decisions: (36%) of Gen Z parents have accepted a job that pays less but has more flexibility (v. Millennial: 26%), and (29%) have moved to a new location to find childcare (v. Millennial: 19%).

**Implication:**

"The quickly evolving world of work is affecting Gen Z in ways we've never seen before," said Paul Thompson, President of KinderCare Learning Companies. "The shift to remote and hybrid models of work has been nothing short of seismic, and it's affecting not only how, when, and where Gen Z is working but also in what they expect from employers for their work."

Section:

# 03

**Topic:**

## 2023'S HIRING SPREE: EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

According to our new research with Express Employment Services in The Journal Record, despite continuing economic challenges and uncertainties, businesses across the country remain in hiring mode.

- Over 6 in 10 (62%) of hiring managers surveyed, they have responded that their companies plan to hire additional workers before the end of 2023.
- For those that do, (52%) said additional employees are needed to manage higher volumes of work.
- Some (48%) said their companies have newly created positions to fill; (42%) cited needs to fill open positions left by employee turnover; and (28%) said they need more help after expanding into new markets.
- However, business managers reported some reticence in taking on new hires: Around (20%) said they would likely wait to see how workloads shake out in coming months before making any hiring plans, and nearly a fifth (17%) said they'd put off hiring until after the economy returns "to normal."
- For those anticipating smaller payrolls, (59%) cited a need to reduce costs as a cause, followed by a need to realign employee numbers to match declines in business (31%). Notably, almost a fifth (16%) of companies with expectations of reducing payrolls cited plans to increase their use of automation or technology.

**Implication:**

Overall, hiring expectations have been trending upward over the past few years, Express Employment has said. "Despite challenging global economic conditions, it's encouraging to see employers are confident enough in their financial situations to bring on additional staff," Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller said.

Section:

# 04

**Topic:**

## THE BACK TO SCHOOL TEEN VAPING CRISIS: VERKADA-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

As students head back to class this month, a Harris survey [with Verkada](#) reveals a rise in vaping among teens nationwide and its negative impacts, including lower academic performance, decreased student engagement, and heightened depression.

- Vaping's popularity amongst teens is on the rise: Verkada's Vape Activity Index shows a (20%) increase in vaping activity in the 2022-2023 academic year vs. the year prior, with more than eight in ten teachers (84%) and students (82%) surveyed saying there's been an increase in teen vape usage over the past 24 months
- This rise in vaping is having a direct impact on educators' ability to teach and students' academic performance: Among teachers who deal with classroom disruptions due to vaping, (87%) agree that vaping in school is disruptive to the learning environment, and around half report that vaping teens struggle to stay motivated (53%) and have trouble focusing (51%).
- Teens even know it's a problem: Nearly all teens who vape (96%) view teen vaping to be a problem, with (61%) of vaping teens considering themselves to be addicted and (54%) wanting to quit vaping altogether.
- Vaping teens are sending alarming signals of depression: They are twice as likely than non-vaping teens to have felt depressed in the last month (71% vs. 35%) and are significantly less likely to feel optimistic about their physical health (42% vs. 67%).

**Implication:**

"The post-pandemic resurgence of teen vaping has made the already difficult job of educating middle school and high school students even more challenging," said Brandon Davito, Senior Vice President of Product and Operations at Verkada. "Teachers and school administrators have the best visibility into the impact of vaping on teens, and they are rightly concerned. The findings from this study reinforce what we are hearing from school staff across the country and issue an urgent warning for all parents, administrators, and teens to take action."



# Wave 156

## WAVE 156 INTRODUCTION

---

The following research was conducted between **July 28-30, 2023** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,040** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

**Topic:**

## CLIMATE CHANGE IS CHANGING HOW WE DREAM: TIME-HARRIS POLL

**Introduction:**

Studying dreams can be slippery. We only sometimes remember them, and interpreting them is highly subjective. But, according to our latest survey [with TIME](#), climate change has woven itself into American dreaming quite clearly.

- Climate dreaming is more pervasive for younger Americans: The majority (57%) of Gen Z and Millennials have dreamed about climate change, compared to (35%) of Gen Xers and just (14%) of Boomers.
- Climate change makes for bad dreams: Most people's climate dreams involve extreme weather or natural disasters; fewer are about mosquitoes and locusts or political leaders and laws. And feelings of stress and fear were reported the most when dreaming about climate change (37%, 36%).
- People of color are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and it's reflected in dreams: Half of all people of color said they had dreamed about climate change at least once in their lives, compared to just (28%) white people.
- Even location matters when it comes to climate dreams: Those living in the Western U.S. – where drought, heat, and wildfires are all worsening due to rising global temperatures – were more likely to report a climate dream (44%) compared to a third of people across the South, Northeast, and Midwest. And half of the people out west – and the same number in the Midwest – had dreams filled with extreme weather (v. Northeast: 46%, South: 37%).

**Implication:**

Now and then, society collectively experiences collective moments to such an acute degree that it changes our dreams. The pandemic certainly did this, as have the world wars and 9/11. The question is whether enough people are feeling climate change acutely enough that it is systemically infiltrating our dreams at a population level – and our surveys seem to show that it's starting too.

Section:

# 02

**Topic:**

## **ROOKIE MANAGERS SPARK WORKPLACE ANGER: OJI LIFE LAB-HARRIS POLL**

**Introduction:**

In partnership with Oji Life Lab, as featured [in Fortune](#), if you thought stepping up into a leadership position was tough for new managers, then spare a thought for their first reports.

- 2 in 5 (40%) of workers said that working under a first-time boss has been the source of "stress or anxiety about going to work" and dwindling motivation – causing a third to reconsider working at their company entirely. About a fifth said they had trouble sleeping under a newly promoted manager.
- For women, first-time managers had an even more significant negative impact: Almost half of female staffers reported feeling stress or anxiety when working for a fresh-faced boss, compared to just over a third of male employees. Women were also more likely to have negative feelings about their career path and poor quality sleep at the hands of a new boss.
- Perhaps most alarming for corporate leaders, new bosses could be inadvertently sabotaging companies' efforts to close the gender gap and pull women through the ranks: 40% of the women surveyed cited new managers as fueling their desire to quit, compared to 29% of men.
- Moreover, this experience worsens with age: Women over 55 were likelier to rate new managers as weak at "handling difficult situations" and "providing feedback."

**Implication:**

Linda Hill, a Harvard University professor of business administration who has studied management for over four decades, [told Bloomberg](#) that this might be because "most new managers believe that to treat people fairly is to treat them the same way." But different groups have specific needs and concerns – like childbearing and menopause – that require targeted treatment from managers.

Section:

# 03

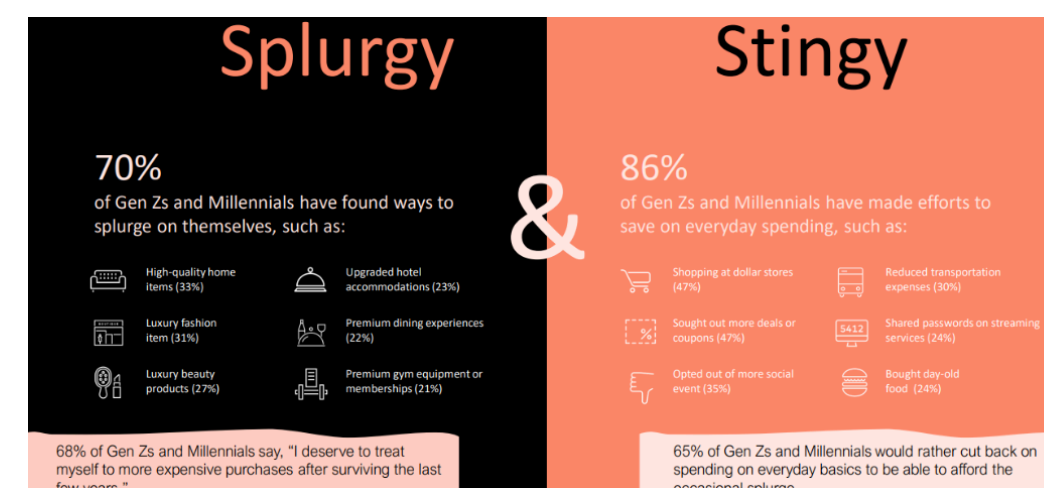
Topic:

## THE AND ERA: HARRIS POLL THOUGHT LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

Introduction:

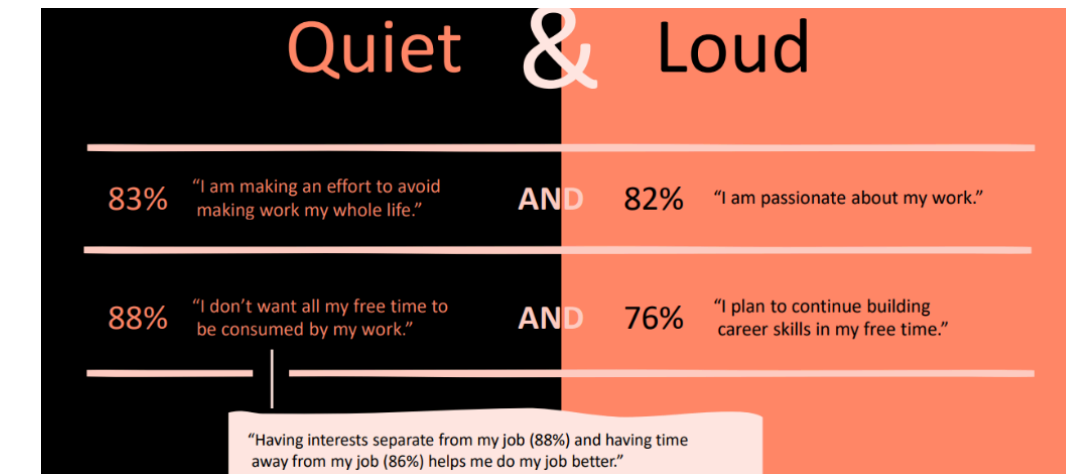
With the rapid advancement of technology facilitating this fast-paced categorization process – distinguishing 'right/wrong,' 'love/hate,' and 'buy/avoid' – our humanity appears to lag. Fortunately, there's a glimmer of hope - younger people are questioning this binary perspective, and introducing a more inclusive era - The "AND" Era, details the latest report [by The Harris Poll Thought Leadership Practice](#).

- Money – Splurgy & Stingy: Consumers are embracing a "split-brain budget" cutting back on basics – (69%) have cut out more in-between spending – but making room for personal luxuries as (63%) of Americans say they aren't going to deprive themselves of the comforts of life now for a future that feels it could change at any moment.



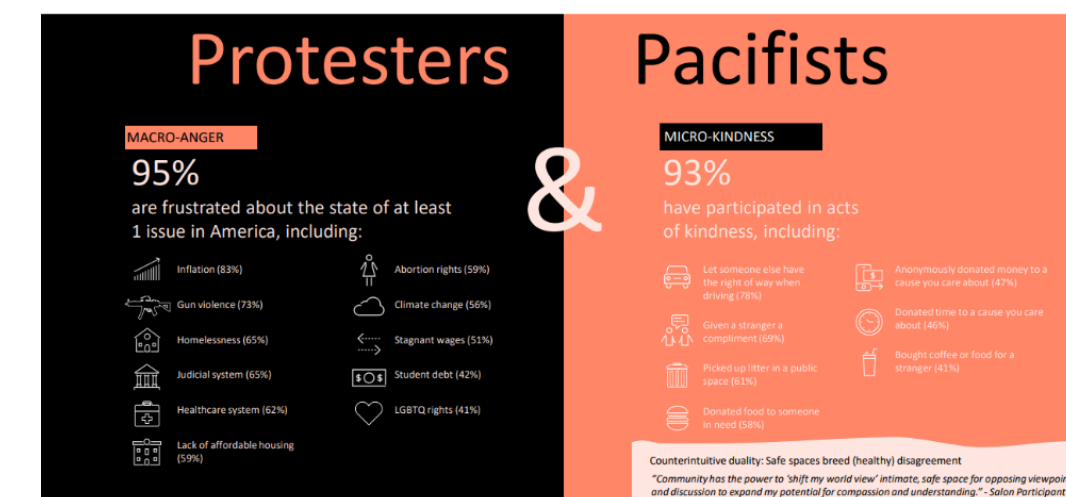
The AND Era: Libby Rodney and Abbey Lunney of The Harris Poll July 2023

- Work – Quiet & Loud: (70%) of Americans believe "quiet quitting is a loud statement by employees about what they are looking for." And most don't want work to be everything, with (83%) trying to avoid making work their whole life.



The AND Era: Libby Rodney and Abbey Lunney of The Harris Poll July 2023

- Activism – Protesters & Pacifists: Nearly all Americans (95%) are frustrated about the state of at least one issue in America, and half (50%) say it's essential to get angry about issues to drive change. However, they also believe kindness can prevail, as (76%) say compassion will ultimately help us overcome polarization.



The AND Era: Libby Rodney and Abbey Lunney of The Harris Poll July 2023

- To dive deeper and learn about all six of the dualities of conflicting human needs and desires, check out the [full report here](#).

Implication:

"The future is unfolding with more complexities and confusion than ever before," says Abbey Lunney, Managing Director. "Meanwhile, people feel like their choices and opinions live in an illusionary binary world, forcing them to check one box or another. But in today's world, we can forge a different pathway to acknowledge that two things can be true simultaneously."



Section:

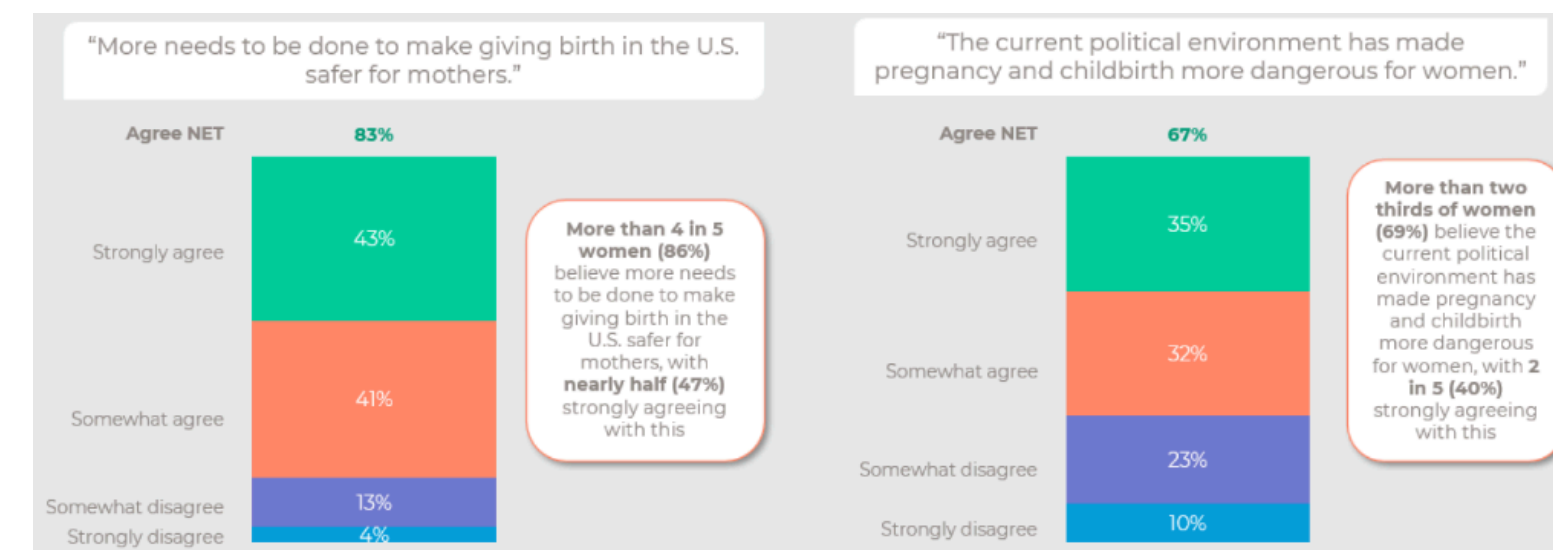
# 04

Topic:

## MATERNITY LEAVE ESSENTIAL TO HEALTHY MOMS AND BABIES: HEALTHDAY-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

The pregnancy and birth journey is a pivotal moment in a woman's life, and while miraculous, it does not come without risk, some of which may be avoidable. And according to the recent [State of Maternal Health in America Study](#) in partnership with HealthDay, as covered [by U.S. News](#), maternity leave is seen as fundamental in improving health outcomes for mothers, babies, and infants.



HealthDay-Harris Poll July 2023

- Less than half (40%) of Americans knew that the U.S. has the highest maternal mortality rate among developed countries. However, they are united that more needs to be done to make it safer for expecting mothers:
- As a result, the belief that maternity leave is crucial to improving healthy outcomes is widely held: Nearly 9 in 10 Americans believe that maternity leave is essential to improving health outcomes for mothers (88%) and babies' health outcomes (89%).
- The current four-week average of maternity leave in the U.S. needs to be more: Americans believe the standard minimum length of paid maternity leave in the U.S. should be 15 weeks, on average, with (25%) thinking it should be at least 20 weeks. On average, women (18-34) believe it should be 20 weeks.

Implication:

"Even though most Americans don't know that the U.S. has the highest rate of maternal mortality among developed countries, the vast majority agree that more needs to be done to make giving birth in the U.S. safer for mothers – including nearly half who strongly agree with this sentiment – suggesting that, despite gaps in awareness of key facts when it comes to maternal and infant mortality, there exists a widespread belief that the 'status quo' is simply not good enough," said Kathy Steinberg, vice president of media and communications research at the Harris Poll.

# Questions?

---

**RYAN LINDER**

Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP, Stagwell

[ryan.linder@stagwellglobal.com](mailto:ryan.linder@stagwellglobal.com)

**JOHN GERZEMA**

CEO, The Harris Poll

[jgerzema@harrisinsights.com](mailto:jgerzema@harrisinsights.com)



**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER**

---