



Helping those who
care about young
people, care better.



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2020**

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The world waits to see what this young generation will do. And along with our hopes and dreams for them, we recognize that they are facing an epidemic of so many things: of loneliness; of declining trust in the social and religious institutions that past generations held (and may still hold) dear; of a dearth of supportive, caring adults who can help them navigate the shifting sands of this world.

In 2020, it felt as if the world froze in a minute—and we were forced to navigate new forms of fear and loss, new ways of being connected yet disconnected, and for some, new depths of isolation.

At Springtide, we realized that this is what we were made for. Our mission was never clearer: We must equip caring adults with new ways of caring for young people, rooted in fresh research. Starting in March 2020, we launched a brand-new study, targeted to specifically help adults understand what young people were experiencing in the height of social distancing, as the streets, religious buildings, and schools and colleges in our towns became empty.

Throughout the year, we continued producing more projects and content for trusted adults like you, who care so deeply about what young people are experiencing. Along the way, I kept hearing from those who work with young people:

They told us their concerns . . .



My biggest concern is the declining whole health of young people including their spiritual, emotional, mental, physical, and social well-being.

—Keith

. . . and the ways Springtide is impacting their work with young people.



Thanks for your research. I plan on using it with staff and parish council to discuss the current state of affairs to see how we might better address the needs of our young people.

—Fr. Joe Regan



Thank you for this gift. Your resources are really helpful in understanding our youth today.

—Aido

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



We surveyed over 10,000 13-to-25-year-olds, conducted over 150 interviews, held focus groups with hundreds of religious leaders, published three studies, including our inaugural *State of Religion and Young People* report, welcomed a diverse cohort of research advisors, and engaged in scores of conversations with stakeholders like you.

It's been quite the year at Springtide, but what I'm most proud of is what it sets us up to do in the future. From the foundation, we're well-positioned to launch several new initiatives in 2021: our custom research unit as well as a Writer-in-Residence program that will open in the summer for a young person to work specifically with our data and staff to develop their skills and contribute to our voice.

Additionally, we have already convened the first meeting of our Springtide Ambassador Program, a group of highly committed young people who gather monthly to help us gain further insight into the challenges and joys of being a young person in 2021. We will also be launching a fellowship program this summer whose goal is to bring more underrepresented voices into this field.

Of course, we'll also be publishing our research along way, first in an upcoming report titled *Work/Life: Helping Gen Z Flourish & Find Balance* and in our second *The State of Religion and Young People* report.

Without your support, none of this would be possible. We are so grateful for your ripples of impact in helping to turn the tide for young people. I count myself lucky to be able to engage in this good work with you, for the good of young people everywhere.

Gratefully,



WHO WE ARE

Springtide Team



Josh Packard
Executive Director



Kevin Singer
Head of Media and
Public Relations



John M. Vitek
President & CEO



Megan Bissel
Head of Research



Marte Aboagye
Head of Community
Engagement



Adrianna Smell
Associate Researcher



Ellen Koneck
Head of Writing
and Editing



Amanda Hernandez
Associate Researcher



Sigrid Lindholm
Head of Marketing



Sean Zimny
Associate Researcher



Steve Mino
Brand Designer

Springtide Research Advisory Board

The insights that come from the Springtide Advisory Board members inform research design, data gathering, and reporting of our findings. The collective wisdom and the range of perspectives from our research advisory board helps us to recognize young people as individuals and existing within national trends. This board helps to ensure our applied research is deeply authentic and highly actionable.



Rabbi Elan Babchuck,
Founding Director,
Glean Network
Director of Innovation, Clal



Dr. Onnie Rogers
Developmental Psychologist and
Assistant Professor of Psychology and
Education, Northwestern University



Araceli Calderón de Weis
Parent Involvement Coordinator,
Centennial BOCES (Board of
Cooperative Educational Services)



Seher Siddiquee
Hospital chaplain, UCSF
Benioff Children's Hospital



Nima Dahir
Stanford University PhD
student in sociology
Cofounder and board
member, Refuge



Chris Stedman
Professor of Religion and
Philosophy at Augsburg College
Founding Director,
Humanist Center of Minnesota



Sarah Kapostasy
Clinical and Social Services
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Casper ter Kuile
Cofounder, Sacred Design Lab



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Rev. Abigail Visco Rusert
Director of the Institute for
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Theological Seminary



Br. Ernest Miller, FSC
Vice President for Mission,
Diversity & Inclusion,
La Salle University



Andrew Zirschky
Research Professor in Youth Ministry
at Austin Presbyterian Theological
Seminary and the Director of the
Master of Arts in Youth Ministry
(Nashville Extension)

WHAT WE DO

Our work, made possible by your support



Over 10,700
print & digital research
reports distributed



15 featured
speaking
engagements



48
distinct media
placements

3,290+
media shares



Over 60
videos
available
on YouTube

8,800+ total views

1,280+ views for the “*What
Is Relational Authority*” video



Over 130,000
total website pageviews

SIGN UP

Over 15,000
email subscribers

28+
podcast episodes
with more than
9,400 total listens

Over 3,700
webinar and talk attendees

I do not attend any church. I still consider myself someone of faith and someone who has spiritual affiliation, but I do not believe in organized religion.

Chris, 19

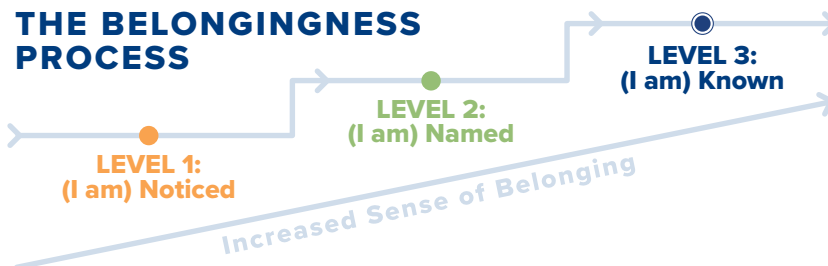


2020 RESEARCH REPORTS



Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation

In *Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation*, Springtide shared important insights about the landscape of loneliness drawn from a national study of 13-to-25-year-olds. The study revealed epidemic levels of isolation among young people and showed why participation alone does not equate to belonging or negate feelings of loneliness.



“You’ll have a deeper sense of belonging because people will know who you are. . . . It’s not just knowing people in the group but the people knowing you. . . . It’s not enough to say, “I’m a part of the group.” It needs to be, “We’re so glad Chris is here,” because they know who I am.

Chris, 19

Quote from *Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation*



Meaning Making: 8 Values That Drive America's Newest Generations

Meaning Making is Springtide's investigation into the values and characteristics that young people, ages 13 to 25, want to practice *and* uphold—and want the organizations they join to practice and uphold too. The values important to young people are accountability, inclusivity, authenticity, welcoming, impactfulness, relationality, growthfulness, and meaningfulness.

“*Meaning Making* doesn't just outline the emerging opportunities to meet the needs of young people; it hands us a blueprint to build a world worthy of them. And while much of the work of innovation and entrepreneurship might rely on counting people, this book reminds us to make sure that those people count.

—Rabbi Elan Babchuck, MBA

Founding Director, Glean Network Director of Innovation, Clal



Nearly 50%

say that **work is not worth doing** if it has no meaning.



“To put it directly, the data are clear that if you are not helping young people find meaning in the ways they engage with your organization, you shouldn't expect them to stick around for long . . . or to even show up in the first place.”

2020 RESEARCH REPORTS

CONTINUED



The State of Religion & Young People 2020: Relational Authority

The *State of Religion & Young People* unpacks the complexity of young people’s inner and outer lives, which shows practitioners a new way to share their values—through a framework we call Relational Authority. The report boasts the largest data set of its kind in the United States, with over 10,000 survey respondents and 150 Interviews with young people.

A generous anonymous donor allowed us to make this report free of charge digitally, and at a reduced price point for print purchasers.

79%

of young people Springtide surveyed agree with the statement:
“I am more likely to listen to adults in my life if I know that they care about me.”

65%

of young people agree with the statement:
“A person’s expertise doesn’t matter if they don’t care about me.”

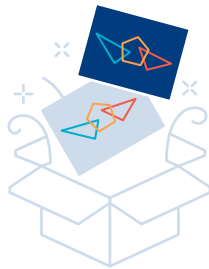
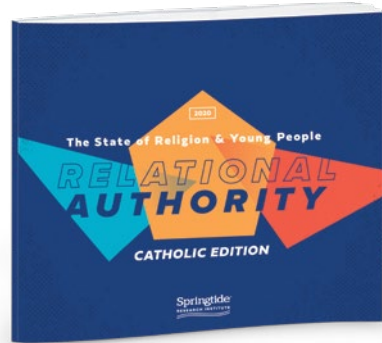
“

If you come in as a teacher and they only know you as a robot who just teaches about history, then they’re not going to care. But if you “get” them—if you work hard to understand them—they’re going to care and they’re going to listen to what you’re saying.

André, 25

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Another generous grant allowed us to create a custom Catholic edition, which allowed Springtide to unpack the data, specifically on Catholic young people's religious lives, while also tending to the greater theological, experiential, and pastoral implications that the research shows.



Over 9,400

print and digital copies of the two versions of *The State of Religion & Young People* have been distributed.

“

I work with faith leaders every day who care about the flourishing of young people. These leaders are challenged by what they see young people facing: a growing hopelessness, an acute mental health crisis, and a disjointed sense of spirituality. In a season when parents and leaders feel the pressure to turn these tides, Springtide's *Relational Authority* study is here, helping leaders reimagine a roadmap for listening, empathy, and curiosity toward connections that pave the way for transformative change.

—Abigail Rusert

Director of the Institute for Youth Ministry, Princeton Theological Seminary

“

A clarion call for a new way to understand the spiritual lives of young people. The data shows clearly that we can no longer use the binary of affiliated/unaffiliated when 60% of unaffiliated people are at least slightly spiritual and 30% of them attend worship services!

—Casper ter Kuile

founder, Sacred Design Lab

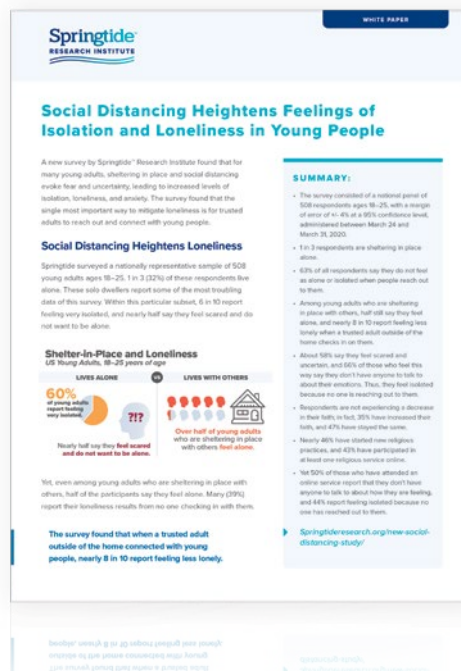
IMPACT OF COVID-19

2020

Meeting Young People in the Midst of the Pandemic

In March 2020, we launched a brand-new study to explore the impact social distancing was having on young people. The resulting data and research—*Social Distancing Heightens Feelings of Isolation and Loneliness in Young People*—was available by April, and open to anyone who needed this life-giving research.

What was most astounding? Our research showed that of the 75% of trusted adults who checked in with young people, only 1% were faith leaders.



Impact of Trusted Adults Checking In

Nearly 8 out of 10 young adults (18–25 years of age) who have had a trusted adult check on them report feeling less lonely.

25% of young people had **no trusted adult check in on them**



75% of young people had a **trusted adult check in on them**

Of that 75% of trusted adults, only **ONE PERCENT** of those adults were **clergy or faith leaders**.

89% family & friends

5% teachers/professors

2% bosses

2% coaches

1% clergy or faith leaders

1% other

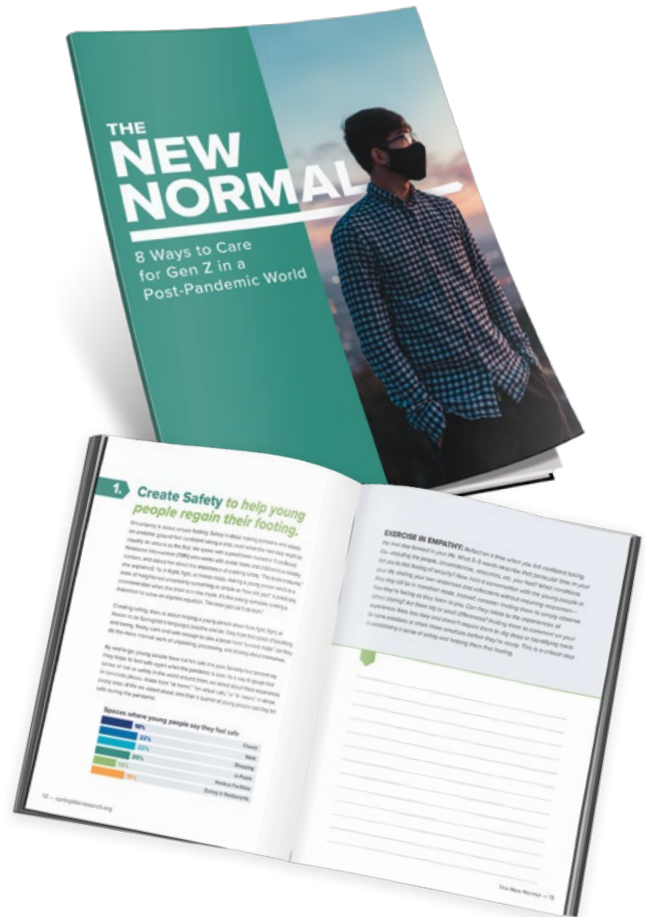
2021

Accompanying Young People as They Navigate a World Post-Isolation

A year into the spread of COVID-19 in the United States, Springtide checked in with young people ages 13 to 25, surveying 2,500 young people nationally in February 2021. We asked about their experiences, how they processed losses and gains, and what they expect from life on the other side of the pandemic, gathering these insights into a guide called *The New Normal: 8 Ways to Care for Gen Z in a Post-Pandemic World*.

Rooted in the social sciences, backed by data, and highly actionable, this guide offers 8 tips for ministry, outreach, and care in a post-pandemic world, in a rich workbook that both trusted adult and young person can journey through together.

We provided *The New Normal* guide **free to over 1,500** (and counting!) adults who care about young people.



57% agree or strongly agree with the statement: **“It might be hard to see how other people are processing if it’s different than how I’m feeling.”**

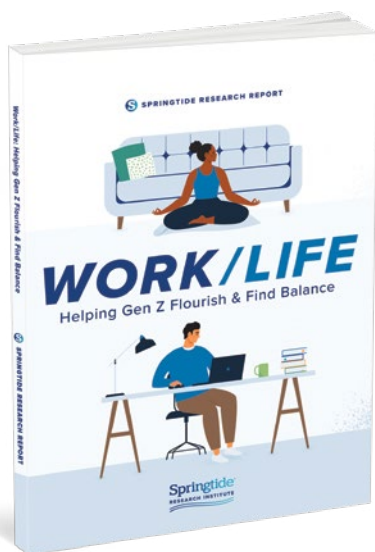


Over 50% of Gen Z tell us **they will feel pressure to move on when the pandemic is over, but they won’t feel ready.**

WHERE WE'RE HEADED IN 2021

The groundswell is just beginning ...

Work / Life: Helping Gen Z Flourish & Find Balance

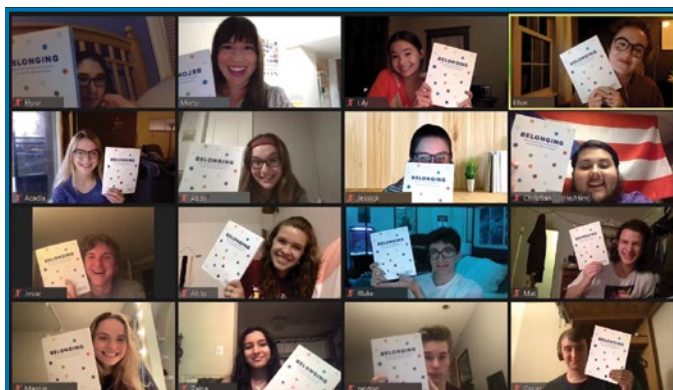


A steady uptick in how much time people spend working means work has to do more. Young people's expectations and experiences for work are changing. In order for Gen Z to do their best work and be their best selves, they need adults who understand what will help them flourish and find balance in work and in life.



when Springtide asked 18-to-25-year-olds what factors would need to be present for them to want to stay in a job,

78% told us that work/life balance is critical.



2021 Springtide Ambassadors

Springtide Ambassadors Program (SAP) participants (ages 13-23) directly shape the research efforts and nationwide community engagement of Springtide Research Institute. Through group collaboration and personal reflection, members have a 15-month commitment with a steady, online cohort.



Fall 2021: *The State of Religion & Young People* Annual Report

This yearly research report will be delivered in the fall with a brand-new theme that we're uncovering now, through surveys and interviews with young people.

BIPOC Fellowship

The Springtide BIPOC Fellowship will focus on research and dissemination of findings from our large, nationally representative data sets about the faith lives of young people. The first project that the 2021–2022 BIPOC fellow will undertake is an analysis of our Latinx/Hispanic data.

It's knowing that you're not just working to make money for the rest of your life and then die.

I think that you need to have some fulfillment in your work, because if you don't, I mean, that's what you're spending the majority of your time doing. That just seems really sad. It's a very short life and if that's all that you've got, it's pretty depressing.

Sophie, 23

Quote from Work / Life: Helping Gen Z Flourish & Find Balance

THE PODCAST



We're listening to young people ... and amplifying their lived experiences

In each episode, we hear directly from young people as they respond to our research and share about the issues impacting their lives.

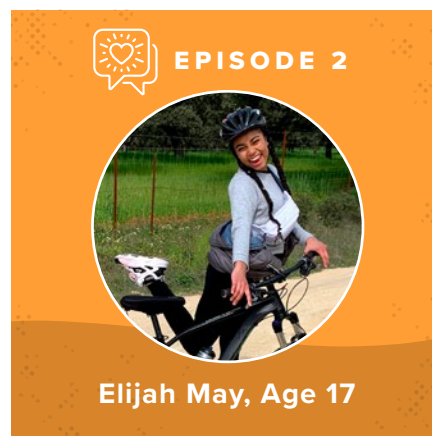
With four seasons (and more to come), this podcast is amplifying the voices of over 25 young people of diverse religious identities, practices, and beliefs, and is leaning into their unfolding stories. You can listen and subscribe to *The Voices of Young People* on Apple Podcast, Google Podcast, and Spotify, as well as on the Springtide website.

Season 1 (7 Episodes): *Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation*

Season 2 (8 Episodes): *Meaning Making: 8 Values That Drive America's Newest Generations*

Season 3 (12 Episodes): *The State of Religion & Young People 2020*

Season 4 (12 Episodes): *Work / Life: Helping Gen Z Flourish & Find Balance*



podcast episodes with
more than 9,400 total listens 

2021 will bring new listeners ...and more stories from young people

What does being inclusive mean to you?



I really look at it from an action perspective. If you look at a lot of restaurants, or any stores, they all have the “Open” sign on, and the majority of people can walk in during those business hours.

But the main difference is when you walk in, are you welcomed or are you just a customer? And so, I feel like, for me, you know when I put my presence somewhere and they’re giving me this ad, or “you belong here, etc.” I listen, but I’m only looking for the action.



Abdimalik



Quote from Season 2 of *The Voices of Young People Podcast*

CUSTOM RESEARCH

Custom research for mission-driven organizations.

Springtide offers custom research to help organizations move forward confidently.

Our research services include program evaluation, grant support, custom surveys and data collection, and more. In addition, Dr. Josh Packard is available for presentations on Springtide data or the custom research you commission.



**Program
Evaluation**



**Grant
Support**



**Custom
Surveys**



**Data
Collection**

Our clients include:



Springtide Research Institute Financials

Springtide Research Institute operates under the 501c3 status and fiscal agency of Lasallian Education and Research Initiatives, a Minnesota nonprofit corporation. Springtide Research Institute's financials are publicly available. A full audited financial report for LaSallian Education and Research Initiatives is available upon request.

INCOME:

Sales revenue:	\$16,177.62
Grants and donor revenue:	\$352,901.81
TOTAL INCOME:	\$369,079.43

EXPENSE:

Administration:	\$102,500.11
Fundraising:	\$63,432.15
Content and Research:	\$104,947.32
Marketing:	\$98,199.85
TOTAL EXPENSE:	\$369,079.43



It's one thing to collect a bunch of data—but it's another thing to have directional business outcomes as a result of the data. That's what Springtide Research Institute delivers on. They were instrumental in helping us shape the right questions, collect the data, analyze the results, and deliver a summary report that was clear, understandable, and most importantly, actionable.

—Craig Cable
ACG Colorado

THE SPRINGTIDE MISSION

Compelled by the urgent desire to listen and attend to the lives of young people ages 13–25, Springtide Research Institute is committed to understanding the distinct ways new generations experience and express community, identity, and meaning.

We exist at the intersection of religious and human experience in the lives of young people. And we're here to listen.

We combine quantitative and qualitative research to reflect and amplify the lived realities of young people as they navigate shifting social, cultural, and religious landscapes. Delivering fresh data and actionable insights, we equip those who care about young people to care better.

Stay in touch:

