The Key to Confidence: Consumers and Textile Sustainability

Changing Mindsets, Changing Behaviors and Changing Outlooks

Focus on MILLENNIALS and PARENTS
This major study of sustainability and, more specifically, textile sustainability was commissioned by OEKO-TEX® as part of the commemoration of its 25th Anniversary.

It is ground-breaking research as it is the first to focus on the global consumer rather than on the textile trade.
A Reminder: What We Did

A 20 to 25-minute general population survey of 11,200+ clothing and home textile consumers, ages 18+:

- Fielded online in June and July, 2017
- In ten countries:
  - Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India, Japan, Spain, Switzerland, USA
  - Conducted in local languages
  - Sampling reflected Census data for each country
- All participants were required to be key decision-makers and shoppers in household for clothes (and purchase at least three times per year)
  - Most were also responsible for the purchase of home textiles
  - Good representation of Millennials / Generation X / Baby Boomers and parents
- Mix of multiple choice and free response (open-ended) questions
  - Direct quotes, as written by consumers, appear throughout the presentation
What We Learned...

We learned that for people worldwide, climate change is a real and serious threat – particularly to those living in manufacturing areas

- People want to “do the right thing” and “take small steps” to be part of the solution and not part of the problem
- They aspire to live more sustainably and have high expectations of their brands to also “do the right thing” and show leadership in this regard

We learned that concerns about textile sustainability are growing: globally four in ten people is ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ concerned about harmful substances in the clothing and home textiles they purchase

- They are very interested in knowing if the clothes and home textiles they purchase and use are safe from harmful substances and produced in environmentally and socially responsible ways

Learning about the impact of the textile industry is a game-changer as it inspires people to think about, purchase and use textile products differently
Today...

.... we’re focusing on two particularly important groups, starting with

MILLENNIALS
The Three Generations

- **MILLENNIALS**
  - c. 1981-2000
  - (18-36)

- **GENERATION X**
  - c. 1965-1980
  - (37-52)

- **BOOMERS (+)**
  - c. 1946-1964
  - (53+)

  “+” - a few are slightly older
Why Millennials?

• They are the (very near) future
  → The largest age cohort (almost 30% of the world’s population)

• They have come of age under the shadow of climate change

• They have also been raised in a “certified world” – particularly in terms of food

• They are already particularly influential – and will be increasingly so as the oldest, now about age 36, take leadership positions everywhere
Who Are the Millennials in Our Sample?

- Millennials: 32% of the total sample (3,200 Millennials)
- Gen X: 40%
- Boomers+: 28%

**Age**
- 18 - 24: 29%
- 25 - 34: 71%

**Have Child(ren)**
- 56%

**Education**
- High: 30%
- Medium: 54%
- Low: 16%

**Annual Income**
- High: 24%
- Moderate: 36%
- Low: 41%
**Shopping Behaviors: Where They Shopped in Past Year**

**Millennials shop at a wide range of store venues, notably department stores, online stores and fast fashion retailers**

- They are much more likely to shop online or at fast fashion retailers than those in other generations.
- For example, 37% of Boomers+ have shopped at exclusively online stores versus 56% of Millennials – and 30% at fast fashion retailers (versus 50% of Millennials).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular department or family apparel store</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively online site</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Fast fashion retailer’</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount outlet or outlet mall</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty chain</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting goods or outdoor retailer</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood or local clothing store or boutique</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount, wholesale or club store</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury department store or boutique</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor market or flea market</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A store specializing in eco-friendly merchandise</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vintage, second hand or consignment store</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Defined as “a retailer that sells up-to-the-minute fashions at affordable prices”*
How Often They Shop

Millennials are at a stage of life where there are many changes

- Some are starting school
- Some are establishing careers, and
- Some are starting families

As a result, they are particularly frequent shoppers:

- Almost half shop for clothing twice a month or more often
- More than one in five shops for home textiles twice a month or more often
Millennials and Climate Change
Like people of all generations, Millennials are very concerned about climate change
Participants were shown a list of sixteen important issues and asked to identify those that concern them the most.

Like people of all ages, Millennials view climate change as one of the most concerning issues facing us today.
Millennials, like those in other generations, consider climate change to be “a real and very serious problem” and are slightly more likely than others to attribute it to human causes.

- Six in ten Millennials feel that they can take actions – even small steps – to reduce climate change.

**Climate Change Beliefs Among Millennials**

- **Climate change is a real and very serious problem.** 82%
- **Climate change is largely due to emissions from human activities.** 77%
- **The actions of an individual like myself CAN'T reverse climate change.** 39%
Millennials’ concerns equally balance the personal and “close to home” (in red) with the altruistic (in blue).

- It is important to keep this in mind when communicating to them about climate change or sustainability.

### Most Important Aspects of Sustainability For Millennials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Altruistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the quality of the air we breathe</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEEPING ME AND MY FAMILY SAFE AND HEALTHY</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the quality of the water we drink</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESERVING THE EARTH FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the natural environment (for example, national parks, rainforests and wilderness areas)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping animal and/or plant species safe from extinction and healthy</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing climate-related disasters like floods, fires, severe storms, and so forth</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting people in developing nations</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Millennials tend to think *systemically* about the interconnectedness of planetary and human health and sustainability.
The Importance of a Healthy, Sustainable Lifestyle

Like those in other generations, 70% of Millennials say they are “Committed to living a sustainable, environmentally friendly lifestyle”

- In the interest of living more sustainably, Millennials – like people everywhere - have:
  - Purchased organic foods: 66%
  - Purchased natural or organic personal care products: 58%
  - Changed to a more natural diet: 41%
  - Adopted a more environmentally-friendly means of transportation: 40%
  - Tried to avoid brands or companies they felt were not friendly to the environment or to those making the products: 39%
  - Checked if packaging can be recycled before purchase: 36%
  - Checked to see if products were tested on animals: 27%

* Note that typically changes are made first to what is ingested into the body (food) and, then, what is absorbed by the body (lotions, etc.)
The Internet and Social Media are Key Sources

To stay abreast of climate change information, Millennials are much more likely to consult the Internet and social media than those in other generations, particularly Boomers.

- This could be one of the reasons that they are better informed about issues related to textile sustainability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Boomers+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream media</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I want to be a good steward of the earth that was gifted to me. (Millennial)

It’s so much better for society to have our products made in a conscientious way. (Millennial)

It’s time to appreciate the world and take better care of it in any way we can. We have to know things about industry in order to do so. (Millennial)

The world is heading towards disaster due to global warming and climate change so we have to do everything possible to protect the environment. That means buying sustainable products, supporting industries that produce environmentally friendly products and thinking about workers in those industries. (Millennial)
 Millennials and Textile Sustainability

2
It is with respect to textiles and the textile industry that differences between the Millennials and others become evident.
Slightly More Knowledgeable About the Industry

Millennials report *slightly* higher levels of knowledge about the textile industry than those in other generations.

% of Millennials, Gen X and Boomers + who say:

“I don’t know much about the way textiles or clothes are produced”

- Millennials: 38%
- Gen X: 41%
- Boomers+: 42%
Millennials clearly pay closer attention to some of the “buzz” about the industry, particularly facts related to chemical and pesticide use, general environmental impact, water use and waste:

- This might be related to their frequent use of media like the Internet and social media
- The chart on the right compares their awareness of some frequently-published facts with that of Boomers+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fact</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Boomers+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests have found residue of hazardous chemicals (for example, formaldehyde) in most children’s clothing and shoes.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The textile industry uses more water than any other (apart from agriculture)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pesticides used to grow cotton are among the most dangerous available today, some are known to be carcinogenic.</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/5 of all clothing produced ends up in landfills within one year of being made.</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fashion industry is the most polluting industry in the world, second only to oil.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25% of the world’s chemicals are used to produce textiles.</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 150 billion garments are produced annually, enough to provide 20 new garments to every person on the planet - every year.</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a result of heightened exposure to facts about the industry, Millennials are slightly more likely than Generation X – but much more likely than Boomers+ – to consider the textile industry a “worst polluter”

- Twenty-six percent (26%) of Millennials identified the textile industry as one of the worst polluters versus 16% of Boomers+
The ‘Fourth’ “Worst Polluter”

While people globally identified the textile industry as sixth on a list of ‘polluting industries,’ Millennials put it in fourth place:

Millennials’ Views of the “Worst Polluting Industries”

- The energy industry (including oil and fossil fuels): 67%
- The car industry: 54%
- The food industry (including "big agriculture"): 28%
- The textile or clothing industry: 26%
- The home care products industry: 25%
- The airline industry: 25%
- The personal care products industry: 21%

None of these industries is a particularly bad polluter.
Greater Concerns About Harmful Substances

Millennials, who have been raised with an ever-present threat of environmental degradation, are generally more concerned about harmful substances in a range of products than those in older generations.

- It is also noteworthy that regardless of whether we are looking at specifically at Millennials, Boomers + or the total population, textile products do not lag far behind food and personal care as sources of concerns about harmful substances.
- Millennials in manufacturing countries like India and China are much more concerned about harmful substances in clothes and home textiles than those elsewhere.

### Extremely or Very Concerned About Harmful Substances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Boomers+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal care</strong></td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothes</strong></td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home textiles</strong></td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When we start to look at concerns about harmful substances, a sub-group of distinct importance emerges:

**PARENTS OF (BABIES AND) YOUNG KIDS**

In our sample, Millennials made up 52% of this group.
Whenever we examine sustainable attitudes and behaviors, **parenthood emerges as a key catalyst of change**

The charts that follow refer to three groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“PARENTS OF YOUNG KIDS”</th>
<th>Anyone with at least one baby or child age 6 or less in the household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“PARENTS”</td>
<td>Anyone with at least one child (of any age) living in the household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“NO KIDS”</td>
<td>Anyone living in a household that is currently without children (e.g., they have not yet had kids)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents’ Elevated Concerns About Harmful Substances

Parents have higher concerns about harmful substances in a variety of products than people living in child-free households (shown in purple) – and parents of babies and young children are even more concerned.

- Again, concerns do not lag behind those expressed for food and personal care items – there is only a 20 percentage point difference: concerns about textiles are 'catching up!' 
- In China, 82% of parents of kids ages six and under are extremely or very concerned about harmful substances in clothes; in India, 77%  

### Extremely or Very Concerned About Harmful Substances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents of Young Kid(s)</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>No Kids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal care products</strong></td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothes</strong></td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home textiles</strong></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safety from harmful substances and responsible production are very important to most people over age 18 – but are especially urgent for parents of babies and young children

- This is another signal that with the entry of children into a household, people become more engaged in sustainability attitudes and behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Parents of Young Kid(s)</th>
<th>No Kids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing – safe from harmful substances</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home textiles – safe from harmful substances</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing – environmentally responsible production</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing – socially responsible production</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents of babies and young children are also more aware of eco-friendly clothing and home textiles – generally – and more likely to have purchased them than those in child-free households.

- Note that for this target audience, eco-friendly home textiles are as important as eco-friendly clothing.

### Aware of, Have Purchased Eco-Friendly Textiles

*Defined as “produced in an environmentally-friendly, sustainable way”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents of Young Kid(s)</th>
<th>No Kids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Purchased</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Textiles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Purchased</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 89% of parents with young children are aware of eco-friendly clothing and/or home textiles for young children.
- 54% have purchased eco-friendly clothes/home textiles for young children.
More Positive Perceptions of Eco-Friendly Clothing

The importance of eco-friendly clothing to Millennials and, particularly, parents of babies and young children, can be demonstrated in the positive words they choose to describe them.

- Parents of babies and young children, in fact, are especially likely to think of eco-friendly clothing as high quality, soft (important for people with babies and young children), innovative and unique.

### Perceptions Held By Those Aware of Eco-Friendly Clothes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Boomers+</th>
<th>Young Kid(s)</th>
<th>No Kids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High quality</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I never worried about harmful substances before but after my daughter was born I started to become interested in ingredients in personal care products. Now I want to learn as much as possible about clothing safety and responsibility. (Millennial)

I always buy eco-friendly clothes for my baby girl because her skin is very sensitive and soft and needs the best care. I think eco-friendly products are better for the health of the whole family. (Millennial)

I want my kids to be exposed to as few chemicals as possible. It feels good just knowing I’ve bought a product that isn’t harmful. (Millennial)
A Heightened Need For Trust & Transparency
High demands for trust and transparency
Millennials Tend to Be Skeptical of Claims

Transparency is very important to Millennials who don’t take claims at face value. This might be related to their use of the Internet and social media.

69% of Millennials aware of eco-friendly clothing, check claims like “eco-friendly” or “sustainable” “always,” “often” or “sometimes”

74% of parents of babies and young kids check these claims “always,” “often” or “sometimes”
# Checking ‘Eco-Claims’

Millennials – particularly parents of young children - are more likely than those in the older generation to regularly check claims like “eco-friendly” on clothes and home textiles.

## Frequency of Checking Claims Such As “Eco-Friendly” Or “Sustainable”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Boomers+</th>
<th>Parents of Young Kid(s)</th>
<th>No Kids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check ‘always,’ often’ or ‘sometimes’</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check ‘always’ or ‘often’</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Textiles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check ‘always,’ often’ or ‘sometimes’</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check ‘always’ or ‘often’</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environmentally safe clothing is best for my kids because it’s usually natural and less harsh for their skin. Buying eco-friendly clothing one way I can keep the environment safe and pollution-free for the next generation and is also a way to teach my kids to respect nature. (Millennial)

Clothing is an important part of our lives and it’s very important to know what we’re wearing. I worry about my family’s safety. (Millennial)

My country is so badly polluted that if we can’t take responsibility for keeping the earth pollution-free, at least we can keep ourselves away from harmful substances. It is so important that our clothes degrade and that they not cause more pollution. (Millennial)
Millennials/Parents: the Role of Brands & Certifiers
Millennials (particularly parents of babies and young children) are more likely to have purchased certified clothing and home textiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Parents of Young Kid(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Purchased</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Textiles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Purchased</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For parents of babies and young kids, concerns about harmful substances, environmental impact and the safety of textile workers are the most important reasons for both interest in or purchase of certified textiles.

### Why Purchase Certified Clothing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have concerns about harmful substances in the clothing worn by me and/or my family</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have concerns about the environmental impact of clothing production</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have concerns about the safety of the workers in factories where clothing is made</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone in my household has had an allergic reaction or a skin reaction to clothing</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There are two reasons why I purchase certified clothing. First, I try to avoid exposing myself and my family to the chemicals used in manufacturing. And secondly, I want to support companies that are manufacturing without harmful substances because it’s better for the environment in the long term. (Millennial)*

*I look for a certification label to know if a brand is eco-friendly and reaffirm my decision to buy it. (Millennial)*
When clothing is certified it ensures that it’s good quality, safe for me and my family members and manufactured in a socially responsible way. (Millennial)

I buy certified clothes to promote healthy workers, a healthy earth and healthy wearers of clothing. I want to know how my clothes are produced and what is in them. (Millennial)

Certification is important because I can’t tell by looking at tags and other labels if the products I buy are as good as they claim to be. (Millennial)

Buying certified clothes is my first step towards the prevention of the environmental damage caused by our present lifestyles. It allows me to help the environment, even if it’s just in a small way, and helps me make better decisions about the clothes I buy. (Millennial)

This consumer society pushes us to keep buying more and more and more. When we buy certified clothing, we can lighten our footprint. (Millennial)
Brands play an especially important role for Millennials and parents of babies and young kids:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents of Young Kid(s)</th>
<th>No Kids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Balance]</td>
<td>Like to know the values and principles of brands of clothing [they] buy</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Leaf]</td>
<td>Like to know what small steps [brands] have taken to be more sustainable</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Not Allowed]</td>
<td>Tried to avoid brands or companies [they] felt were not friendly to the environment or to those making the products</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I’m willing to put money towards supporting companies that do not harm the earth and help them be sustainable. It’s good to know that I’m contributing. (Millennial)"
For example, parents of babies and young kids are more likely than those in child-free households to check a brand’s sustainability practices when they check if eco-claims are true

- They are also more likely to check Social Media or other online sources

### How Check Sustainability Claims

- **Parent of Young Kid(s)**
  - I check the brand’s sustainability practices: 40%
  - I check social media or other online sources (e.g., blogs, reviews): 37%

- **No Kids**
  - I check the brand’s sustainability practices: 26%
  - I check social media or other online sources (e.g., blogs, reviews): 23%
Millennials who don’t regularly check if claims like “sustainable” are true are more likely than others to say that it’s because they “don’t want to take the time”:

As such, brand names and certification labels play a particularly important role as SHORTCUTS TO TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY for Millennial consumers and for parents, especially of babies and young kids!
Even if we do a lot of our own research about a brand it can be hard to figure out where and how ethically clothes and other textiles are made. It’s great to have a source of validation of claims. (Millennial)

Even though nothing can be 100%, a label like OEKO-TEX® gives me almost complete trust that the clothing I buy is free of chemicals. Clear information stops me from buying clothes that aren’t safe or that are produced in an irresponsible way. (Millennial)

It’s really urgent that every person takes responsibility to protect the environment from pollution and protect our planet. OEKO-TEX® is like a guide for us. (Millennial)

Certified clothing is a simple way to guarantee the clothing I buy is free from chemicals. (Millennial)
With OEKO-TEX® I know the research has been done better than what I could do and I can trust it. I want to make intelligent, informed choices in my purchases. OEKO-TEX® seems dedicated to making the earth better. (Millennial)
What Does It Mean?
The Future is (Almost) Now

- The general findings of the survey suggested that as people increasingly learn about the impact of textile production, the greater likelihood for shifts in attitudes and behaviors as they seek to “live a better textile life” – and brands and marketers should be ready

- Millennials prove this point. They are already more aware of the buzz about the industry and the fact that they are more critical of the textile industry than others substantiates our forecasts for the future

- As such, Millennials give us a glimpse into that future – a future where there is a heightened need for transparency and trust between consumers, brands and retailers. Textile certification plays an important role in establishing that trust

- “The times they are a 'changing” and Millennials are harbingers of the change. These are transformative times and they are in the vanguard
- **What do Millennials want?**

- They want easy assurances that the brands they favor are *doing the right thing to help them live a better textile life*.

- Millennials are a population with heightened sensitivity to ‘false claims’ and greater need for transparency and validation. Given this sensitivity, they are quicker to recognize ‘greenwashing’ or ‘truth-washing’ and thereby lose faith in the brands they want to trust.

- If you market to Millennials, the need for demonstrations of trust – the communication that “We are a conscious brand and are aware that you want to live a better textile life” - could quickly become an imperative. If we are indeed approaching a tipping point in textile sustainability, Millennials are driving us there on the Internet highway.

- **If you market to parents of young children, the imperative is greater: their concerns about toxic substances are real.**
Even if you don’t market to Millennials – if, for example, your core audience is older – it is still important to take heed. Millennials are already the loudest voice in the marketplace. They shop more often than others. They are coming into positions of social, cultural and business leadership and dominance. Their values are soon to become the norm.

Millennials, of course, will soon be older. What of their kids, kids being raised on a consumer diet of trust and transparency? What of the kids of Millennials’ kids?
More to Come

We hope you enjoyed this special report about Millennials and Parents from *The Key to Confidence: Consumers and Textile Sustainability*

Please join us in the spring for a new round of insights from the survey – or find us at upcoming industry events like:

- Outdoor Retailer in Denver
- India International Garment Fair in New Delhi
Thank you!
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