



Generation Alpha – A New Day

Forum on the Dilemma of Discipleship in Christian Higher Education

Dr. George Hillman

Vice President for Education
DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

2025 ABHE ANNUAL MEETING

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**BUSINESS
INSIDER**

“Gen Alpha is no longer the youngest generation — **Gen Beta** has arrived”
Tom Carter, *Business Insider* (January 1, 2025)

Newsweek

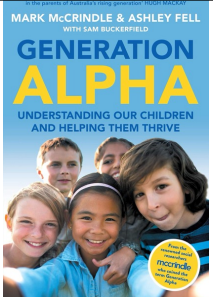
“What Is **Gen Beta**? How Babies Born From 2025 Will Change the World”
Maya Mehrara, *Newsweek* (January 1, 2025)

**USA
TODAY**

“Welcome **Gen Beta**: A new generation of humanity starts in 2025”
Greta Cross, *USA Today* (January 1, 2025)

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Category	Builders Born: 1925-1945	Baby Boomers Born: 1946-1964	Generation X Born: 1965-1979	Generation Y Born: 1980-1994	Generation Z Born: 1995-2009	Gen Alpha Born: 2010-2024
Slang terms	 We prefer proper English if you please	 Be cool! Peace (group) Way out	 Dude Ace Rad As if Wicked	 Bling Funky Dab Fashizz Whassup?	 Fam GOAT Stay Yass queen	 It's best friends cool em sdc
Social markers	World War II 1939-1945	Moon landing 1969	Stock market crash 1987	September 11 2001	GFC 2008	COVID-19 2020
Iconic cars	 Model T Ford First 1927	 Ford Mustang 1964	 Holden Commodore 1978	 Toyota Prius 1997	 Tesla Model S 2012	 Autonomous vehicles 2020s
Iconic toys	 Roller skates	 Frisbee	 Rubik's cube	 BMX bike	 Folding scooter	 Fidget spinner
Music devices	 Record player LP, 1948	 Audio cassette 1962	 Walkman 1979	 iPod 2001	 Spotify 2008	 Smart speakers Now
Leadership style	 Controlling	 Directing	 Coordinating	 Guiding	 Empowering	 Inspiring
Ideal leader	Commander	Thinker	Doer	Supporter	Collaborator	Co-creator
Learning style	Formal	Structured	Participative	Interactive	Multi-modal	Virtual
Influence Advice	Officials	Experts	Practitioners	Peers	Forums	Chatbots
Marketing	Print (traditional)	Broadcast (mass)	Direct (targeted)	Online (linked)	Digital (social)	In situ (real-time)



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What can one-on-one discipleship provide Generation Alpha?

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“When this generation is complete in December 2024, Generation Alpha births will total almost two billion globally, and they will be the **largest generation** in the history of the world.”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 25.



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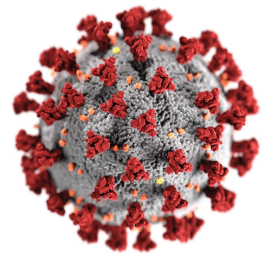
“Generation Alpha have become the **COVID-19 generation**, not in terms of virus impacts but in the resulting **economic, social, educational, and psychological impacts** for their future”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 59.



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- Technology and screens more integrated in our lives
- More flexible working conditions
- Education delivered online
- More reserved about face-to-face interactions
- Negative impacts on mental health
- More creative due to challenges experienced
- Increased desire to travel and explore
- Value family time screen-free time more



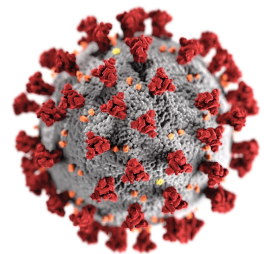
Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 59–60.

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All six living generations experienced challenges of COVID-19.

Younger generations faced it during their **formative years** with no broader reference point.

Led to higher levels of anxiety among them. They were already a **more anxious generation** even before the pandemic.



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 59.

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Generation Alpha are "Up-agers"

Physical maturity now begins at a younger age.

As a result, adolescence will start earlier for them.

Peer pressure has always been there but has been massively amplified.



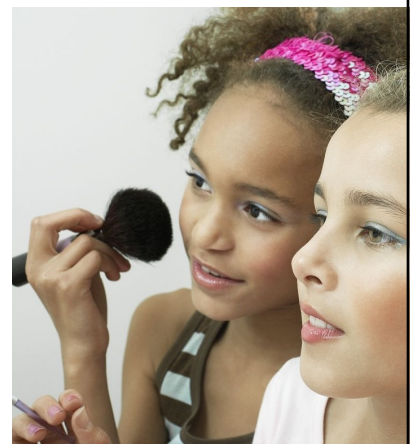
Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 27, 81.

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48% of educators and 20% of parents see up-ageing as a **barrier to thriving**.

87% of parents and 90% of educators worry children are **growing up too fast**.

79% of parents and 84% of educators struggle between **protecting innocence and preparing children for safety**.



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 90.

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Education Differences from Gen Z

Persistence	Help-seeking	View of failure	Feedback
Gen Alpha tends to persevere through challenges instead of quitting.	Gen Alpha prefers asking for help over struggling alone.	Gen Alpha sees failure as a chance to learn, not a personal flaw.	Gen Alpha is open to constructive feedback.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 29, 32.

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Characteristics of Generation Alpha



1. Digital
2. Social
3. Global
4. Mobile
5. Visual

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 46-58.

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1. Digital

- Digital natives (confident and intuitive) from the youngest age
- Instant access to information
- Shorter attention spans, greater digital literacy, less traditional social formation
- “Global experiment where screens are placed in front of children as pacifiers from the youngest age”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 46-50.

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1. Digital

“In 2010, when the first of their generation began being born, the iPad was released, Instagram was launched, and ‘app’ was awarded ‘Word of the Year’ by the American Dialect Society.”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 106-107.

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Generation Alpha may never experience written exams, cash, or traditional voting booths.

They may never own a car.

They have never known encyclopedias, phone books, video rental stores, or fax machines.

They may never use desktop computers, analogue watches, physical credit cards, car ignition keys, or wallets.



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 62, 253.

1. Digital

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Most children see AI assistants as friendly and trustworthy.

Older children often believe AI—especially Alexa—is smarter than they are.



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 131.

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“Generation Alpha will have a **greater need for interpersonal skills** such as communication and leadership to thrive in a more machine-assisted future.”



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 29.

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“Generation Alpha will have to make **ethical decisions** that we can hardly contemplate at present, particularly when it comes to robots and sentience.”



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 321.

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Digital world offers many opportunities but also challenges.

- Increased social isolation and weaker relational skills.
- Greater access to information and education but fewer practical life skills.
- Globally connected through devices yet less socially engaged in real life.



1. Digital

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 49-50.

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Screen time is higher than ever for Generation Alpha. Key challenge is developing strong interpersonal skills beyond screens.

- Parents must prioritize teaching active listening and attentiveness.
- Parents must model these behaviors through their own interactions.



1. Digital

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 115-116.

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Too much early exposure to technology can **disrupt natural brain growth**.

Critical **developmental processes** may be skipped or rushed.

Technology reinforces immediate rewards, affecting **attention and patience**.



1. Digital

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 118–119.

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2. Social

- Socially connected to and shaped by peers (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
- Connected 24/7 across social, geographic and demographic boundaries
- 60% have experienced bullying (social media, text messages or emails) with 20% experiencing bullying weekly

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 50-51, 130–131.

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“Despite its goal of connecting people, technology, social media, and gaming can also be a contributing factor to loneliness as they **substitute usage for face-to-face interaction**, can create unrealistic expectations, and a sense of missing out (FOMO).”



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 92.

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Loneliness and social isolation are major challenges for students.

- 66% of educators and nearly 50% of parents say it is extremely/very challenging.
- Over a third of parents and 40% of educators believe student loneliness will be a top challenge for schools in the next year.



2. Social

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 90-91.

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3. Global

- More globally aware and connected
- Global trends (fashion, food, music, social trends, communication and viral YouTube videos and memes)
- More curious about the world
- More consumer choice
- More caring for the environment
- Globally invested

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 52-55, 326.

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4. Mobile

- Where, when, and how they will work to how they will study, travel and live
- Average stay at one job is just under three years
- Gig economy
- 65% of Gen Alpha will work at jobs that do not exist yet (robotics/drones, coding, media marketing, app development, block chain and big data analytics)

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 56.

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4. Mobile

Job tenure is declining:

- Average stays just 2 years and 9 months.
- Not due to lack of loyalty or work ethic.

Key reasons for shorter job tenure:

- Little job security and a highly competitive market.
- Precarious employment and fast-changing industries.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 56.

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4. Mobile

- Grown up in apartments, not detached houses
- Average renter moves every 1.8 years
- Homeowners stay on average for 8 years
- Grown up using subscription models like Spotify and Netflix

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 56, 286.

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5. Visual

- Stories and games
- Visual apps and video
- Multi-modal and interactive
- More creative

“Gen Z grew up watching YouTube, whereas Generation Alpha are being babysat by YouTube.”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 56, 90.

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The Wellbeing Generation

- Increasing complexity
- Greater uncertainty
- Greater societal anxiety
- Economic and social volatility
- International fragmentation
- Family breakdown (two homes)
- Social media comparison
- Cyberbullying

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 61.

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The Wellbeing Generation

“For children, **loneliness** can affect their levels of cortisol (the stress hormone), sleep, self-care, self-esteem, mental health, and outlook on life.”

“Currently, around **one in four** young people aged fifteen to nineteen meet the criteria for having a serious mental illness.”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 75, 91.

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The Wellbeing Generation

Mental health challenges are rising among the next generation.

Positive shift: It is now **discussed openly** instead of being hidden or stigmatized.

Impact: Schools, families, and communities are **more aware and supportive**.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 78.

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Parental **expectations for student well-being support** are rising.

- 60% of parents say their expectations of schools have increased in the last five years.
- This has risen 12 % in just two years.
- Gen Y parents (31%) are driving the increase more than Gen X parents (23%).

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 92.

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- Nearly all parents agree schools should take a **holistic approach to well-being**.
- Almost 50% believe schools should provide **some support** but refer to experts.
- Teachers see themselves as the **first line of defense** before referring to specialists.
- 25% of parents think schools should provide **extensive, individualized support** for all well-being issues.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 93-94.

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Factors Supporting Mental Health

Relational	Social	Physical	Spiritual
• Invest time with loved ones • Serve • Give to others	• Connect with those around us • Do fun activities with friends	• Partake in moderate exercise • Eat well • Get adequate sleep.	• Take time out to be reflective and aware of our emotions • Practice mindfulness, meditation or prayer

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 103.

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Schools are focusing on more than just academics:

- Developing **social and relational skills** alongside education.
- Implementing **group work and team-based learning** to teach **collaboration**.
- Preparing Generation Alpha for the future with more **diverse generations, cultures, and social backgrounds**.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 202–203.

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Transferable Skills for Generation Alpha



- Teamwork
- Technology literacy
- Empathy
- Problem solving
- Leadership
- Work ethic
- Communication
- Ability to learn
- Motivation
- Creativity
- Time management
- Critical thinking
- Adaptability
- Resilience

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 207.

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Transferable Skills for Generation Alpha



Nearly 80% of educators agree technology cannot replace:

- Creative roles
- People-focused professions
- Leadership-oriented positions
- High-level communication roles

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 209.

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Transferable Skills for Generation Alpha

71% of educators believe equipping students with **lifelong, transferable skills** is the most important function of high school.



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell,
Generation Alpha, 210–211.

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“While technology is driving job creation, and STEM skills are important, it is the **uniquely human and context-dependent skills like creativity and empathy** that will be most important for Generation Alpha to establish now for the future – because they are the ones a computer cannot replicate.”



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell,
Generation Alpha, 211.

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“Parents, teachers and leaders of Generation Alpha will do well to prioritize the development of **problem-solving, communication, creativity, and critical-thinking skills** in students, as this will teach valuable **lifelong skills** and equip them for the changing workforce.”



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell,
Generation Alpha, 211.

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“Positive schools are places where students feel **safe to make mistakes** and where **resilience** is intentionally taught through overcoming challenges. In a society where failure is largely avoided, schools have an opportunity to create an environment for Generation Alpha to **take risks and innovate**, which will help them to thrive in their future beyond school.”



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell,
Generation Alpha, 217.

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‘Many of these **uniquely human skills** are developed outside of the formal education environment, which means broader society will need to be mobilized. Parents and other family members, community organizations, sports clubs and social media role models should understand and embrace their roles in teaching children skills that make us uniquely human: **empathy, ingenuity, cooperation, resilience, ethics, and integrity.**’

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 239-240.

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IQ – Intellectual Intelligence



EQ – Emotional Intelligence



CQ – Cultural Intelligence



GQ – Generational Intelligence

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 242.

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Implications for Higher Education



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Education's role is more than academics or career prep; it's about lifelong learning.

Key focuses for success:

- Instill a love of learning.
- Expand thinking and perspectives.
- Foster friendships and connections.
- Develop skills like critical thinking and leadership for life beyond school.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 220.

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Shifting parental priorities for Generation Alpha:

- University is no longer the singular focus for success.
- Parents prioritize **employability, earning potential, and financial stability**.

More pragmatic approach due to economic factors:

- Rising housing costs and cost-of-living pressures influence decisions.
- Many parents are willing to support children at home while they study or start working.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 225.

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Future universities will offer more flexible learning options

- Blended learning (online + on-campus).
- Shorter, flexible qualifications that fit around work.

Goal:

- Enable **lifelong learning** for Generation Alpha.
- Help adapt to a fast-changing world and workforce.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 230.

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Future universities will integrate with industry to drive innovation

- Universities and industries will **co-locate and collaborate** on real-world solutions.
- Campuses will become **innovation hubs with applied research for community impact**.
- Stronger **connections between young entrepreneurs, mentors, and funders**.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 230–231.

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Future-Proofing Generation Alpha

Focus on human strengths over machine skills.

- **Critical thinking**
- **Empathy**
- **Leadership**
- **Social and cultural awareness**

Be collaborative, responsive, and innovative to thrive in a global, digital workforce.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 239.

50

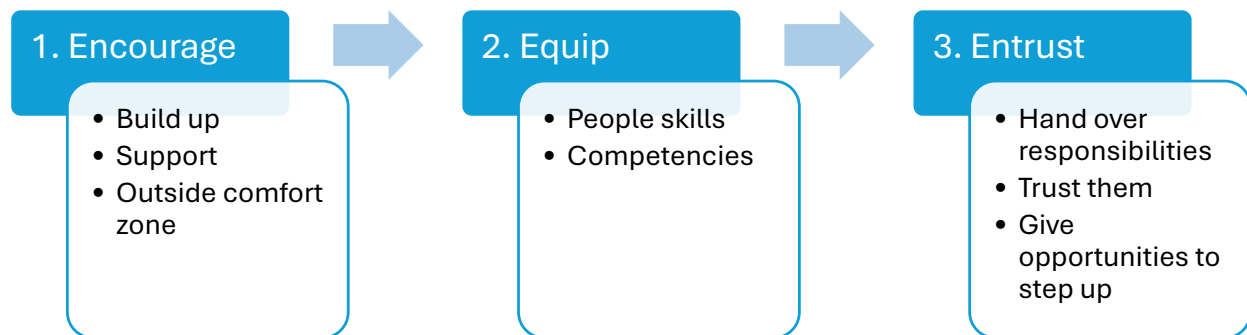
Leading Gen Z and Gen Alpha

- Values communication, transparency, and respect.
- Preferred leadership style:
 - Consensus-driven rather than command-based.
 - Participative rather than autocratic.
 - Flexible and organic rather than rigid and hierarchical.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 260.

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Leading Generation Alpha



Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 268-271.

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Empowering Generation Alpha Voices

- Give them space to speak to foster growth and learning.
- Invite their input to encourage contributions and problem-solving.
- Use this to understand their perspectives and thinking.
- Engage, equip, and trust the next generation.

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, *Generation Alpha*, 271.

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“The future for Generation Alpha is full of hope – not because they are more materially endowed and technologically supplied, but because they have more access to information, more knowledge, wisdom and role models than any previous generation.”

Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell,
Generation Alpha, 275.



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