

# GENERATION PANK<sup>®</sup>



## A Report on the Social & Economic Influence of PANKs - Professional Aunts No Kids

### Introduction

A new study on the growing demographic cohort of PANKs, or Professional Aunts No Kids, reveals a sizable tribe of child-loving, affluent women without children of their own - by circumstance, choice or challenge.

Melanie Notkin, the founder of SAVVY AUNTIE<sup>®</sup> - A Celebration of Modern Aunthood - uncovered and coined the term PANK in 2008. In 2018, she partnered with Michael De Cicco, a strategic market researcher for global iconic brands, to take a deeper look at PANKs to better understand the cohort - not only from a demographic standpoint (inclusive of relationship, fertility and children in their lives) but also their specific needs, behaviors, spend and preferences across a range of categories.

There are 18.4 million PANKs ages 20-50 in the United States - more than a quarter (28%) of all American women in that age group. Our survey found that overall, 4-in-5 PANKs are ages 33-52, and half are ages 38-47. This generation of PANKs wield enormous social and economic influence. And yet, while PANKs represent huge opportunity, this hidden demographic often remains overlooked, misunderstood and unappreciated by marketers and society-at-large.

In the first of a series of reports derived from selections of the survey, **GENERATION PANK** focuses on the strong bonds between Aunts by Relation and/or Aunts by Choice and the children in their life as well as the social and economic influence of PANKs at the holiday season and all year-round.

### Methodology

The online survey of non-moms ages 20+ who share of special bond with a least one child in their life, was administered in April 2018, with a total of 703 U.S. respondents residing in 49 of 50 states. The study serves as a follow-up to the 2012 "Power of the PANK" study by Savvy Auntie, Weber Shandwick with KRC Research.

## GENERATION PANK

PANKs span the generations - from older Millennials to younger Boomers. We found the majority of PANKs are Gen Xers.

81% of PANKs are ages 33 to 52  
50% of all PANKs are ages 38 to 47

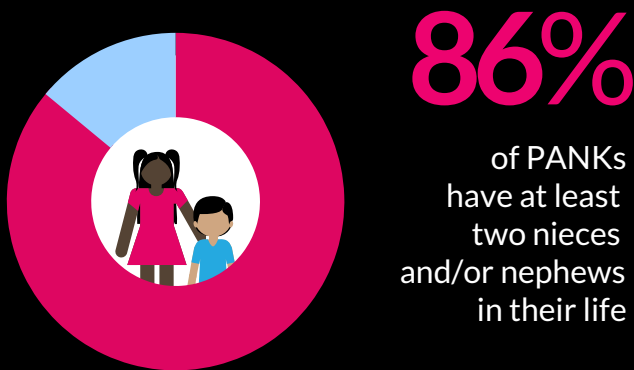
We are calling it:  
**GENERATION PANK**



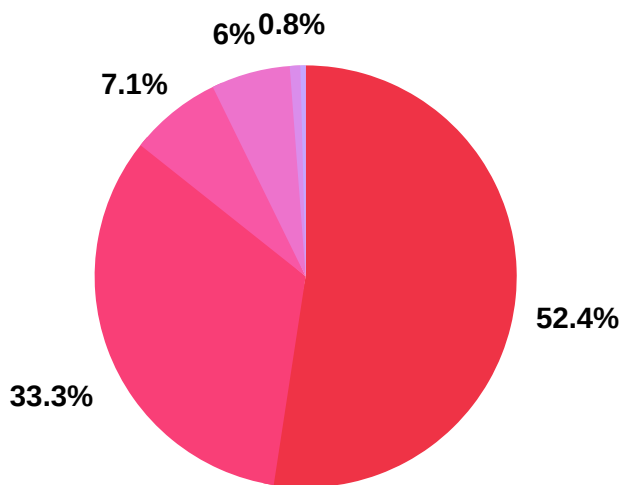
## PANKs Play an Active Role in the Lives of a Sizable Number of Children

While the national fertility rate is 1.87 children per mother, most PANKs (86%) have at least two children under the age of 18 who play an active role in their lives. A whopping 13 percent of childless aunts have 10 or more nieces and nephews.

While most PANKs (93%) are Aunts by Relation, 57 percent are Aunts by Choice to friends' children. Exactly half are both Aunts by Relation and Aunts by Choice.



**13%** of PANKs have 10+ nieces and nephews in their life



Just over half (52%) of PANKs are single, never-married, while a third (33%) are married, cohabiting or in a domestic partnership. The remaining PANKs are in a relationship (7%) or divorced (6%). Fewer than 1 percent are widowed.

## Aunthood Is a Celebration!

**91%** of PANKs say their role as aunt is "very important."

**89%** of PANKs say the experience of becoming/being an aunt is even better than they expected

While there is no obligation to actively participate in a child's life, 91 percent of these dedicated women rank their role as an aunt as very important and 89 percent say the experience of becoming/being an aunt is even better than they expected.

However, while most PANKs (83%) feel appreciated by parents for their role in their child's life, only about a quarter (28%) feel appreciated by society in general for their role as an aunt.

## PANKs Are More Likely to Be College Educated

PANKs are among the most well-educated Americans. Nearly three-quarters (74%) have earned a bachelor's degree, which is twice as many as the general population. PANKs are also three times as likely than the general population to have earned a master's degree.

## PANKs Are Among the Most Affluent American Adults

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of PANKs have a minimum annual household income of \$50,000. An impressive seven percent of Professional Aunts No Kids are in the top 1% of all female income earners and in the top 2% of all income earners, male and female, combined. Nearly half (47%) of PANKs own their own home.

## PANKs Are Generous Gift-Givers

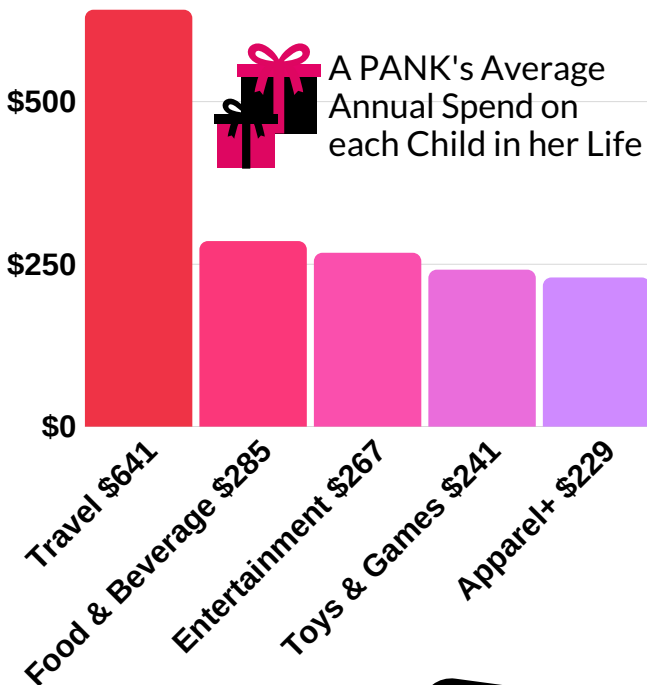
PANKs are an affluent, generous, emergent consumer tribe. With a conservative estimate of 2.5 nieces and nephews per PANK, these aunts collectively spend an astonishing \$61 billion on the babies, children and teens they love, each year.

Moreover, this market opportunity does not include the average \$1,521 spent on occasional big-ticket items, or the average \$232 spent on newborn niece and nephew gifts. Plus, 63 percent have contributed to a niece's or nephew's education.

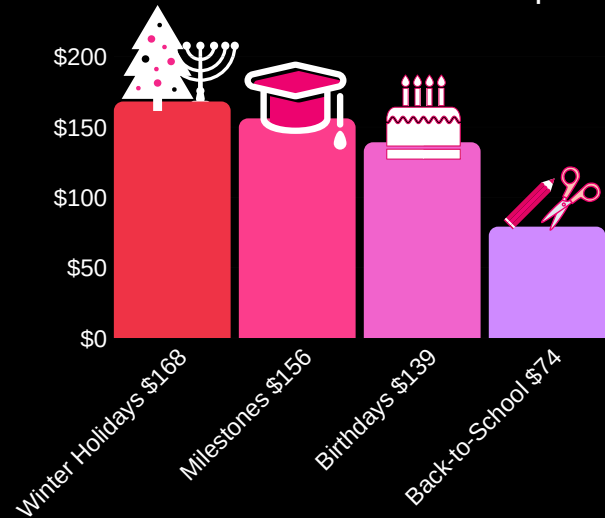
PANKs not only lavish gifts on the children they love, nearly two-thirds (67%) have given gifts to parents to help provide for their child or children.

# \$61 Billion

Spent Annually on Gifts for Niece and Nephews



## Average Annual Spend on Special Occasion Gifts for Nieces and Nephews

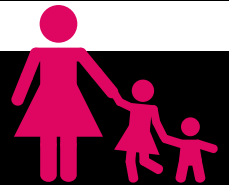


## Big-Ticket Gifts

28% of PANKs have purchased a big-ticket item for a niece or nephew with an average per-item spend of:



## Auntventure Days

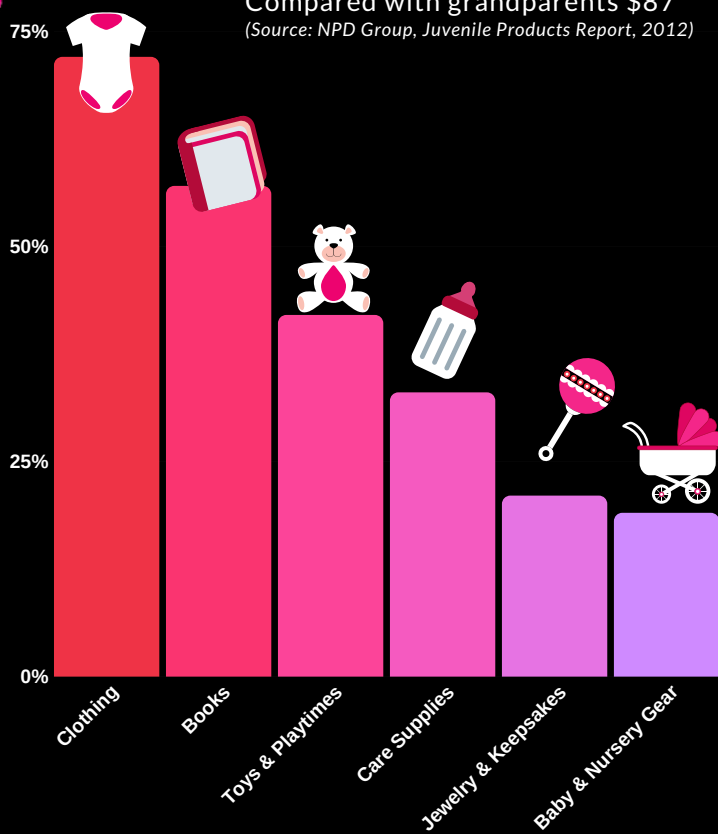


PANKs spend \$160 per niece and nephew on "Auntventure Days" - the special days Auntie carves out to spend with the children she loves.

## Newborn and Baby Niece and Nephew: Top Purchase Categories

**\$232** average spend

Compared with grandparents \$87  
(Source: NPD Group, Juvenile Products Report, 2012)



## Newborn and Baby Shopping Preferences and Behaviors

Most PANKs (81%) feel a duty to give their newborn nieces and nephews meaningful gifts

Still, nearly two-thirds (64%) of PANKs feel that baby companies are not marketing to them effectively

Many PANKs (68%) know exactly what they want to buy for their own newborn and baby nieces and nephews but fewer PANKs (57%) know what to buy for newborn and baby gifts in general. Still, only about half (53%) prefer to give gifts the baby's parents ask for. In fact, only about half (49%) of PANKs prefer to use a gift registry. This may be why over half (57%) of PANKs say their purchasing decisions are influenced by gift receipt and return policies

When seeking recommendations, PANKs are more likely (72%) to rely on recommendations from parents in general, while fewer than half (44%) rely on recommendations from family or friends. Still, 44 percent have purchased a newborn or baby gift based on recommendations from, or posts by, their social media connections

When PANKs purchase gifts for their own nieces and nephews, 61 percent cite price as a factor. But, when purchasing newborn and baby gifts in general, 75 percent cite price as a factor

## PANKs are Childless by Circumstance or Challenge, or are Childfree-by-Choice

Nearly half of PANKs (49%) are childless by circumstance. Most expect, hope or had expected to have a child but the majority remain single, or were single during their fertile years.

Nearly one-third (32%) of PANKs are childfree-by-choice. Over half (54%) of childfree PANKs say they enjoy the freedom being childfree affords them, while 42 percent say the children of others play large enough role. About a quarter (26%) say their pets are their "children."

Due to fertility challenges (hers/his/unsure), 13 percent of PANKs who want(ed) to have children have been unable.

While it is often assumed women are childless or childfree because they are focused on their careers, only 1 percent of PANKs say their job is not conducive to motherhood.

### If a PANK Does Not Find a Partner:

- 47% would not consider single motherhood
- 44% would consider adoption
- 30% would consider fostering a child

While the majority of PANKs hope or expected to be moms, nearly two-thirds (65%) say they can live a fulfilling life without children of their own.

# Engaging the Social & Economic Influence of GENERATION PANK



Melanie Notkin Media, Inc. offers recommendations for reaching and engaging the new marketing frontier: GENERATION PANK

## Recognize the value of GENERATION PANK as influential women in children's lives.

PANKs are committed to their role as aunts and most play an active role in the lives of at least two nieces and/or nephews - whether or not they expect, hope, or wanted to be moms, or have chosen not to have children. Rather than thinking of PANKs as childless or childfree-by-choice, consider them "childfull" women who choose to love the children in their life.

## GENERATION PANK may be secondary caregivers, but they are primary gift-givers.

PANKs spend generously on their nieces and nephews from the time they hear they will become aunts for the first time (DebutAunts!) or an aunt again. PANKs collectively spend \$61 billion on the children they love each year yet are not being marketed to directly. Meanwhile, nearly 8-in-10 (78%) PANKs say they are more likely to pay attention to ads that feature aunts

PANKs are more likely to pay attention to brands that pay attention to the valuable role PANKs play in the family village. PANKs should be a part of any marketing and media strategies focused on products and services for babies, children and teens - marketed to as the generous aunts they are.

Melanie Notkin Media, Inc. is ready to help you connect, engage and value the next marketing frontier: GENERATION PANK.

## Education is a priority - for PANKs, for the children they love, and children in general.

While we often think of PANKs as spoiling their nieces and nephews, and many do, they are also likely to be focused on education. Not only are PANKs well-educated, they are also likely to contribute to a child's education. Plus, nearly 1-in-5 (18%) PANKs work in the field of education - the top job category among PANKs. It's no surprise that 93 percent of PANKs say that education is the political issue that is most important to them. Educational products and services, including college savings planning, would get an A+ for reaching out to PANKs.

## Most PANKs Want to Be Moms

Nearly half (49%) of PANKs are childless by circumstance; they have not met a partner with whom to have children. Another 13 percent are challenged with fertility issues. Those involved in reproductive health, and companies that employ PANKs, should consider their reproductive health needs.

## Next Steps

GENERATION PANK is the first report derived from selections of the 2018 online survey. We are available to help marketers, media and other key stakeholders learn more about PANKs and how to reach and engage this emerging demographic.

For more information about the data and insights summarized here, and those to be revealed in upcoming reports - plus, how best to include PANKs into your marketing and communications strategies, please contact us at [info@MelanieNotkin.com](mailto:info@MelanieNotkin.com).