

PARENTHOOD REPORT | PART 2

New Parent Purchasing Behavior

Insights from more than 6,500 new and expecting parents in the U.S.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to understand the way expecting and new parents approach their purchasing decisions, marketers must understand the overall landscape parents are faced with today.

The ever-present digital world makes information and online shopping readily available to parents. But with new technological advancements and eco-friendly and nontoxic baby products flooding the market, parents have more purchasing choices than ever before.

We already know the constant: **WHO** they are making purchasing decisions for. But **WHAT** purchasing criteria they deem most important, **WHERE** they shop, and **HOW** they celebrate fluctuates by age, gender, and whether this is someone's first pregnancy or they've been down this road before.



OVERVIEW

The **Healthline Parenthood Report Series** brings forward data and insights about the shifting landscape for expecting and new parents, and how understanding their mindset and behaviors identifies why marketers need to consider parenting in a new light.

The initial release of this report series coincided with the launch of *Healthline Parenthood*, a resource for a new generation of parents who understand the impact of this transition on their own well-being. The goal: help parents take care of themselves so they can take care of their families.

This is the second report in the series focused on **new parent purchasing power and consideration criteria due to the transition to parenthood.**

METHODOLOGY

Findings are based on a Healthline survey and original reporting.

Using field services provided by SurveyWriter, Southpaw Insights fielded a 20-minute online survey among a sample of 6,667 expectant and new American parents (18 to 50 years old).

Out of the total sample, 3,064 were expectant parents, and 3,885 were parents of babies 12 months or younger.

Survey executed: September 13-30, 2019.

DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE

Gen Z (18-22)	16%
Young Millennial (23-30)	43%
Older Millennial (31-39)	34%
Gen X (40-50)	6%

GENDER IDENTITY

Female	84%
Male	15%

MARITAL STATUS

Married/partnered	80%
Single	20%

ETHNICITY

White	72%
Black	18%
Hispanic	20%
Other	16%

EDUCATION

Less than college	29%
Some college or more	71%

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Employed	63%
Not employed	37%

GEOGRAPHIC REGION

Northeast	17%
Southeast	30%
Midwest	22%
Southwest	13%
West	17%

INCOME

Less than \$50,000	47%
\$50,000 or more	53%

KEY PURCHASING CRITERIA

There are so many things that parents are thinking about when it comes to deciding which products to buy for their baby.

The key criteria most important to parents are around **safety, health, and cost**, although generationally, the level of importance shifts. For example, Gen Z parents are placing less importance than older generations on all of these brand attributes (*see graph*).

We also see that moms are significantly more likely than dads to place importance on all brand attributes, especially safety (68% mom vs. 48% dad). It's not to say dad or younger generations don't care about the safety of products for their child; it just indicates that certain segments are thinking about purchase criteria less.

IMPORANT BRAND ATTRIBUTES

	GEN Z	YOUNG MILLENNIAL	OLDER MILLENNIAL	GEN X
Feel the product is a safe choice for your baby	55%	66%	68%	62%
Cost	46%	63%	69%	56%
The products are nutritious/healthy for your baby	50%	58%	61%	57%
Having a coupon or getting a deal	32%	46%	49%	42%
The products don't contain chemicals	38%	45%	44%	47%

KEY PURCHASING CRITERIA

Overall, when asked to pick just one, **safety is overwhelmingly the top factor** in purchasing baby products amongst all parents surveyed, followed by health and cost. This really showcases how parents' mindsets are so focused on the baby during pregnancy and these early newborn days.

35%

of new or expecting parents say choosing a product that is **safe for their baby is most important**

15%
Healthy/nutritious
products

15%
Cost



Base: N=6,667

C4: You just selected the following as important to you when deciding which products to buy for your baby (or baby-to-be). Please tell me which one is the MOST important to you.

SHOPPING BEHAVIORS

Parents change many of their habits once a baby enters the picture, including the way they shop. You can see in the data that since parenthood, 50% are doing **more research** about the safety of a brand or product. Mom is also more likely to do her due diligence about safety than dad after becoming a parent (52% vs. 43%).

And you see parents being **more budget and time-conscious** (45% paying more attention to cost) and others doing more shopping online (41%), maybe out of a convenience factor with everything else going on during parenthood.

% DO MORE SINCE PARENTHOOD

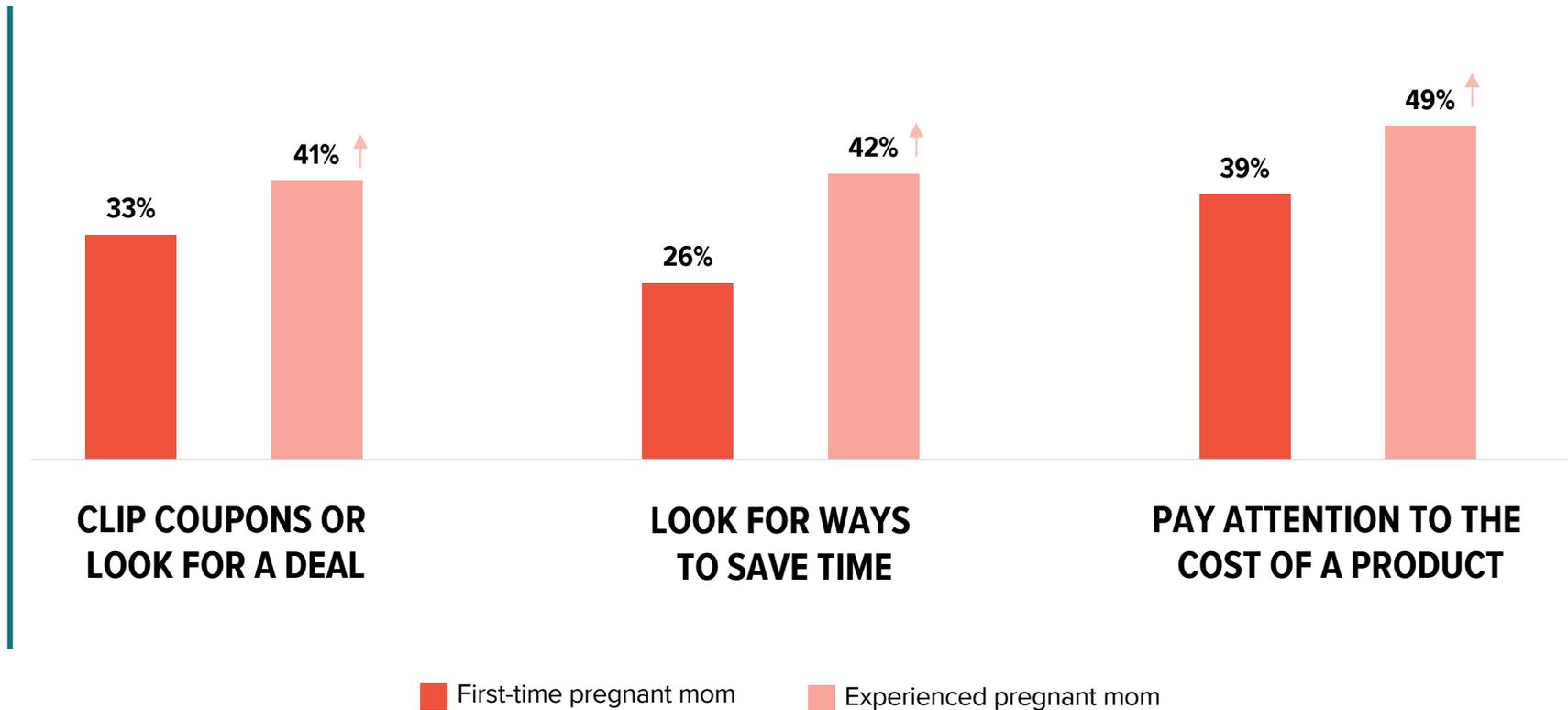
Research the safety of a brand or product	50%
Pay attention to the cost of a product	45%
Look at the ingredient list	42%
Shop online	41%
Research products online before I buy	40%
Clip coupons or look for deals	39%
Look for ways to save time while shopping	39%
Shop at big box stores rather than boutiques/specialty stores	29%
Pay attention to brand names of items	27%
Research where or how a product was made	26%
Look up brands on social media	25%

Base: N=6,667; Moms N=3,185; Dads N=648

C5: How do you compare your shopping habits since becoming a parent or soon-to-be parent, and the way you shopped before you were a parent or soon-to-be parent? Please select if you have increased, decreased, or maintained each of the following behaviors. Please also state if you do not do the activity listed

SHOPPING BEHAVIORS

SHIFTS BY PREGNANCY EXPERIENCE: % DO MORE



First-time pregnant moms are less focused on time saving and cost than experienced pregnant moms who have been pregnant before with other children.

In fact, first-time pregnant moms are seen to have less of an increase in all shopping behaviors noted on p.8, except for “research where or how a product was made” where the two segments are equal.

↑ Indicates a statistically significant difference at a 90% confidence level between respondent groups

Base: First-time pregnant moms N=1,106; Experienced pregnant moms N=1,968

C5: How do you compare your shopping habits since becoming a parent or soon-to-be parent, and the way you shopped before you were a parent or soon-to-be parent? Please select if you have increased, decreased, or maintained each of the following behaviors. Please also state if you do not do the activity listed

SHIFTS IN PERSONAL SPENDING

Not surprisingly, personal spending among new parents, especially moms, decreases significantly once baby arrives.



Buy items for myself



“Splurge” occasionally

↑ Indicates a statistically significant difference at a 90% confidence level between respondent groups

Base: Total parents N=6,667; Moms N=3,185; Dads N=648

C5: How do you compare your shopping habits since becoming a parent or soon-to-be parent, and the way you shopped before you were a parent or soon-to-be parent? Please select if you have increased, decreased, or maintained each of the following behaviors. Please also state if you do not do the activity listed.



BABY REGISTRY

You can't talk about new parent purchasing behaviors without talking about baby registries – traditionally when there is an increase in spending and purchases for baby products. Nearly 6 in 10 (57%) of new and expecting parents **created a baby registry**.

Parents are more likely to create a registry with a big box store, however we see that younger Gen Z parents are starting to register more at some of the smaller, boutique players.

And what criteria is most important to parents in deciding where to register? **Convenience, price, and quality** drive these decisions: online shopping (61%), low prices (61%), everything we need in one place (59%), selection of products (54%), and quality of products (53%).

WHERE PARENTS TO BE ARE REGISTERED OR PLAN TO

Amazon	67%
Target	62%
Walmart	42%
buybuy BABY	26%
Babylist	17%
Bed Bath & Beyond	11%
Pottery Barn Baby	7%
A universal registry	6%
IKEA	6%

GEN Z
slightly more likely
to register at these stores

C6: Which of the following did you do or do you plan to do during your or your partner's pregnancy? Please select as many as apply. Base: N=6,667

C7: Where did you/or do you plan to create a baby registry? Base: N=3,780

C8: Which of the following were/are important to you when deciding the store(s) where you registered? Please select as many as apply. Base: N=3,780

NEW PREGNANCY TRADITIONS

Traditional baby registries and showers are still the preferred way to celebrate pregnancies, but new traditions are gaining traction – especially with younger generations. For example, 44% of Gen Z parents are likely to celebrate with a gender reveal party, in comparison to 32% Young Millennials, 24% Older Millennials, and 26% of Gen X.

Not surprisingly, more first-time pregnant moms celebrate their pregnancy in some way (96%), versus 89% of moms who have been pregnant before. They are 65% more likely to take a ‘babymoon’ trip and 35% more likely to hold a baby shower.

WAYS OF CELEBRATING PREGNANCY

Create a baby registry	57%
Hold a baby shower	57%
Celebrate/announce our baby’s gender on social media	42%
Have a gender reveal party	31%
Take a “babymoon” trip	20%
Hold a “sprinkle” shower	14%
Have a Blessingway ceremony	9%

Base: Total parents N=6,667; Gen Z: N=1,072; Young Millennials: N=2,633; Older Millennials N=2,264; Gen X: N=408
First-time pregnant moms N=1,106; Experienced pregnant moms N=1,968

11 C6: Which of the following did you do or do you plan to do during your or your partner’s pregnancy? Please select as many as apply.

ACTION POINTS

There is huge opportunity for brands to get involved in new parenthood conversation.

HIGHLIGHT PRODUCT SAFETY FEATURES

Safety is the top priority for parents and their babies. Consider your brand messaging and how you can create a "safe space" for parents in their purchasing decisions.

BEHAVIORS CHANGE WHEN BABY ENTERS THE PICTURE

It's clear that life, purchasing, and shopping look very different during and after pregnancy. Think about how you can be present, and support, where these parents are shifting their focus to.

YOUNGER GENERATIONS FUEL NEW TRADITIONS

There are generational shifts in where parents register and what they want. Think about how your brand can market to parents engaging in these new traditions.





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Interested in learning more about this study or other insights to help you with the evolving parenthood and media landscape?

Contact us at corpmarketing@healthline.com or click to read more about [Healthline Parenthood](#) today.

ABOUT HEALTHLINE PARENTHOOD

We help moms and dads navigate all areas of their new reality. While other brands focus on the baby, Healthline Parenthood delivers information and guidance for the parent.

Our **advertising solutions** foster a positive experience for brands to engage expecting and new parents who are eager to learn how to best take care of their families — and themselves. Join the conversation, and capture the attention of new parents:

- Reaching 6.6MM+ new and expecting parents monthly
- 50%+ growth since launch
- 1.4 million active newsletter subscribers

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As the largest health information property in the U.S., we inspire 90 million people each month to take control of their health and well-being. We're committed to providing every individual with clear, credible, evidence-based health and wellness information that's distinguished by its compassion for the human experience.

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