**Young men were key to the blue wave. Our research offers a reason why.**
**Adapted from The Guardian, Friday Nov. 13th, 2026**

When young men helped propel Donald Trump into the White House in 2024, the administration doubled down on a brand of toxic masculinity popular in the so-called manosphere.
They touted high testosterone, male supremacy, and a "biblically-based family" where men work and provide, and deferential women stay home to bear children and care for others.

In a complete reversal, on 3 November, young men powered the blue tidal wave that swept away Maga's hold on political power. Men 18 to 29 shifted nearly 40 points to help Democrats capture both Houses of Congress, flip seats in state legislatures, and win some unexpected governorships.

The election results made clear that young men want financial stability at a time when the cost of living is soaring and jobs have become precarious, disposable and threatened by AI. But they also want time to give care.
That's according to recent research we produced with NORC at the University of Chicago on men's attitudes and experiences with care, based on a nationally representative survey of more than 3,000 Americans, with an oversample of young men 18-29.

We found that more than six in 10 young men value caregiving as much as paid work, even though many of them are not yet fathers or caring for a loved one. Thirty percent of young men identify as caregivers, including 44% of young Hispanic men, who swung for Democrats by 47 points from 2024. Nearly six in 10 young men who have worked while giving care have reduced their work hours. Providing care while still earning enough to live is a major concern.

Eight in 10 say that being an involved father is an important part of being a man. Seven in 10 say they'd be at least somewhat interested in being a stay-at-home parent if they had the choice. In fact, six in 10 young men, compared to about four in 10 young women, said they'd be at least somewhat interested in being a full-time caregiver – hardly the answers politicians pandering with UFC fights on the White House lawn might have expected.

Our survey did find that some young men hold traditional views on gender. Men ages 18 to 29 are nearly three times more likely than women of the same age group to say that it's OK for men to do some care work, but women are better suited to do most of it (32% versus 12%). Young men are also more likely than young women to say that men's role in the family should be providing financial support while women run the household (32% versus 14%).

Still, these are minority viewpoints. More than 70% of young men say that care should be divided equally between men and women. Perhaps what young men want is what we all want: good work with living wages that ensure the ability to have and care for a family.

Instead of disgruntled Republicans working to thwart Democrats at every turn in the next Congress, policymakers would do well to raise the minimum wage, help all families cover the high cost of care, and pass federal paid family and medical leave, and measures to give workers more flexibility and control over their schedules.
Evidence suggests young men are moving beyond toxic masculinity and the politics of division.