

# Child beauty pageants

[Family](#), [Mother](#)



Child Beauty Pageants While beauty pageants started in the 1920's, children's beauty pageants began in the 1960's. This is when the predicament all began. Equally important is the definition of child abuse. It is defined as the exploitation of a child. Children in beauty pageants are exploited at a very over powering rate. Since there is so much exploitation, it should be considered child abuse. Due to parental involvement, children participate in pageants that damage them physically, mentally, and emotionally, prohibiting them from appropriately socializing in society. Before and during beauty pageants, there are many preparations that happen. Before the beauty pageants, the children's parents get them tans and flippers which are a type of falsified teeth. After that, the parents either wax or even clear up any imperfections they may have like wrinkles, bushy eyebrows, and/or messed up hair. At the pageants, the girls get covered with make-up in the hopes of hiding any imperfections the child may have. The child is then dressed in whatever attire they are required to wear. For example: dresses, swimsuits, formal attire, and/or casual. After that, the girls will model their attire to the judges. Pageants will continue on into the talent portion in which the children will show their talents to judges. The talents vary from dance routines to karaoke, or even simply doing a catwalk. Child beauty pageants only judge based on looks and pure perfection. There are many damages that those requirements put on children. These requirements at times go as far to making five to six year olds look like sixteen to twenty year olds (Grosaru). The children are made to look more mature than what they are. Writer Frank Rich says " Today the merchandising of children as sexual commodities is ubiquitous and big business. " Referring to this

statement, this shows that it also makes it easier for them to be made susceptible to pedophiles, eventually at times ending with the child being harmed physically by one of those men or women. Other than being subjected to that type of danger, the children are also subjected to cosmetic damages as well. Botox is one of the common cosmetic tools used. This is used to make the children appear " perfect" with no marks or any types of imperfections. One mother Kerry Campbell gave her eight year old daughter Botox and her excuses for giving her daughter this drug was one to give her a head start in pageants and second because all the other moms were doing it (Thompson). Many mothers like Kerry Campbell may be doing this type of abuse to their children because simply they want their child to be ahead in the pageants. Injecting a child with a dangerous chemical just to get a ahead in a child beauty pageant is a clear example of child abuse. The mental afflictions that the pageants cause to the children are numerous. Pageant mothers begin to create anxiety by the continuous moving from hotel to hotel. This keeps the child from having a normal home. In addition to this, there is no time for the children to socialize with friends in their own hometowns. They are not able to socialize with society at large. Now some of pageant parents argue that their children are able to make friends when they're participating in the pageants. This is false and quickly disproven when the children are given the infamous speech of " no other girl is your friend here. " This speech begins to create paranoia about ever making friends or socializing with peers of their age (Grosaru). Other than creating anxiety and paranoia, there is also self destruction of self-image because they are made to think their body must be a certain way and their hair. This

is called being "A little Barbie" (Nusseara). Mothers also can cause confusion within the child because of the beauty pageants. Mothers who had only boys try to make their boys into girls by making them participate in pageants. This causes the child to have confusion about their sexuality and this should not be done to a child. Such gender confusion and lack of self esteem in the name of a pageant are s clear signs of child abuse on the part of the parent. The parent should help the child to build their self esteem and not tear it down. There is a type of Darwinism that is incorporated in these pageants which is the fear the parents have of their children being losers (Giroux). Psychologist David Elkind says, " Parents use to be worried about if their children were good at school, but now they are only worried if their child are so called losers at school. " Parents create this emotional destruction within the children. The children begin to fear of becoming losers or disappointments to their parents so they are continuously rehearsing how to be perfect every day. In these pageants, the moms try to relive their own fantasy of what they once used to do or what they never got to experience themselves (Grosaru). This is abuse as the parents are only entering the child in the pageant for their selfish need to relive a glory day. The mothers go as far as lying about their child's age to give them an advantage in the competition. This begins to make the child feel guilty about lying afflicting the emotional impairment to the child. In the 1960's, children's beauty pageants were created on the intention of showing off the innocence of children; when in reality it was use to exploit the children and make a profit off of them by making them dress inappropriately and not advocating their well being. This exploitation of the children is pure child abuse and nothing

else. The children of these parents should be taken away for their safety. Laws or regulations should be made to insure the well-being of the children. Children who participate in beauty pageants all suffer physical, mental, and emotional damage; which keeps them from appropriately socializing in society and developing normally.