

Child beauty pageants



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Children are masters of fantastical ideas, and these pageants can be a plentiful playground for their fantasies to come to life. But these fantasies can come at a high price and self worth. Child beauty pageants are contests that feature children less than eighteen years of age. These competitions are categorized in talent, interview, casual wear etcetera; contestants wear makeup and elaborate complex hairstyles and fitted outfits to represent their routines. But how does it develop the child while they grow into becoming adults as these beauty pageants could harm the child's well-being as the child loses their sense of their childhood.

Sheldy Colene Pannell, a sociologist questions why parents would subject their children to gender socialization on TLC's hit television series are specially criticized negatively influencing to children that their physical appearance will score them attention and win prizes and pageants.

While child pageants are not inherently sexual there are types of pageants that create an atmosphere which heavy makeup emphasizes full lips and flushed cheeks. Syd brown a child and adolescent psychologist implies "when you have them looking order, for a lot of people that means looking sexier. I don't think it's a great idea for girls at that age to be focused so much on their sexuality." There have been reports of children that have been sexually abused; these researches have shown that the sexualization of child beauty pageants is a contributing factor to these abuses.

Also if the child wins constantly by her seductive looks she or he is more likely to develop psychological issues later in their lives, as they soon figure out that they could obtain what they want just on good looks. Lucia Grosorv in her everyday psychology article claims that a female child is very prone to

develop eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia as she focuses so much to her looks to become sexier. Anorexia is characterized by low body weight, inappropriate eating habits, obsession with having a thin figure, and the fear of gaining weight. Bulimia is characterized by eating and purging, or consuming a large amount of food in a short amount of time followed by an attempt to rid oneself of the food consumed, typically by vomiting.

Martina m. Cartwright is an adjunct professor of nutritional sciences at the University of Arizona as she wrote an essay about child beauty pageants focusing on the children's eating disorders. Cartwright indicates that many experts agree that children should participate in activities that focus on physical appearance in a early age so it can influence teen's or adults self-esteem in their body image. But some children in a early age all ready struggle to reach that perfection in their body, the perfection that beauty pageants demand as the child already begins in strict diets which and the end develops eating disorders, as these eating disorders can take a toll in their adulthood. Cartwright states not all pageant participants will have these issues when they get older, but the issues is still there, it appears that the hypercritical environment of their youth drives them to an unattainable goal of physical perfection " the princess syndrome " is what Cartwright likes to call it.

As it wasn't stressful enough for the child it is the same stress that the parents and other family members have to cope to these pageants as the very cost of the pageants destroy families not only the participating child, the average cost of these pageants in the entry fee can range to hundred of dollars as well optional events are offered for a little more amount to the

original cost. Many of the pageants are held in hotels, hotel rooms generally range from 99-180 dollars per night. The dress cost range anywhere from 50 to 8000 dollars depending on the designer. Additionally some parents hire a pageant coach to teach their child professionally choreographed dances, preparing them for interviews to answers the questions of the judges, these coaches range from 300 to 5000 this depend on the level of competition. Parents have confessed to spend over 30, 000 of dollars on the child beauty pageants, as there are cases that families go into extreme debt or even losing their very homes by overextending their family resources.

The psychologist Phil McGraw suggests pageant parents that they need to explain to their children that beauty pageants are a fantasy. If parents do not stress this fact the child could loose control as children can not define what is good and bad. Children can easily believe after competing that they should concentrate on developing internal values of caring for others and a love for learning. Hillary Levy, an undergraduate researcher at Harvard University emphasizes that many parents felt that their children were able to gain more confidence as they can now speak in large crowds and interact with other children around their same age. Even parents of children with birth defects found a way for their children to interact with others and not feel different among other children, because they were aiming for the same goal.

At one point these beauty pageants at first was a wonderland for children, has turned into a horrendous nightmare as children are now under false statements in life. Looking sexy and wealthy can supposedly obtain what you want, as later on in their lives they will be subjected to sexual acts and harming themselves and even death, just to get what they want. Children

are our future, parents should teach their kids to focus on the important matters in life, so that in the end we can have a better society for our children and their children's children.