

Teenagers' increased interest in plastic surgery essay sample



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Introduction

It is no big surprise the trend that our teens today have set themselves especially pertaining to beauty and body perception. Although plastic surgery is still a first world “ thing,” because of technology availability, accessibility as well as affordability, more and more countries has come to accept its presence. Today’s adolescent is an assortment of contemporary style and the most modern know-how: fashionable fitted denims, tight polo top, and a sling bag with matching cell phone and iPod inside. It is no wonder then that fashion and medicine come together especially in the teen dominated scene.

What is actually going on here is the evolution of how people appreciate beauty and the way to get it. Beauty is defined today much different than it was years before. A pretty woman or the ideal impression of the womanly figure has gone through stages, as manifested in art and the mass media. Leonardo da Vinci’s portrayed a sort of virtuous beautiful lady in the likeness of Mona Lisa. If artists like Ruben and portraits of his art on women would be on display, they will not be the kind to consider on the ramp. In fact, way back during the 40s and the 50s, beautiful means having the full and curvy figure. It cannot be denied that to a degree, the parents have a compelling effect over whether or not their offspring will become overweight or obese. The reality is that parents don’t just pass on their genetic traits; most importantly, the nurture aspect of the equation is equally powerful. Bad eating practices and inactive routines like staying long in front of television or playing video games at hours end are routines make obese children what they are. Thirty three-point-three percent (33. 3%), studies show that they

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are more prone to become overweight as they reach young adulthood (Source: locateadoc. com, accessed November 22, 2006).

These are just some of the glaring realities in this generation. Add to that is the way parents relate with their children in some questionable aspects. There are parents who take for granted the decision-making opportunities that their children make. They even give away gifts in the form of plastic surgery to their children. This goes to show that either they don't care or are not concerned at all with what their children are doing in their bodies or perhaps this is their way to "win" their children for lost time and affections. Of course, there are exceptions to the category, parents who genuinely care for their children and who just don't make use of their wealth at their whim, who use their money wisely and with real legitimate reasons.

Definition

There is a false impression that plastic surgery can alter anyone into someone who looks like the cover of a glossy magazine. There is the assumption also that whenever an individual subjects him/herself to this type of surgery, that person is a very vain one. So what is plastic surgery?

Derived from the Greek word "plastikos", denoting to mold or give form, plastic surgery is the area of expertise in medicine devoted to remodeling and touching up the human body. It includes both reconstructive and cosmetic surgery. The former is operated on abnormal parts of the body brought about by birth flaws, developmental abnormalities, physical wounds and scars, illness, lumps or sickness; while the latter (cosmetic surgery) is done to reshape or restore natural and functional structures of the body to

enhance one's physical looks and self-esteem (as adopted by AMA and ASPS, <http://www.medem.com>).

Factors that Influence Teens' Faulty Perception of Body and Appearance.

Parents strongly influence children's perception of themselves whenever they communicate verbal and nonverbally, anything regarding their teen's or other individuals' body image. Mockery and coarse joking by members of the family and friends on appearance have been associated with body image dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptoms. Consequently, significant others like parents' and peers' communication concerning one's body shape or weight appear to have an effect on body image dissatisfaction (Source: Thelen & Cormier, 1995 as quoted from a study done by Wertheim et al.). Increasingly, it is no wonder that adolescents today prefer "cosmetic surgery." Many teens typically desire procedures consisting of laser hair elimination, nose restructuring ("nose job"), ear reshaping (identified as otoplasty), and breast reduction. Procedures like dermabrasion (process in which the top layers of skin are surgically scraped away) can smooth grave and terrible scars resulting from acne. And if one wishes to reduce unwanted body hair, with just a number of treatments laser hair removal is the procedure used. What about the men? Most of them pay the surgeon a visit for procedures like Botox shots, liposuction, and eye lifts.

Prevalence

From studies done by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, statistics show that:

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“ In 2001, 17 percent of patients having chemical peels were men, up from 4 percent in 1992. During that same nine-year period, the number of men having facelifts climbed from 7 percent to 10 percent. Males opting for liposuction rose from 13 percent to 18 percent. And men who chose to reshape their nose jumped from 28 percent to 37 percent”

(Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/sections/living/Healthology/30312.html>).

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that as the fashion remains and media exposure intensifies the concentration on adolescents desiring plastic surgery has increased. The total number of nose jobs done on teenagers has gone up from 4,311 in 1994 to 42,513 in 2003 says the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) statistics. Cosmetic measures done on teenagers and children (18 and younger) in 2003 were 331,886. The chemical peels with just over 126,000, and one procedure, otoplasty (ear surgery), was more prevalent in this age group than in all of the others combined. Of course, ten years ago the number for this age group was just a fraction of what it is, but across the board numbers have risen dramatically. The 2003 total for all age groups was 8,793,943, dwarfing the 1994 total of 364,398 (Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/sections/living/Healthology/30312.html>).

Cosmetic surgery is done basically for aesthetic rather than medical reasons. People choose to go through cosmetic surgery to develop their appearance. Because it is surgery, cosmetic surgery involves risks. Moreover, the outcome is not what the client expected. It is important to decide on a competent and knowledgeable surgeon

(http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Cosmetic_surgery?open).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Plastic Surgery

Based on information from the U. S. Food and Drug Administration, some of the risks in plastic surgery (i. e. breast implants) at times will not end after the initial surgery. Because implants are likely not to last a lifetime, patients discover that oftentimes follow-up surgeries are frequently required. In the case of breast implants, risks include the possibility that the implants might burst and shrink, the FDA elaborated. The rest will experience the rupture after quite a few years and some will keep going for as long as ten years or more before they rupture or deflate (http://abcnews.go.com/sections/GMA/Living/Breast_Implants_Graduation_040615-1.html).

Other complications include the probability of infection, blood loss, blood clots, and harmful effects of anesthesia (<http://www.accessexcellence.org>).

However, according to studies made by Stark, patients obtain a strong lift from such procedures (Stark xv as quoted from a study done by Wertheim et al.). Older clients and patients of these surgeries gain psychologically in the procedures, aside from the physically enhanced and modified body images.

“ Thus an individual whose body image is aberrant or different will find it hard to form meaningful interpersonal associations and may become a social outcast, suffering psychological damage inherent in this particular type of rejection” (Stark 10-11 as quoted from a study done by Wertheim et al).

So for those who see that these procedures actually benefit recipients, plastic surgery is actually a boon not a bane. Their adherents see that this is the answer to people's unhappiness. Plastic surgery is their alternative to feel satisfied and enjoy life. It is an opportunity that can be advantageous for one who suffered humiliation and inferiority. No doubt, this is a valid concern but this is not true for everyone.

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