

Media body image assignment



Products for children also reinforce girls' value on "sexiness," such as Bratz dolls wearing bikinis and fishnets and thongs for seven-year-olds (yes you read that correctly). 46 percent of all high school age students, and 62 percent of high school seniors, have had sexual intercourse; almost nine million teens have already had sex.. What we market to young girls is the number one issue. Sexualization in media is everywhere. From a young age, boys and girls are told by the media that girls should be more focused on their looks and ultimately their sex appeal.

Sex appeal is portrayed as only skin deep in the media. North American's expectations of beauty are very unrealistic. Media and entertainment is affecting our younger generations standards of morals and self-image. Media's image of beauty is unattainable. If we go by marketing standards, beauty is a tall skinny airbrushed half naked girl. The way the media portrays beauty is very discouraging to young woman everywhere. Marketing manipulates young girls into believing these images and they compare their body to the images of the model or celebrity.

Comparing themselves to an airbrushed image of very skinny women is not healthy for self-esteem. Although there is no single cause of body dissatisfaction or disordered eating, research is increasingly clear that media does indeed contribute and that exposure to and pressure exerted by media increase body dissatisfaction and disordered eating. Eating disorders are a serious issue with young woman. According to nationaleatingdisorders.org in the United States alone, 20 million women and 10 million men suffer from a clinically significant eating disorder at some time in their life, including anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, or an eating

disorder not otherwise specified. It's a shame that young women believe that these images are the norm and believe that everyone should look like this.

Another way the media is affecting young women is by making beauty seem the only way to attract the opposite sex. The sexualization of girls and women is the depiction of females as merely valued by their sex appeal.

It is everywhere here in our media. The idea of a beautiful woman in a music video is a big-breasted woman with a big butt and a thin waist, "Coca Cola shape." A girl with these measurements used only to be seen as an object in the music industry. They parade around in music videos in skimpy outfits and dance around seductively. They are being portrayed as objects only there for the pleasure of a man. What happened to having a brain or talent? What happened to someone loving you for you? The fact is these young women believe you have to seduce or give away your body to have acceptance from the opposite sex.

Boys, on the other hand, see how girls are sexualized and dehumanized everywhere. Everywhere and for the rest of their lives they may think that's the acceptable way of treating women and girls. This will continue to affect relationships for young women and men everywhere. The kind of material young women have been exposed to on television is relevant to their sexual behavior. In a recent study of fifteen and sixteen year old girls (who admitted to being more sexually active) were more likely to name programs with sexual content among their favorites.

Not only is sex present in almost all television shows, teen pregnancy is glamorized in shows and movies. *16 and Pregnant* is a popular show on MTV.

It takes you on a journey with young mothers through their trials and tribulations of young motherhood. Although one-time viewing of the show did not significantly impact some of the measures – such as acceptance of teen pregnancy myths, acceptance of the ability to avoid teen pregnancy, attitudes about teen pregnancy or behavioral intentions to avoid pregnancy – regular viewing of the show did.

Researchers also found that teens who thought they were similar to the pregnant teens were more likely to have a lower perception of their own risk for pregnancy, greater acceptance of myths about teen pregnancy and more favorable attitudes about teen pregnancy. 16 and Pregnant shows how cool teen pregnancy is, and the fact that many of the show's stars become celebrities in their own right "gracing the cover of People magazine" doesn't hurt the impression that having a child while in high school is one way to get attention.

Approximately nine percent of sexually experienced females age 14 and under become pregnant each year. The abortion rate among all females age 14 and under was 5.6 (per 1,000 females age 14). These statistics are proof that teen pregnancy is an issue and media isn't helping. Children and teens need to understand and be conscious of the messages they are receiving from the media. The first step in combating negative media portrayals of females is helping them gain the ability to look critically at all forms of media and its messages, and how it affects everyday life.

This way girls and boys will understand that females don't have to look a certain way in order to be valued by society. Girls will know not to put

themselves through the pressure, and have a much better outlook on their appearance and increase self-esteem; boys will not have unrealistic expectations of girls and will respect them for who they are. Even the simplicity of promoting safe sex could alter the pregnancy rates among teens.

There needs to be a drastic change in the values of the media with more representation of girls and women which are realistic, celebrate the differences among females, and focus beyond just looks. Sex sells but at what price? Media and entertainment is affecting our younger generations moral integrity and self-image because the media promotes an unrealistic image of beauty, uses sex to sell beauty, and exposes young adolescents to distinct sexual content. Once the media universe starts promoting less sexual values, society will too. The result on our younger generations morals and self-esteem would be beneficial.