



Wholesome to Hypersexualized: What Happened to Children's Dance?

I. The International Tsunami: Internet, Media & Porn

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Media:** The main means of mass communication; over the course of the last decade, the unfiltered influence of media on the internet has normalized harmful rather than healthy dance for younger and younger children
- B. **Harmful Dance: "Hypersexualized Dance";** children look like adults in adult costumes, choreography and music.
- C. **Healthy Dance: "Educational Dance";** children look like children dressed in age-appropriate costumes, choreography and music
- D. Youth Protection Association for Dance (YPAD) Harmful Dance Definition: **Dance students should NOT be instructed or encouraged to do dance movements that:**
 - 1. Are sexually suggestive such as twerking (this excludes African, Afro-Caribbean or Brazilian Dance moves or any movement of hips, pelvis, buttock and torso that do not promote a sexualized message), "booty pops", lip licking, finger licking, and breast or groin stroking, patting or pointing towards breast or genitalia, lip pouting, or winks that promote a sexual tone.
 - 2. Mimic obscene gestures, drug or alcohol use, or gang activity (i.e. flashing "gang" symbols, middle finger, licking the hand and grabbing the crotch).
 - 3. Include sexually suggestive grinding, humping the floor, sexually straddling a prop (like a chair), back arches with bottoms to the audience in a suggestive manner.
 - 4. Use props that are sexually suggestive or meant to depict violence (whips, chains, guns or knives) unless they are part of age-appropriate storytelling (Pirates of the Caribbean, etc).
 - 5. Staging the dancers in a row touching each other and then rolling their bottoms or gyrating their hips in sexually suggestive way.
 - 6. Spanking themselves or another dancer on the bottom or running their hands up another dancer's body in a seductive manner.
 - 7. Crotch drops in a deep plié with knees and feet turned out, either by itself or multiple bouncing while engaged low on the floor.
 - 8. Contain artistic concepts or themes with sexual connotations or references to drug or alcohol use (such as "partying at the club").
 - 9. Contain expressions that connote an "invitation" on the part of the audience to view the dancer as a sexual target (e.g., "come hither" looks, winks, long gazes and provocative stares directly into the eyes of judges or audience members.
- E. No dance studio regulation.

II. Research Patterns: A Pornified Culture

- A. What does it mean to sexualize children? According to the American Psychological Association (apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report), a child is sexualized when:
 - 1. She/he is valued only for her sexual appeal or behavior
 - 2. Her/his physical attractiveness is equated with being sexy
 - 3. She/he is treated as a sexual object
 - 4. Sexuality is inappropriately imposed on her/him
- B. Effects of sexualization on children:
 - Co-dependence
 - Higher risk of porn use
 - Cognitive development
 - Promoted objectification
 - Teen pregnancy
 - Inability to identify sexual abuse
 - Eating disorders
 - Poor academics
 - Promotes rape culture
 - Promiscuity

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C. Brain Research & Trauma

- Brain research links for mirror neurons:[Anderson, Cordelia, The Impact of Pornography(2017 revised) p, 13]; ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/amendment-process/public-hearings-and-meetings/20120215/Testimony_15_Cooper.pdf [p10]; tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15551390902803820; bark.us/blog/porn-dangers-damages/
- Brain development re: pre frontal cortex v. basil ganglia [Pornography harms children - Dr. Sharon Cooper, M.D. at PornHarms.com briefing [Video File]. (2010, December 6). Retrieved from youtube.com/watch?v=TFw1Cnuq9jc
- Dr. Anne Redelf's article on trauma danceawareness.com/resources/beneath-the-surface-of-hypersexualized-dance-in-children/

- D. Experts identify pornography as a public health issue leading to the on-going development of CSAM (Child Sexual Abuse Material). Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play. [Source: Hypersexualization of young girls: Why should we care? (n.d.). cwhn.ca/en/hypersexualizationprimer American Psychological Association, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. (2007). Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report.aspx ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdfplus/10.2105/AJPH.62.3.374 endsexualexploitation.org/issues/child-sexual-abuse/ endsexualexploitation.org/articles/how-to-help-restrict-child-predators-and-curb-demand-for-child-sexual-abuse/

III. Generational Grooming: Unaware Children & Adults

- A. Grooming: a tactic of overcoming the child's defenses by slowly desensitizing his or her natural reaction to abusive behaviors. The most commonly recognized context is when pedophiles use it on children and their parents, but the technique is also used in other contexts, such as confidence scams or commercial sex work. Grooming works by mixing positive behaviors (the fun of a dance class) with elements of abuse (hypersexualized children's dance). Overtime, the inappropriate comes to feel normal. abuseandrelationships.org/Content/Behaviors/grooming.html
- B. Corporate paedophilia is a metaphor coined by Phillip Adams to describe the selling of products to children before they are able to understand advertising and thus before they are able to consent to the process of corporate-led consumption. The metaphor draws a parallel between actual paedophilia, the use of children for the sexual pleasure of adults, and corporate use of children for the financial benefit of adults who own and manage corporations. tai.org.au/sites/default/files/DP90_8.pdf p1, 2
- C. Adult grooming normalizes hypersexualized children's dance.

IV. Healthy Solutions: Informed Choices

- A. Educational benefits/outcomes of healthy dance for children
- Creativity
 - Social awareness
 - Higher order thinking
 - Communication
 - Risk taking
 - Improved self-esteem
 - Problem solving
 - Emotional maturity
- [Source: Hanna, J. L. (1999). *Partnering dance and education. Intelligent moves for changing times. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.*]
- B. Make healthy, not harmful choices
- Watch our powerful videos
 - Educate using our PowerPoints
 - Support our work with a financial gift
 - Join the DA:NCE Coalition: danceawareness.com/coalition
 - Download our free eBook
 - Volunteer
 - Inform with our Step by Step Guide to Educate Dance Studios
 - Receive the DA:NCE newsletter
 - Share your DA:NCE story
- C. DA:NCE objectives
1. To protect children from hypersexualization in adult costumes, choreography and music, and to protect the art of dance
 2. To create free research materials to give adults informed choices about the differences between healthy or harmful dance
 3. To engage in respectful conversations about hypersexualization without shaming/demonizing adults or dance studios so that there is a path for reflection and changed perspectives
 4. To communicate the hypersexualization of children in dance and its connection to the public health issue of pornography with bipartisan engagement

Join the DA:NCE Coalition

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DA:NCE is a program of Soul to Sole Choreography
Advocacy, Education, Collaboration