

HEALTHY OR HARMFUL CHILDREN'S DANCE: SOLUTIONS



Panel Introductions

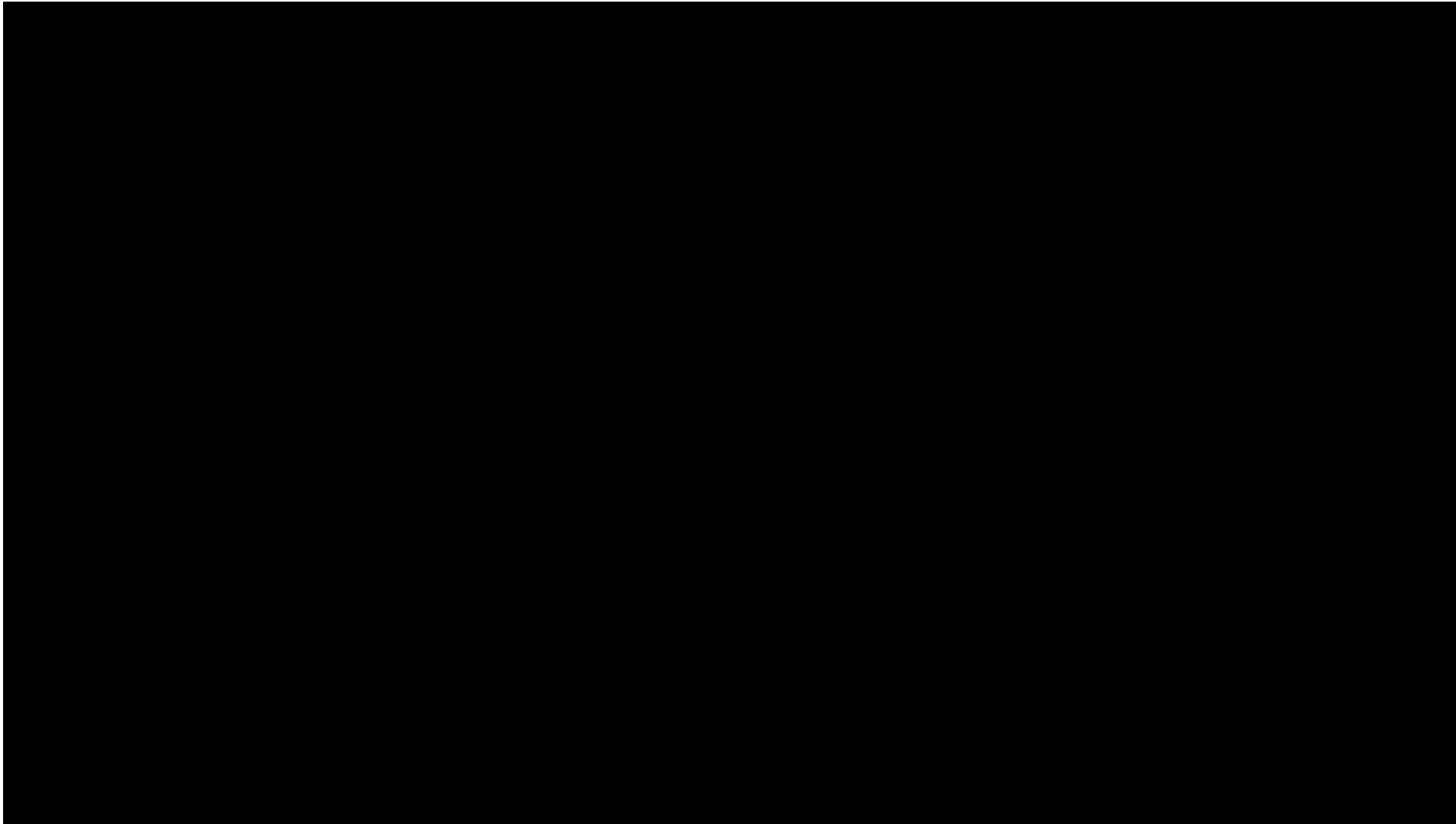
Anne Green Gilbert
Creative Dance Center

Lynn Monson
AZDEO(Retired)

Mary Bawden
DA:NCE Awareness

Marlita Hill
DA:NCE Awareness

Introduction: **Healthy or Harmful Dance: Solutions**



Introduction Video: Healthy or Harmful Children's Dance: What do the experts say about hypersexualization?



Today's Presentation:

- I. The Cultural Shift: **Healthy to Harmful Dance**
- II. The Source of the Problem: **Internet, Media & Porn**
- III. Research Patterns: **A Pornified Culture**
- IV. Stories of healthy to harmful dance: **Realities & Outcomes**
- V. Practical Solutions: **Informed Choice**

Cultural Shift: **Healthy to Harmful Dance** Changing the Definition of Innocence

The Cultural Shift: **Healthy to Harmful Dance**



In many dance settings, girls are becoming hypersexualized in adult costumes, choreography and music at younger and younger ages.

https://books.google.com/books?id=Acy1DwAAQBAJ&pg=PA5&lpg=PA5&dq=research+on+media+culture+that+blurs+the+line+between+childhood+and+adulthood&source=bl&ots=mBwLFy9yAK&sig=ACfU3U3Vc3lldr4twcibiEy_USmM7BTw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj0sszCi9nlAhXOpJ4KHW5CDTgQ6AEwBXoECAkQAAQ#v=onepage&q=research%20on%20media%20culture%20that%20blurs%20the%20line%20between%20childhood%20and%20adulthood&f=false

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314395153_Socialization_as_Media_Effect

The Cultural Shift: **Healthy to Harmful Dance**

Definitions

What does the word *'hypersexualization'* mean? A toxic sexual environment

What does the word *'toxic'* mean? Extremely harsh or harmful

What does the word *'healthy'* mean?

What does the word *'harmful'* mean?



HARMFUL DANCE = Hypersexualized Dance

Children look like adults in adult costumes, choreography and music

HEALTHY DANCE = Educational Dance

Children look like children dressed in age-appropriate costumes, choreography and music

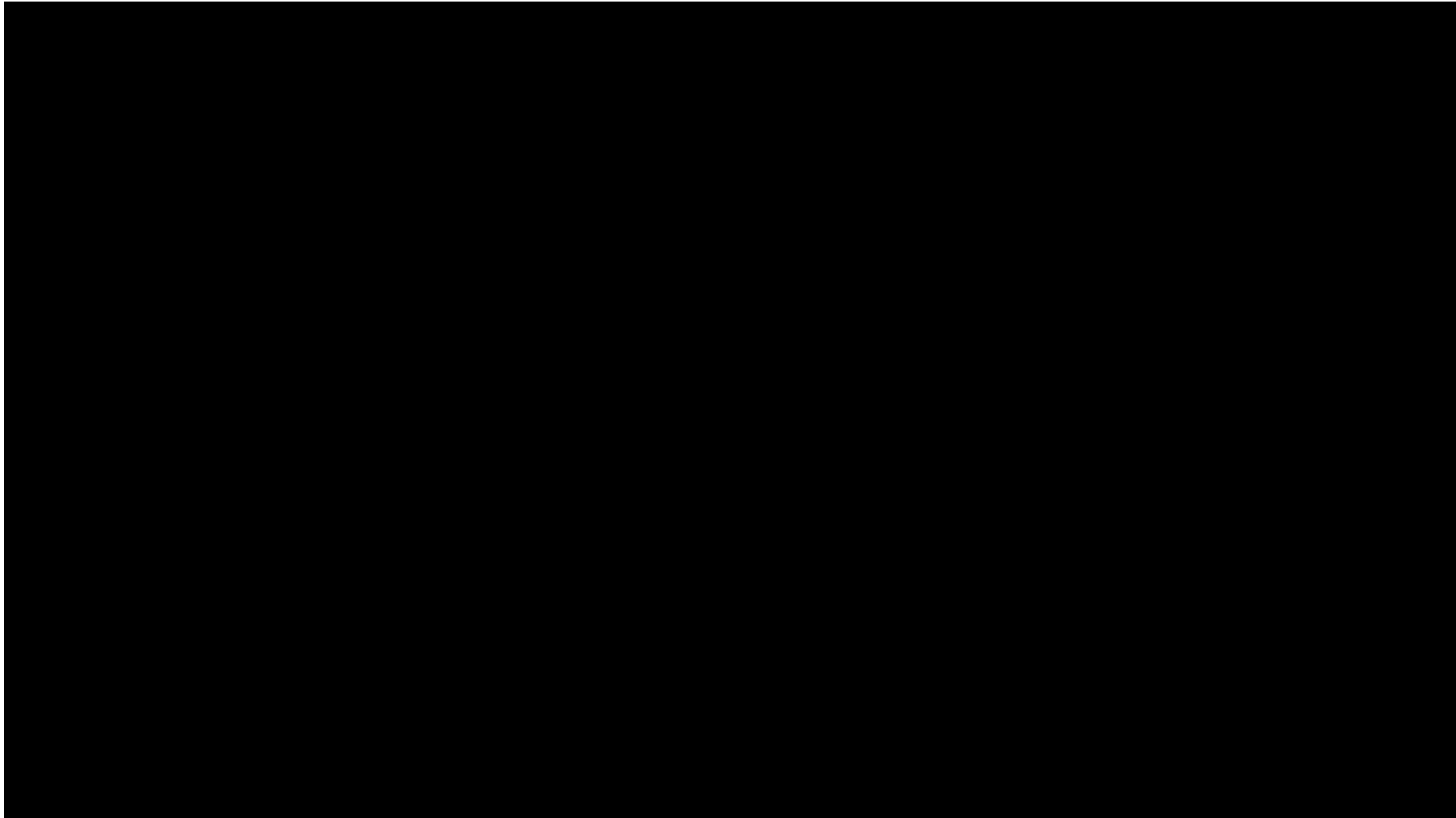


Harmful, Hypersexualized Dance Defined by YPAD (Youth Protection Association for Dance)

- Dance students should NOT be instructed or encouraged to do dance movements that:
- 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.
- Spanking themselves or another dancer on the bottom or running their hands up another dancer's body in a seductive manner.



The Cultural Shift: **Healthy to Harmful Dance**



Video: What do research experts say?

The Source of the Problem: Internet, Media & Porn

Deleting Childhood

The Internet

1996 Communications Decency Act

Section 230 This law has outlived its usefulness: No accountability for social media platforms; they are immune from prosecution. This is the one of the few industries with no regulation.



"We are grooming young children to open themselves up for predators to come in."
- John-Michael Lander

There is no dance regulation in the USA

There are no required background checks.

Anyone can open a dance studio.

This could be a breeding ground for sexual exploitation to occur.



DA:NCE RESOURCE: 8 Questions Parents Should Ask to Understand An Organization's Commitment to Child Safety

<https://www.dancemagazine.com/sexual-abuse-dance-education-2650145602.html?rebellitem=9#rebellitem9>

The Source of the Problem: **Internet, Media & Porn**

Media: The main means of mass communication



Reference: Webster's Dictionary

The Source of the Problem: Internet, Media & Porn



“Why are we surprised when children do what they see in media modeled all around them?”

Anderson, Cordelia, *The Impact of Pornography* (2017 revised) p, 13

Barry, A. M. (2009). Mirror neurons: How we become what we see. *Visual Communication Quarterly*, 16(2), 79–89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15551390902803820>

Porn Industry

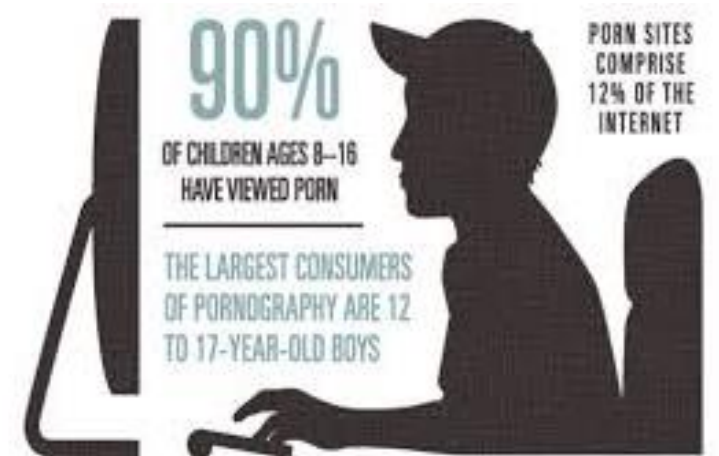
“The pornographers did a kind of stealth attack on our culture, hijacking our sexuality and then selling it back to us, often in forms that look very little like sex but a lot like cruelty. The only solution to this is a movement that is fierce in its critique of sexual exploitation and steadfast in its determination to fight for what is rightfully ours.”

– Culture Reframed Founder, Feminist Gail Dines

The Source of the Problem: Internet, Media & Porn

Mainstream porn is free, hardcore and harming children.

90% of children ages 8-16 have viewed porn



The facts: Mainstream porn is free, hardcore and harming children and youth. Retrieved from <http://www.culturereframed.org/the-crisis/>

The Porn Industry uses dance as a portal to **groom all children inside and outside of dance** for harmful outcomes.

The increase in child porn:

- 2008-3000 images NY Times
- 2018-18.4 million images NY Times



CULTURAL GROOMING

A tactic of overcoming the child's defenses by slowly desensitizing his or her natural reaction to abusive behaviors.

Grooming works by mixing positive behaviors (the fun of a dance class) with elements of abuse (hypersexualization).



<https://www.abuseandrelationships.org/Content/Behaviors/grooming.html>

The Source of the Problem: Internet, Media & Porn

Parents are unaware that a predatory media culture has groomed them as well as their children



<https://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2019/04/23/child-sexual-abuse-friends-family-how-predators-groom-parents-first/3499244002/>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1077559517729479>



**"The corporate use of children
for the financial benefit of
adults who own and manage
corporations."**

--Researcher Philip Adams

https://australiainstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/DP90_8.pdf

The sexualization of girls is not new.



What are some examples that you have seen in the culture?

Through today with **digital media**

The **sexualization of girls (and boys)** has become **commonplace, widespread** and a **pervasive cultural norm**.

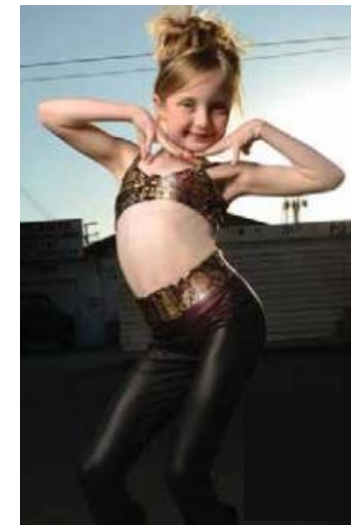
Research Patterns: **A Pornified Culture**

Definition of Sexualization from the APA

The American Psychological Association says sexualization is different than healthy sexuality.

A girl is sexualized when:

- She is **valued only for her sexual appeal or behavior** rather than other characteristics
- Her **physical attractiveness is equated with being sexy**
- She is **treated as a sexual object**
- Sexuality is inappropriately imposed on her



Hypersexualization of young girls: Why should we care? (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <http://www.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. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report.aspx>

The Effects of Sexualization for Children: Evidence-based APA Research

- Body Dysmorphia
- Eating Disorders
- Poor Academic Performance
- Promiscuity
- Teen Pregnancy
- Higher Risk of Abusive Relationships
- Higher Risk of Pornography Use
- Unable to Identify Sexual Abuse
- Mismanagement of Social Networking
- Promotes Rape Culture
- Promotes Objectification of Females
- Relationship Wounding due to Constant Comparison
- Co-Dependence
- Desensitization



American Psychological Association, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. (2007). Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. Retrieved from

<http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report.aspx>

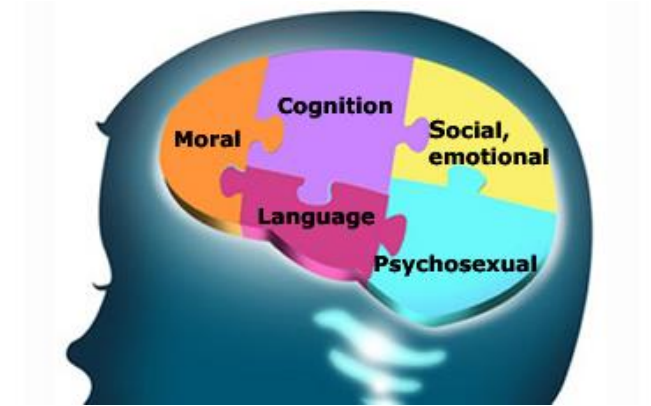
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11199-012-0145-3>

Research Patterns: A Pornified Culture

Brain Research

Children exposed to adult sexual material **experience neurological stress.**

Their brains are simply not mature enough to handle the exposure to porn.



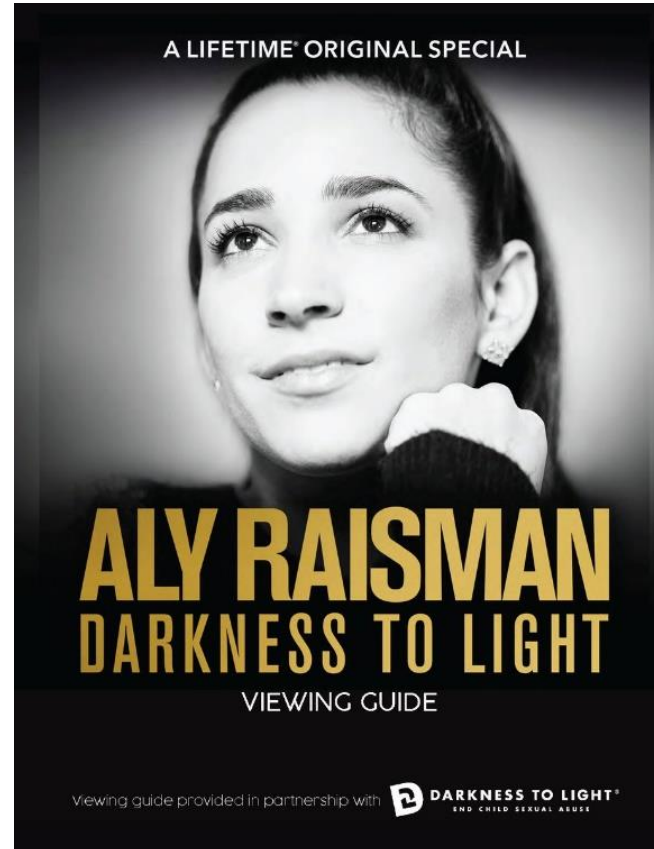
They also are more likely to **develop impulsive behavior** and are **less able to think critically**. *And this leads to:*

Pornography harms children - Dr. Sharon Cooper, M.D. at PornHarms.com briefing [Video File]. (2010, December 6). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFw1Cnuq9jc>
Jensen, K. (2014, September 4). Can soft-core porn damage your child's brain? Retrieved from <http://protectyoungminds.org/2014/09/04/can-soft-core-porn-damage-your-childs-brain/>

Research Patterns: **A Pornified Culture**

Trauma: a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing with long term effects.

ACE:
Adverse
childhood
experience



PTSD:
Post
traumatic
stress
disorder

http://www.d2l.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statistics_5_Consequences.pdf <https://www.d2l.org/child-sexual-abuse/statistics/> <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html> <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1994-97404-012> <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1994-97404-012>

Hypersexualization of Boys

Hypermasculinization of Boys

“Hypersexualization of femininity can’t exist without hypermasculinization of males. They feed off and reinforce each other ([Source](#)).” Dr. Linda Papadopoulos



Daniel Agliata, Stacey Tantleff-Dunn (2004). The Impact of Media Exposure on Males' Body Image. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology: Vol. 23, 1 Special Issue: Body Image and Eating Disorders: Influence of Media Images, pp. 7-22.

Prud'homme, J. (2015, July 21). Popular Culture and the Male Body: A New Challenge. Retrieved from

[http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/07/15310/?utm_source=The+Witherspoon+Institute&utm_campaign=02321aada7-](http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/07/15310/?utm_source=The+Witherspoon+Institute&utm_campaign=02321aada7-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_15ce6af37b-02321aada7-84110661)

[RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_15ce6af37b-02321aada7-84110661](http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/07/15310/?utm_source=The+Witherspoon+Institute&utm_campaign=02321aada7-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_15ce6af37b-02321aada7-84110661)

Stories of healthy and harmful dance: Realities & Outcomes

“We live in a hypersexualized, image-based media culture which has normalized hypersexualized dance for children.”

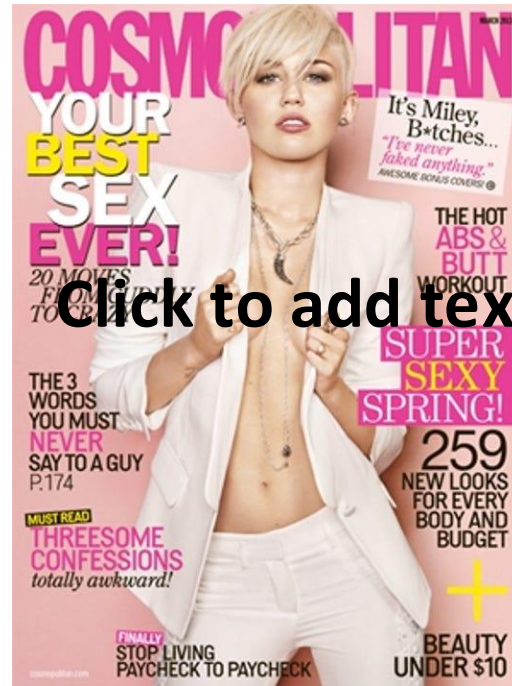
- Mary Bawden

*These stories are from
women who were
hypersexualized in dance*

Video: Dance Studios and Children: 3 Survivor's Speak About Hypersexualization

Stories of Healthy to Harmful Dance: Realities & Outcomes

“Young people cannot be expected to navigate the perfect storm of a sexually toxic, pornified culture without impact.”



That is why experts identify porn as a **public health issue**.

Anderson, Cordelia, The Impact of Pornography(2017) revised) p.37. <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdfplus/10.2105/AJPH.62.3.374>
<https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health>

Healthy Dance Stories



Stories of Healthy to Harmful Dance: **Realities & Outcomes**

Research shows that healthy dance studios have positive developmental outcomes for children.
It's all about making informed choices.

Proven Research Benefits

- Creativity
- Problem Solving
- Risk Taking
- Higher Order Thinking
- Communication
- Social Awareness
- Emotional Maturity
- Improved Self-Esteem



Hanna, J. L. (1999). *Partnering dance and education. Intelligent moves for changing times*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Tarr, B., Launay, J., & Dunbar, R. I. (2016). Silent disco: Dancing in synchrony leads to elevated pain thresholds and social closeness. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. doi:10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2016.02.004

Practical Solutions: **Informed Choice**

“Life is about choice. The choices you make are going to dictate the life you lead. When you get that, that is when your life is going to start coming alive.”

- Valerie Kondos Field, former UCLA gymnastic coach: criticizing USA gymnastics for enabling the culture of child abuse created by Dr. Larry Nassar

What is the solution to prevent abuse & grooming in hypersexualized children's dance?

1. IDENTIFY the problem with awareness. *We can't address what we don't have the courage to name.* Understand the differences between healthy and harmful dance.
2. Make informed choices.
3. * Educate all adults with practical tools.
4. YOU are the protective factor for children in dance. YOU are the 'take action' prevention.



DA:NCE Nonpartisan Reminder

DA:NCE is a non-partisan, unifying organization that welcomes input from any individual or organization that values protecting children from hypersexualization in adult costumes, choreography and music

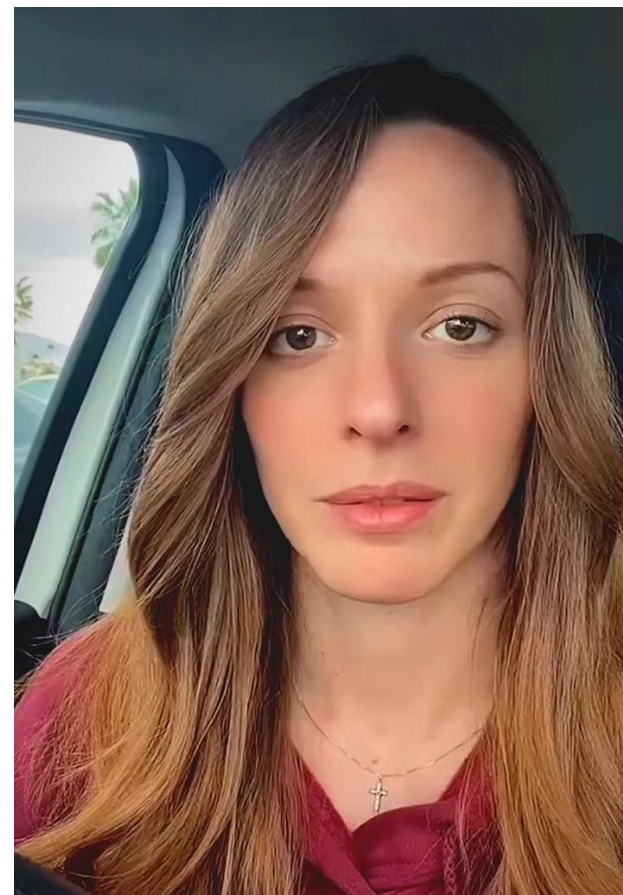




DA:NCE Nonpartisan Reminder

DA:NCE is a non-partisan, unifying organization that welcomes input from any individual or organization that values protecting children from hypersexualization in adult costumes, choreography and music

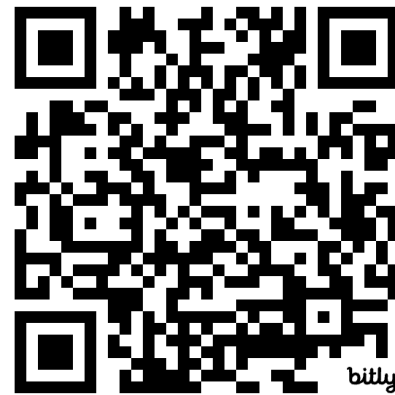
MY DANCE WHY





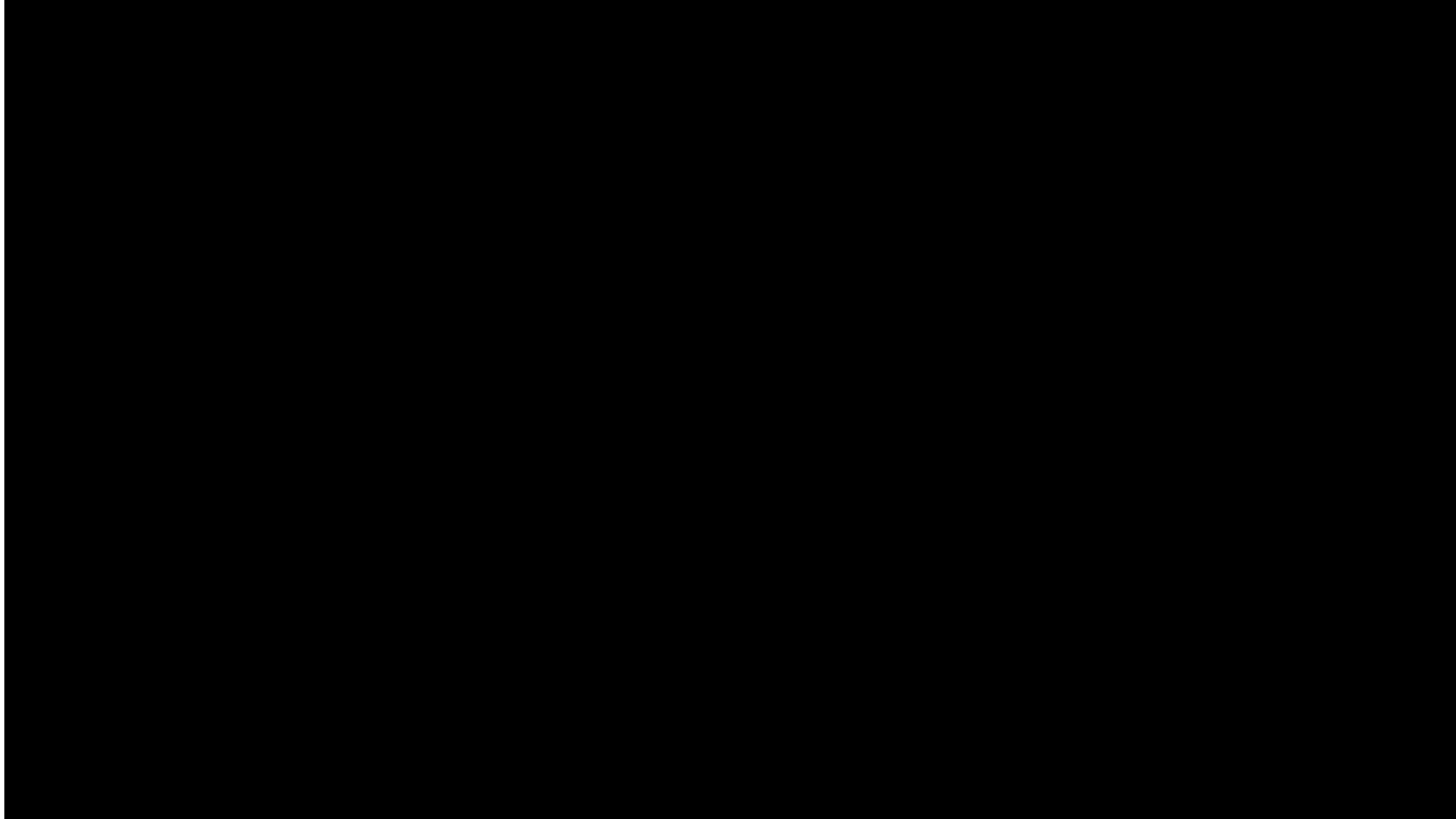
How Do We:

- Adapt our choreography, costumes & music for children so that we don't reflect exposure to adult sexualized messages?
- Speak out in dance systems that reward hypersexualized content?
- Provide support to students & dancers who need advocacy in systems that are not already in place?
- Work together to develop non-partisan net-working collaboration of this issue through awareness, advocacy & education to support the protection of children in diverse dance environments?
- Develop resources for dance educators/parents/dance students so that they are able to think critically about the differences between healthy and harmful dance?



Practical Solutions: **Informed Choice**

“



The Joy of Healthy Dance

Advocacy, Education & Collaboration



www.danceawareness.com

DA:NCE is a program of



Follow Us on Social Media



QUESTION ANSWER



Happy to answer any questions on your mind

