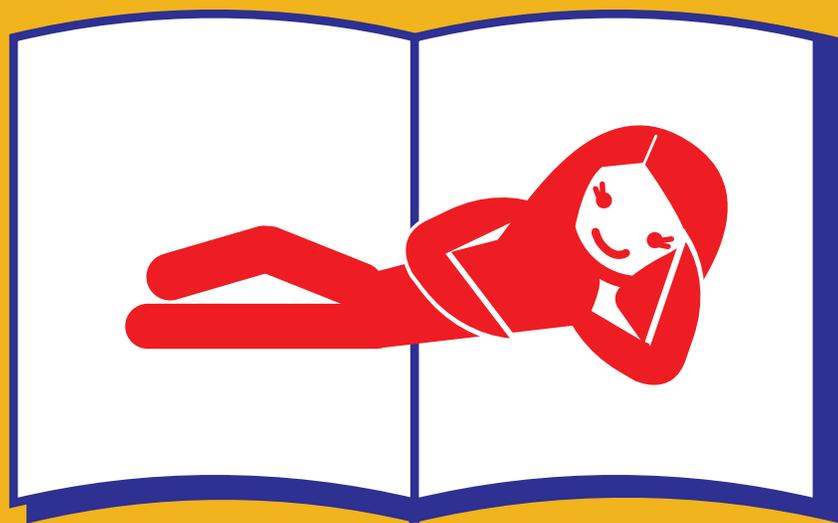




EDUCATEEMPOWERKIDS

A SIMPLE LESSON FOR
TEACHING YOUR CHILD ABOUT

MEDIA LITERACY



BACKGROUND

Everyday, kids are bombarded by images and ideas in the media they are exposed to. It's important for children to know that digitally enhanced images in the media show impossible standards that no one can attain, not even the people in the actual images. All media messages are constructed. An advertising team puts together what people see and hear in the media. Encourage your child to think about not only the images they see, but the messages that are being presented in the images they see. Learning to think critically is an important part of growing up.

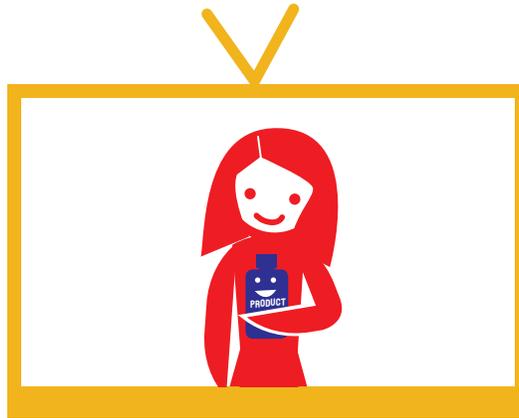
PREPARATION

Review the objective of the lesson and understand why it is important to talk to your child about being media literate.

- Think about how the media has influenced your choices or affected your body image.
- The people in media images are almost always altered by airbrushing or other digital enhancements.
- Remember that people come in all shapes and sizes because we don't all fall into the very narrow definition of beauty that the media presents us with.
- Familiarize yourself with the glossary terms.

OBJECTIVE

- Teach your child to question what he or she sees in all forms of media.
- Think about all the places and times your child is exposed to media images and ideas each day.
- Consider ways to counteract the negative, inappropriate, or unrealistic messages and images your child is exposed to.
- Teaching your child to take apart or "deconstruct" what they hear and see is a tool that will be invaluable to them throughout life.
- Talk about the fact that commercials are all trying to sell a product and that we should always be looking for the underlying message instead of taking things at face value.



ACTIVITIES

While watching television or shopping with your child, challenge him or her to pick out advertisements. As you examine them, teach your child to ask himself the following questions:

1. Who created the ad?
2. Who is the ad targeting (what age group or type of person?)?
3. What is the overall message of the ad?
4. Are there any underlying messages?
5. How does the ad make you feel?
Does the ad make me feel like I need the product?
That my life will be better with the product?
Does it make me question my values or standards? Is the ad ok for kids?
6. If there is a person in the ad, is he or she a realistic looking person?
7. Is this ad appropriate for kids?

Ads are increasingly being placed within television shows and movies. This is called “product placement” and can be a fun scavenger hunt-type of game for kids!

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- How often do you see ads? (Try counting all the ads you see in one day!)
- Do you think the people in the media look like the people we know in real life?
- What kind of unrealistic things have you seen in the media?

FOLLOWING UP

- Frequently point out images and messages in the media to your child and remind them that this is not a standard they or anyone else should hold themselves to.
- Be aware of ALL of the types media your children are taking in. (Online, TV, Ads in games they play, billboards, signs in the mall, etc).

- Learning to think critically about media will help your child when they are exposed to inappropriate types of media- they'll have the knowledge that media isn't an accurate representation of real life.
- This will not be a one-time discussion, you'll want to reiterate these principles continuously. This lesson will likely lead to other valuable discussions like media savvy kids, body image and self-esteem and self-worth, all of which can be found in ***30 Days of Sex Talks, Empowering Your Child with Knowledge of Sexual Intimacy*** (available on Amazon.com).

RELATED DISCUSSIONS

(which can be found in 30 Days of Sex Talks)

Being Media Savvy

Liking Yourself

Respecting Others

Self-worth/Self-esteem

GLOSSARY TERMS

Aspirational Character - A character aimed at or one who tries to appeal to people who want to attain a higher social position or unreachable goal, or standard of living.

Body Image - An individual's feelings regarding their own physical attractiveness and sexuality. These feelings and opinions are often influenced by other people and media sources.

Deconstructing an Image - Breaking down the image or message into separate parts. (Words, images, body language, tone). Examining those parts critically and determining their individual meanings.

Marketer - A person whose job is to promote, sell, or convince people to buy a product or service.

Media Literacy - The ability to analyze and evaluate media. People who are media literate can understand the messages they receive from radio, internet, television, magazines, books, billboards, video games, music and all other forms of media.

Self-Esteem/Self -Worth - An individual's overall emotional evaluation of their own worth. Self-esteem is both a judgment of the self and an attitude toward the self. More generally, the term is used to describe a confidence in one's own value or abilities.