What Is Objectification & Sexualization?

1. Objectification turns people's bodies into things or objects through images and language.

2. Sexualization emphasizes the sexuality or "sexiness" of a person's body to the exclusion of other characteristics.

3. Objectification and sexualization disproportionately target female bodies, but they are harmful to everyone.

Where Do We See/Experience Objectification & Sexualization?

VideoGames
Language
Music
SocialMedia
TVShows

Who Does It Effect?

Objectification and sexualization disproportionately affect female-bodied people (particularly female-bodied people of color), people who identify as LGBTQ, and anyone who does not fit the white, wealthy, young, thin, able bodied, cisgendered, and heterosexual "ideal" that is celebrated and promoted by mainstream culture.

"The perceived promiscuity of Black and Hispanic women, and the perceived submissiveness of Native American and Asian American women are among many stereotypes that devalue women of color and condone sexual violence committed against them. Women of color are often blamed for the sexual violence they suffer, and institutionalized racism and sexism among systems that respond to sexual violence discourage survivors of color from reporting their assaults and receiving the supportive services they deserve." **

References

* Media Contributions to African American Girls' Focus on Beauty and Appearance: Exploring the Consequences of Sexual Objectification

** Sexual Violence & Women of Color: A Fact Sheet
How Does Objectification & Sexualization Lead To Sexual Assault?

1. Youth are exposed to more images depicting sex and violence than ever before through widespread exposure to the internet and traditional forms of media like music, movies, TV, and video games.

2. These images sexualize minors, emphasize male aggressiveness and female passivity, and romanticize sexual violence.*

3. Studies show that brain circuits fire in the same way when we observe someone doing something as when we actually do it. Repeated exposure to violence and objectification through images normalizes those behaviors and desensitizes our brains to those behaviors. Objectification and sexualization contribute to exploitation due to their prevalence in pornography, prostitution, and trafficking.**

4. Boys who are exposed to media at a young age that encourages or normalizes objectification and sexualization are more likely to engage in sexually coercive behavior. Girls who are exposed to this media are more likely to be victims of sexually coercive behavior in their lifetime.***

References


Below are links to age-appropriate activities for children, adolescents, and adults that teach the prevalence of objectification and sexualization, the effect objectification and sexualization have on individuals, communities, and society, and media literacy skills.

**Activities for Grades K-5**
**Activities for Grades 6-8**
**Activities for Grades 9-12 and College Level/Young Adults**

**Key Resources:**
- Hypersexualization of Girls Resources
- Sexual Objectification Explained by YouTuber Laci Green
- Prevalence and Social Cost of Pornography
- "It's All One Curriculum" Activities
- Ted Talk: Why I Stopped Watching Porn
- How School Dress Codes Shame Girls and Perpetuate Rape Culture

**Contact Us**
- www.facebook.com/wcasa
- (608) 257-1516
- wcasa@wcasa.org
- twitter.com/wcasa_df
- 2801 West Beltline Highway Suite 202
  Madison, Wisconsin 53713

Images