Media Influences on the Adolescent

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Description

The purpose of this literature review paper is to report the effects of exposure to negative media and how behavioral issues, low self-esteem in regard to body image, and sexual activity are related adolescents' exposure to the media. To meet this purpose, we review and summarize findings from 10 empirical resources, including articles in scholarly journals and educational publications.

Aggressive Behaviors

❖Many interactive video games depict aggressive and violent behaviors. Studies show that users find the video games so real then relate the content to their lives by echoing the aggressive behaviors found in the media

❖Children who are exposed to violent media have a heightened chance to partake in social aggression and behavioral aggression

Negative Perception of Body Image

❖Body dissatisfaction is present in both sexes, but is overwhelming in the female adolescent

❖Girls are faced with the "Barbie-like" image at a very young age

❖In a culture of Botox, plastic surgery, and digital-retouching, the ideal look is distinctly unattainable for most women (Christians, 2009, p.157)

Sexual Conduct

❖The observable sexual conduct found in the media influences adolescence to portray the actions that they believe society wants them to practice

❖75% of primetime television programming contained sexual content with only 13% of the programming portraying risks and responsibilities associated with sexual behavior (Pinkleton, 2012, p.461)

Recommendations

❖Educators must teach adolescents to critically analyze media messages before accepting them by promoting and practicing media literacy in the classroom through discussions, debate, and critical thinking skills

❖Educators must have an understanding for the culture the adolescent is exposed to within the media

❖Students must practice critical thinking skills in order to become independent thinkers who can analyze the interpretations of the media on their own