



Body Image through the Media Lens

An Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in Mainstream Media

Workshop Summary

This workshop is designed to introduce children ages 11 through 16 to the idea that the media affects our impressions of our own body image. Participants will reflect on how they define beauty for themselves, and discuss how that definition is shaped by advertisers and the images of women in the media. Participants will also learn a little bit about techniques used by advertisers to make models look better than they do in real life, and will spend some time analyzing the covers of magazines to think critically about what they might find inside. In the final activity, participants will get to be in a photo shoot to project their perception of beauty and a healthy body image.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will reflect on their own ideas of beauty and positive body images
- Children will be able to identify industry tools & techniques used enhance or manipulate images used in advertisements
- Children will be able to think critically about images they see on magazine covers, and learn about attempts to hold some magazines to higher standards
- Children will create images of themselves expressing their own ideas about beauty and positive body images.

Introduction: “I Am Beautiful Because...” Activity

In this activity, participants reflect on the statement, “I am beautiful because...” Each participant completes the sentence on a note card. After the cards are all collected, responses are shared with the group.

Video Segment: “The Evolution of Beauty”

After watching the video, participants will have a better understanding of how much work goes into creating a certain look for a model – hair, make-up, lights, digital retouching, and more!

Discussion: Seventeen Magazine Body Peace Pledge

After reviewing the story of Julia Bluhm’s petition to *Seventeen*, the group must determine what the petition really accomplished and what changes *Seventeen* actually made.

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Reinforcement Activity: Cover Girls and Boys

Participants analyze several magazine covers from various men's and women's magazines. Sample critical thinking questions include:

- What kind of messages does this cover send about how girls/boys should look?
- What kinds of products do you think this magazine will advertise?
- How might a girl/boy feel about herself after looking at this magazine?
- Do you believe the image on the cover is accurate? How do you think it may have been digitally enhance?

Take it Home Activity: "I am Beautiful" Photo Shoot

Recalling the statement, "I am beautiful because..." from the beginning of the workshop, participants take turns creating their own image using various costumes and props. Each girl will have the chance to be the photographer, the lighting director, and the model.

All participants will leave with a printed copy of their photo!