

Lesson Three – Does the Media Affect (Sexual) Decision-Making?



Lesson Overview

This lesson gets students to understand the powerful effect that the media has on their minds and sexual decision-making.

Key Points

- The media can have an influence on sexual decision-making of adolescent teens.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, students will:

- Identify the effects of media on sexual decision-making and predict the potential consequences of not taking responsibility.
- Identify TV shows, movies, magazines, books and songs that contain sexual messages.
- Examine a magazine advertisement to determine possible underlying messages regarding sex.

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate class time
FOCUS: Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sex and Advertising</i> Slide Presentation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class discussion 2. Prepare to show <i>Sex and Advertising</i> slide presentation 	10 minutes
LEARN: The Media's Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Media Influence</i> worksheet • <i>Sex in Advertising</i> worksheet 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print/photocopy the <i>Media Influence</i> worksheet for each student 2. Print/photocopy the <i>Sex in Advertising</i> worksheet for each student 3. Collect and cut out advertisements that use sex to sell 	30 minutes
SUMMARIZE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class discussion 	5 minutes



Predict			
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Education Standards Supported

National Health Education Standards: 2.8.2; 2.8.5-7



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FOCUS: Media

10 minutes

Purpose:

This activity is a class discussion that gets students thinking about the various media they use daily and how they might be influenced by it regarding sexual views or behavior.

Materials:

- *Sex and Advertising* slide presentation

Facilitation Steps:

1. Collect the *What Do I Know about my Birthday?* worksheet from the previous day.
2. Ask the class what types of media they get information from on a daily basis.
3. Ask if they think the media influences their decisions or attitudes about sex.
4. Conduct a class discussing using the following information/steps:
 - *Does the media affect your decision making regarding sex?*
 - *Does Listening to music with sexual messages/word make teens more sexually active?*
 - Ask students to name some popular songs that have sexual undertones. List these on the board.
 - *Does watching TV shows and movies with sex scenes and sexual comments in them make teens more sexually active?*

Groundbreaking research suggests that pregnancy rates are much higher among teens who watch a lot of TV with sexual

dialogue and behavior compared with those who have tamer viewing tastes.

The study is the first to link those viewing habits with teen pregnancy, said lead author Anita Chandra, a Rand Corp. behavioral scientist. Teens who watch the raciest shows were twice as likely to become pregnant over the next three years as those who watched few such programs.

Participants studied were asked how often they watched any of more than 20 TV shows popular among teens at the time, and which were found to have lots of sexual content.

Chandra said TV watching was strongly connected with teen pregnancy when other factors were considered, including grades, family structure and parents' education level.

It found that children who watched the most sex-saturated television – defined as popular comedies and dramas on the major networks and on cable television were twice as likely to engage in sexual activity within the next year than those who reported a low level of television watching.

5. Show the *Sex and Advertising* slide presentation. Discuss the various examples and the influence each is trying to have.

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LEARN: The Media's Agenda

30 minutes

Purpose:

In this activity, students work in small groups to discuss the media's agenda. They also work in pairs to find and analyze examples of ads that contain subtle or blatant sexual references.

Materials:

- *Media Influence* worksheet
- *Sex in Advertising* worksheet

Facilitation Steps:

1. Hand out the *Media Influence* worksheet to each student.
2. Divide the class into teams of four (2 girls/2 guys). Have teams discuss and answer the 6 questions completely.
3. Reconvene as a large group and ask groups to share their thoughts.
4. Think/Pair/Share: Pass out magazine advertisements that have a sexual message to each student. Have students use the *Sex in Advertising* worksheet to answer questions about the advertisement they have been given.
5. Have students pair with another student and share their advertisement and discuss their answers. Have them compare views about each advertisement they were given, to see if they both have the same views, or if their partner has different insight into the given advertisement.
6. If time permits, have pairs share their advertisements and how they answered some of the questions on the worksheet.

Media Influence

Name: _____

Class: _____

Does the “Sex Appeal” in any one piece of media make teens more sexually active? How about all six combined?

◆ Music? ◆ TV? ◆ Movies? ◆ Magazine Ads? ◆ Books? ◆ Internet?

Media Influence

1. Is the media interested in giving you a true, balanced picture of what “sex” is all about? Why or why not?

2. What would you say is the media’s number one goal?

3. Think about how much time you spend each day on the following:

Books	_____ hours	_____ minutes
TV	_____ hours	_____ minutes
Radio/CDs	_____ hours	_____ minutes
Internet	_____ hours	_____ minutes
Movies	_____ hours	_____ minutes
Magazines	_____ hours	_____ minutes
<i>Total Time:</i>	_____ hours	_____ minutes

4. Considering your total media exposure, what effect do you think media images have on your attitudes about sex or on your behavior?

5. Do you think “sex” in the media affects you in any way? ____ Yes ____ No
If so, how?

6. Why do you suppose companies spend billions of dollars on “sex” in their music, movies, TV shows, magazines, books and internet ads?

The Media’s Magic Formula: **SEX SELLS!**

Sex → Viewers → Dollars = People Getting Rich

At what cost? Our minds?



Sex in Advertising

Name: _____

Class: _____

Directions:

Closely look at this advertisement in which “sex” is used to sell a product. Answer the questions below as they pertain to your ad. Examples: perfume ads, liquor ads, clothing ads, suntan lotion ads, etc.

1. What product is being sold?

2. Describe the physical background (setting) of your ad if there is one.

3. Describe the people in your ad.

4. Is any factual information about the product given? If so, what?

5. What image or message is the advertiser trying to get across with this ad?

6. According to the advertiser, what will this product supposedly do for you?

7. Why do you think “sex” was used to sell this product?



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SUMMARIZE: Predict

5 minutes

Purpose:

Students participate in a class discussion about what would happen if they either weren't exposed to sexually-related messages in the media or were able to block it out of their minds.

Materials:

- N/A

Facilitation Steps:

1. To summarize this lesson, conduct a class discussion asking students to predict what may happen to their values, morals, beliefs, and decision-making process if they either weren't exposed to sexually-related messages in the media or were able to block it out of their minds. Jot responses on the board for each category: values, morals, beliefs, decision-making process.