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Hypersexualized: The Scary Trend in Children's Dance

NASHVILLE, Tenn. Feb. 25, 2020 — Over the last decade, children have become increasingly hypersexualized through dance at younger and younger ages. Instead of age appropriate choreography, young children are being taught movement that exploits and sexualizes them with erotic moves, adult costumes and mature, sexually charged songs. Over 100 global reports have highlighted the negative effects sexualization has on the healthy development of children, some of which include body dysmorphia, eating disorders, and poor academic performance.

"Most parents don't realize just how much their kids are being sexualized," commented Mary Bawden, Founder of DA:NCE (Dance Awareness No Child Exploited). "Our culture is inundated with sexualized messages and imagery. And now it has entered what used to be a safe place - children's dance."

Recent research shows that most girls – as young as 6-years old – are beginning to think of themselves as sex objects. According to the National Dance Education Organization's Research Journal, released in 2019, research supports that sexualized dance routines for pre-pubescent girls are age-inappropriate and potentially harmful. Additionally, the American Psychological Association's recent report on the sexualization of girls says that the effects on children are unhealthy and damaging. Ample evidence testing sexualization theories indicates that sexualization has negative effects in a variety of domains, including cognitive functioning, physical and mental health, sexuality and attitudes and beliefs.

"Dance leaders, parents, and concerned adults need to take action," remarked Bawden. "Educate yourself. Demand that the people teaching children dance use choreography that is age appropriate. And we need all adults to stop glamorizing sexual costumes, music, and movement for kids."

DA:NCE is one organization on the front lines working to protect children from hypersexualization in dance. The organization travels nationally speaking about the issue, and has created a library of free resources that parents and concerned adults can leverage in bringing awareness to this issue.

"It's time for adults to wake up," said Bawden. "Pay attention. Understand how this impacts your children. And don't accept how our society is sexualizing kids."

For more information, including free resources to learn more and take action, visit www.danceawareness.com.

About DA:NCE: In children's dance classes around the nation, young children are learning to dance with choreography that hypersexualizes them and their bodies. DA:NCE is committed to raising awareness around this issue while providing free resources for dance teachers, parents, and concerned adults who want to take a stand against the sexualization of children in dance.

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