



Why we need to bring awareness and educate dance studios to stop adult, sexual choreography, lyrics and costumes for children

Written by: Mary Bawden, Local Petition Creator

I love dance. I have a degree in modern dance from UCRiverside. I am highly trained in the Cecchetti method of ballet. I love to see movement communicate on the heart level. It is effective communication that transforms. Every year I go to dance studio recitals to enjoy movement and choreography, and to support young dancers that I know. Last June was no different. I went to several local dance studios – and that turned out to be both good and bad. Good because I sometimes saw the beauty of dance reflected in some wonderful ways, but also bad because I saw how dance can be distorted to produce disturbing images.

During the dances involving children under 12, I often saw little girls dressed in adult costumes with makeup and hair choices designed to present them in adult-themed choreography with adult songs. I watched these dances with a sick stomach. Of course, this deformity goes beyond dance studios. I remember seeing a media video of 8-year-old girls dancing to Beyonce's "Single Ladies" filmed during a dance competition with plenty of gyration and bikini-like dance costumes. I have also watched shows on television with children dancing to adult themes, and have been appalled by the clothing choices displayed in many mainstream shopping malls.

The article, "The Sexualization of Children and Adolescents Epidemic," points out the alarming trend that is becoming reality for our parents and their young children. The article states, "If you don't believe me, just try and go shopping for children's clothes and underwear that aren't too tight, body-fitting, low-cut, too short, "sexy," with messages and sexualized images that say things like "eye candy," "So many boys, So little time," "Who needs credit cards," "Mr. Pimp," and "Mr. Well-Hung" all while hearing your little prince or princess repeat song lyrics like "Don't cha wish your girlfriend was hot like me," "so blow me bitch," "I rock for topless dancers," and "I tell hoes all the time, bitch get in my car." ([Source](#))

The article continues: “Adult choices have put little girls (and little boys) into multifaceted situations that objectify and sexualize them long before that they should have to be aware of and/or deal with these issues. “Hot Tots” and “Prostitots” are just two of the descriptive urban slang terms being used to describe girls who dress like tarts, as today’s tarted-up society teaches young girls as young as 4 and 5 that body image and looking like sexy Lolitas is important, even before reaching the tween years.”

And while the trend continues to glamorize the sexualization of young children, research shows how dangerous this mentality is. As quoted in the same article, the author states, “Sadly, some people just don’t “get it.” Some people, including parents, view the sexualization of children as something of minor importance, while the American Psychological Association report concluded that young boys and girls are growing up to view themselves as sex objects and are more likely to experience poor self-image, eating disorders, depression, academic failure in school, low self-confidence, with increased likelihood of engaging in sexual activity at a very young age, due to the fact that girls who look older tend to attract more attention from boys.” ([Source](#))

Let’s stop this trend.

At an early age, young children are often being taught how to approach relationships and how to approach intimacy in the wrong way. The art of dance should not be used to divert young children from healthy sexual development. We need to carefully evaluate the cultural choices that entice children to be viewed as adults. We need to produce healthy boundaries in dance so that little girls and boys are protected relationally. Then, when they experience the beauty of dance, they can move as young children, not as adults. Let’s make a difference by starting a petition in your community. Your advocacy can help us raise awareness and give a voice to end the sexualization of young children through adult choreography, costumes and music.

Start your petition now and make a difference!

Dance studios: Stop adult, sexual costumes, choreography and music for children



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