



19 June 2012

Media Release

Children growing up in a highly sexualised media environment: experts call for action

On Thursday June 21, The Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM) will present an important seminar called **Too Much Too Soon: guiding your child through a sexualised world**.

ACCM president Elizabeth Handsley says 'this seminar has been developed in response to the high level of concern expressed by parents, teachers and health professionals in regard to children growing up in a highly sexualised media environment. People want to know the extent of the problem, what research there is on these issues and how they can minimise the pressures on children as they grow up'.

Professor Handsley also deplored the lack of action in support of parents on these issues. She continued 'The government needs to take a proactive stance and not leave these matters in the hands of industry'.

ACCM will present three expert speakers on these issues:

Melinda Tankard Reist, author and co-founder of the grassroots campaigning movement, Collective Shout will discuss **the impact of sexualising children and what we can do about it** by presenting a visual 'tour' of almost 200 images from popular culture, and exploring the way these messages shape and mould young women's ideas of themselves, their bodies, and their relationships. Her presentation will help us help girls rise above the airheaded cult of celebrity, fashion and outward appearance and discover their true value and worth.

Dr Wayne Warburton, a lecturer in developmental psychology with the Department of Psychology and Deputy Director of the Children and Families Research Centre at Macquarie University (Sydney) will present on **Music, music videos and their effects on sexual thoughts, feelings and behaviours** by giving a brief review of research findings related to the effect of music and music videos with sexual content and an examination of their effect on thoughts, feelings and levels of arousal, and how these effects may influence actual sexual behaviour in both the short and long term.

Lesley-Anne Ey, early childhood researcher from UniSA will present the results from her recent studies on the sexualised content of music videos shown in PG rating time slots on free to air television. She will also discuss her observations made at primary school discos that focused on how children present in a school disco context.

The final part of the seminar will include a panel discussion with all speakers, chaired by ABC 891 Sonya Feldhoff, on parenting strategies and how to take action on these issues in the community.

A full program can be found at www.childrenandmedia.org.au and bookings can be made at www.trybooking.com/BKFM. The seminar will be held on Thursday, June 21, 2012 at Immanuel College, Novar Gardens, Adelaide at 7:30pm.

ACCM is a unique national community organisation, which strives for a media environment that supports the health, safety and wellbeing of Australian children. It is committed to promoting healthy choices and stronger voices in children's media.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please email admin@youngmedia.org.au or call on (08) 8376 2111 or 0434 146 096. Media passes are also available for this seminar.

Promoting healthy choices and stronger voices in children's media

Australian Council on Children and the Media (incorporating Young Media Australia)
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