



LIFEGUARD YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®



GUARD YOUR HEART

GUARD YOUR MIND

GUARD YOUR BODY

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The Media: An Influential Force



The media and its influences are all around us; this is nothing new. All day long we are bombarded by images and ideas advertising what we should want, and how we should be. Teenagers are often the target of media campaigns, and they reach out to teens through the TV and the internet. In fact, the average teen will see over 14,000 sexual references each year! Parents and educators need to be aware of the tremendous influence and prevalence of the media, not to dishearten them, but to encourage them to talk with their kids. Set boundaries and standards emphasizing your own expectations for your child. Everyday they are getting mixed messages and misinformation from the media; they need to hear the truth from YOU!

Television

The average American teen watches about 3 hours of TV each day. This fact alone makes it a powerful method of socialization, and, unfortunately, TV can distort reality. Of the TV shows viewed by teen audiences, *83% have sexual content!* If a teen continually sees dysfunctional relationships portrayed as normal or sexual activity without consequences, they may begin to internalize those images. That's why it is increasingly important for parents and educators to give teens the truth, set realistic boundaries and talk to them about the difference between what they see on TV and reality. To emphasize the importance of this, a recent study found that teens with high levels of exposure to rap videos, which often promote drug use, violence and sex, are:

- 3xs more likely to have hit a teacher
- 2.5xs more likely to have been arrested
- 2xs more likely to have multiple sex partners
- more than 1.5xs more likely to contract an STD

Internet

Today's teenagers are more connected than any generation before them, and the internet is what makes it all possible. Teens are using the internet to chat, post pictures, stay connected, and search for information. While most teens will say that they are cautious about the information that they do find, *44% of youth have searched the internet for sexual health information.* This means that they are looking for answers to questions about their sexual health. If they don't talk with you about it, they will look elsewhere.

Parents - Be Encouraged!

What you say can make a difference; 91% of teens (ages 15-17) who have not had sex, said that they were influenced by what their parents have taught them about sex. The media is prevalent and powerful, but remember, what you say and do matters to your teen!



Sex, Contraception and the Media, American Academy of Pediatrics, committee on public education, January 2001.
 "Sex on TV 3," January 2003, The Kaiser Family Foundation.
 Generation Rx.com" December 2001, The Kaiser Family Foundation.
 A prospective study of exposure to rap music video and African American female adolescents' health, Wingood GM et al. American Journal of Public Health, 2003.

Remember—The New Sexual Revolution!

Keith Deltano is coming to Kansas City! To end his time here with a bang we will be hosting a **FREE** event for teens and parents, on **Friday May 9**. Keith will give his comedy presentation, *The New Sexual Revolution*, about abstinence until marriage. Afterwards, he will conduct his candid parent workshop, *Keeping Your Kid a Virgin 101*, while the hip hop dance group, *Level Five*, takes the stage. Free food provided from 6 - 7pm, and teens with a parent or guardian present will be eligible to **win one of 2 iPod nanos, or free movie tickets.**

For more information call: 816-836-8336
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