

MEDIA MESSAGES is a '*Community Awareness Program*' that was developed by Crisis Connection, Inc. in cooperation with agencies as Girl Scout of Raintree Council, University of Evansville Department of Communication, and University of Southern Indiana.

This workshop/presentation is focused on how media impacts our society's attitudes, relationships & behavior in regard to issues of sexism, power, control and violence. It speaks to the effects of media (television, advertising, computer, etc.) on our community; particularly, our children.

This can be adapted to audience needs – time, age, and focus. Our agency also has an interactive game on understanding how media targets our culture.

Five Key Questions To Ask Yourself:

1. Who created this message?
2. What techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently from me?
4. What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?
5. Why was this message sent?

Five Core Concepts To Remember:

1. *All media messages are constructed.*
2. *Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.*
3. *Different people experience the same message differently.*
4. *Media have embedded values and points of view.*
5. *Media messages are constructed to gain profit and/or power.*

Taken from: Center for Media Literacy, www.medialit.org
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Start Analyzing For Yourself:

1. VISIT A TOY DEPARTMENT. Differences in toys and games for boys and girls represent another example of institutionalized sexism, particularly in the advertisement and marketing of these toys. In fact, images of men/boys and women/girls on the packaging of toys can be stereotypical as toy manufacturers often appeal to social constructions of 'male' and 'female' when targeting their products to a mass audience. Taking a cue from the television and film industries, toy manufacturers often employ sexist images in their marketing and packaging.

Why does 'Barbie' come with toy penthouses and beauty shops while 'GI Joe' accessorizes with rifles, flamethrowers and attack vehicles? Don't forget to consider the kinds of toys that you preferred when you were little too.

2. CREATE ADVERTISING PARODIES. Find ads that typify stereotypical images of men and women. Then exaggerate the 'unrealness' of these images.

Watch television commercials and make them more true to life in a skit!

3. EXPLORE GENDER ISSUES IN TOBACCO/ALCOHOL ADVERTISING. The impact of sexism goes far beyond portraying men as jocks and women as bimbos. What if sexist illusions lure us with products that are dangerous and addictive?

Tobacco and alcohol advertising is notoriously gender based and plays to fears and insecurities that reinforce sex-role stereotyping.

4. CHECK OUT TEEN MAGAZINES. What messages are they trying to get you to buy into? Are you willing to be told how to dress/act/feel based on them?

I fight like a girl who refuses to be a victim.
I fight like a girl who's tired of being
IGNORED and HUMORED and BEATEN and RAPED.

I fight like a girl who's sick
of not being taken seriously.

I fight like a girl who's been pushed too far.

I fight like a girl who **OFFERS** and
DEMANDS RESPECT.

I fight like a girl who has a lifetime of
ANGER and **STRENGTH** and **PRIDE**
pent up in her girly body.

I fight like a girl who doesn't believe in
FEAR and **SUBMISSION.**

I fight like a girl who knows that
THIS BODY and **THIS MIND** are mine.

I fight like a girl who knows that

**YOU ONLY HAVE AS MUCH POWER
AS I GRANT YOU.**

I fight like a girl who will never allow you
to take more than I offer.

I fight like a girl who **FIGHTS BACK.**

**So next time you think you can distract
yourself**

**from your insecurities by victimizing a girl,
THINK AGAIN.**

She may be ME and

I FIGHT LIKE A GIRL.

Poem written by a girl in Australia. Poster ©1999 by Sticker Sisters™, PO Box 11460, Takoma Park, MD 20913. www.stickersisters.com

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