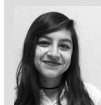# Stopping The Sex Stress

Ending Sexual Pressure Should be a Priority for Public Education Systems, Peers, Parents

by editor
Delilah Rivera

It can be heard in the hallways, on television, in the lyrics of songs and on the news as the latest scandals. It can be heard everywhere.

Teenagers live in a society that puts a spotlight on sex.

Faced with the pressures of conformity and social acceptance, teenagers find themselves giving in to uncomfortable situations rather than taking the time to think through the emotional, physical and even social consequences of sexual relations.

Teenagers should realize using peer pressure to get others to be sexually active is not okay and that one do not need to partake in sexual activities to be socially accepted.

Almost on a daily basis, teens deal with peer and social pressure from friends and media. It becomes easy for some students to get caught up in their reputation. To seem cool or relevant, especially in the first few years of high school, some students say things they don't really mean and do things they don't really want to do. Sometimes, this involves building an image of sex promiscuity.

Some younger teens don't realize that a reputation that may seem cool freshman year can be the total opposite by senior year.

According to a publication by Parent Further, 28% of students surveyed said that giving into peer pressure ended up improving their social status. However, being called cool or experienced can backfire and end up becoming derogatory and degrading. Just like a positive reputation can bring good effects later in life, a negative reputation can build to bad effects, including bullying, depression and anxiety.

A study published by Psychology Today says that one in three boys between the ages 15-17 say they feel pressure to have sex, often from their male peers. And, many teens, especially boys, feel pressure to have sex before they are ready. While 63% of teens think it's a good idea to wait, few actually do, and peer pressure is usually the major factor.

Beyond friend and social stress, teenagers
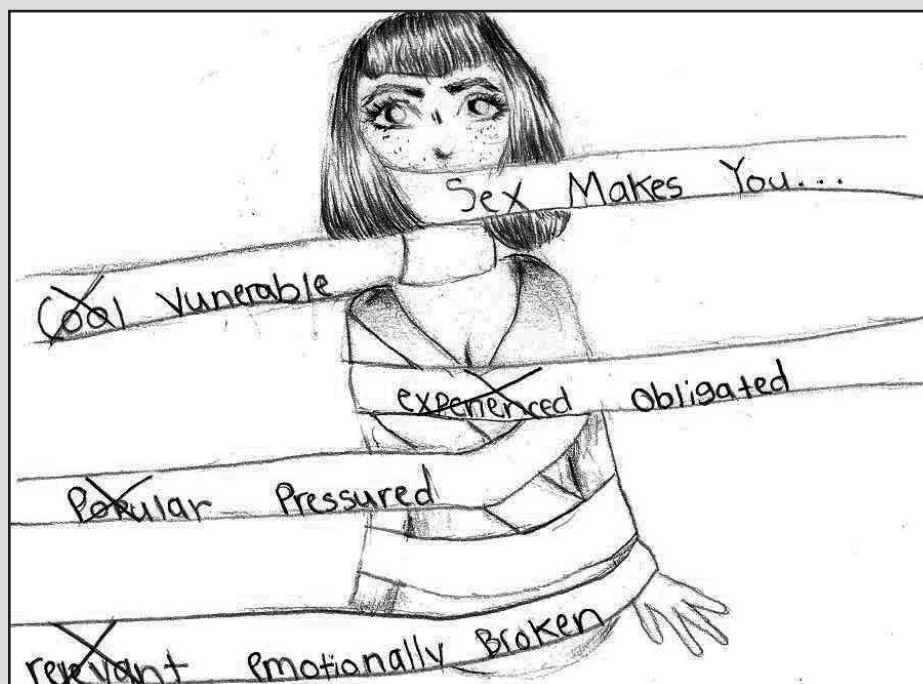
art by Izabella Solis

usually feel pressure within relationships to engage in sexual activity before they are ready. It becomes the norm to quickly give it up simply because they are in a relationship. This should not be the case. One obvious consequence can be unplanned pregnancy from a lack of protection and knowledge. Less obvious are social and emotional issues and health consequences such as STDs.

Teens fail to realize that peer pressure and the thought that "everyone else is sexually active so I should be too" can end up leading to extreme consequences like cases of sexual assault and acquaintance rape. According to RAIIN.org, approximately 4 of 5 rape cases are caused by someone who the victim knows, while 47% are acquaintances and 25% are intimate partners.

It's well known that peer pressure can lead to risky behavior, but unlike the pressure and behavior of drinking and using substances, teen sexuality is less reported. Because there are two social viewpoints on teen sexuality, making

intercourse both acceptable and taboo, teens are scared to say anything for fear of trouble or they don't say anything because they feel like it is no big deal.

For a variety of reasons, schools have programs that address risky behaviors like drugs, alcohol and texting and driving, but teen sexuality is less discussed.

Schools need to include more programs addressing teen sexuality. From assemblies and small group discussions to requiring incoming freshmen to take a health class or attend a session where sexuality is discussed, schools need to make sure students get a proper education on peer pressure and sex.

With help from the school, teens can start considering that no one should feel obligated or pressured to engage in sexual activity if they do not want to or do not feel ready. After gaining more knowledge, teens will be able to see that while sex may seem cool at the time, it can lead to serious consequences that may not be reversible.

Letters to the editor

The heart of athletics

"The student [athletes in football] show respect to each other's beliefs and religion. There are no racial problem between students and even adults.

Football is what I love to do what and I get to show off my skills to college scouts. I get to prove people that said I couldn't make it. It's not always about football, but we also get to learn more about life and build as a person. We are not just people who play football together we are a family."

Junior **Jared Young**

Club opportunities

"I also love how the school has so many options of clubs and different opportunities at doing things we love. It helps me show my skills and talent off to my friends and others.

[Also, I'd like to say] I love the school's volleyball team because they're so competitive. They never give up on each other when it comes to a loss and the team only tries to get better. The team is a family and stays together. It was a really hard season, but we still are happy at what we have done."

Freshmen **Emory Alvarado**

Challenges of tryouts

"I don't like how we can't try out for another sport because we already have practice for another sport at the same time as try outs. We can only try out if we are passing all classes at that time of tryouts

[On another note], We've come along way to become who we are today on the football team and all of the coaches show love and respect to our team. We got to show the ones who said we could not make it wrong, and Blue Crew helped us prove them wrong.."

Senior **Michael Scroggins**

Looking Beyond the Screen

Social media's portrayal of beauty causes self hate, unrealistic desires in regards to body image

by staff reporter
Izabella Solis

There are 7.21 billion people on this planet as of today. Of those 7.21 billion people, there are over 3 billion active Internet users. Of those 3 billion users, 2.1 billion of them are checking social media every single hour.

It's strange to think about, but from those many, many users, millions of posts and images are uploaded in a single day. Somewhere in between all those numbers, social media has become what we think, breathe and live. And studies show that it's killing us.

In 2013, Flinders University study concluded that the more time girls spent on social media, the more likely they were to be dissatisfied with their body image and experience low self-esteem. For instance, teens on Instagram ask for feedback on their posts, rates on their looks and advice on how to improve their self appeal to others. Whether the answers are even true or not, the feeback that these girls receive either crushes them or boosts them up.

When responses come back negative, the effects can be detrimental to teens emotional and physical health. In fact, new studies suggest that social media and eating disorders have a direct link. According to Common

photo by Rebeccah Macias

Sense Media's body-image study, teens who are active online worry more about how they're perceived, and a study by the Keep it Real Campaign found that 80 percent of 10-year-old American girls have been on a diet.

Many would argue that social media is a

fun, collective and inspiring way to connect. However, it can cause young people with body image issues to feel worse about themselves. It's not even the magazines or the commercials that change teens' esteem anymore. It's teenage interaction and communication through over-glamorous posts on social media that causes some to stop loving themselves.

Social media causes unexpected self-hate. There's no way to solve his problem, unless teens understand that what they see on their phone screen is not the only thing that's beautiful. Outside Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, there is something much spectacular that's waiting to surface.