

# Sexism, Sexualisation and Sexual Bullying

Do we need to be  
concerned?

# Sexual Bullying-What is it?

- NUT defines it as:
- 'Behaviour, language or prejudice which expresses institutionalised, systemic and comprehensive discrimination. It is based on a stereotypical view of masculine and feminine roles. Sexism limits the options of women and girls and can lead to favourable discrimination or less favourable treatment. It is learned behaviour however and can therefore be unlearned'

# Examples of sexual bullying/sexist incidents include

- Abusive, sexualised name calling
- Unwelcome looks and comments about someone's appearance, attractiveness either face to face or to others
- Spreading rumours of a sexual nature
- Inappropriate or uninvited touching
- Inappropriate sexual innuendo and/or proposition
- Graffiti with sexual content
- Display/circulation of inappropriate material of a sexual nature
- Badges or clothing depicting inappropriate sexual innuendo or language
- In its most extreme form sexual assault or rape

# Who does it happen to?

- Mostly to girls
- Although gender based /homophobic bullying can happen to boys as well
- It is acknowledged that sexual bullying in schools is underreported. We know this from comparing the data with national surveys (which are usually anonymous)
- Girls don't often recognise sexual bullying when its happening to them or their friends

- The Sugar/NSPCC reader's poll in 2006 revealed that nearly half (45%) of teenage girls surveyed had had their bottom groped against their wishes. 56% of unwanted sexual experiences occurred for the first time when girls were under 14. 51% of unwanted sexual experiences occurred more than once and left girls feeling dirty (47%), ashamed/guilty (39%), angry (34%), powerless (30%), and frightened (27%).

# Young women and male violence

- The highest proportion of reported rapes are from under 18's (Making the grade? 2006, pg.41)
- Girls 16+ experience domestic violence 1 in 4 (Bliss/WAFE Survey 2008)
- Quarter of teenage girls forced into sexual activity (Bliss/WAFE Survey 2008)

# Young people as victims and perpetrators of sexual violence

- The youth justice board reported a 20 per cent rise in the in the number of children being given court orders and warnings for sex offences, up from 1,664 in 02/03 to 1,988 in 06
- Home office figures show a rise in the number of under 13's who have been raped. In 2005 1,752 children under 13 were sexually abused or raped- 484 more than in 2004. For young people aged between 13 and 16, there were 3,334 cases of reported rape in 2005.

# Learning for the future?

- Researchers in the US, Canada and Africa have argued that school sexual violence may be linked to violence against women in later life... 'Girls are taught that they are on their own, that the adults and others around them will not help or believe them: in essence they are trained to accept the battery and assault... Boys on the other hand receive permission, even training, to become batterers because many of their assaults on girls are not interrupted or condemned by adults in the school environment.' US researcher Nancy Stein (1995)



# Where does it happen?

- Can be covert
- Corridors, classrooms, playground
- Through the use of technology (mobile phones, email, msn) to directly bully and indirectly through downloading pornography

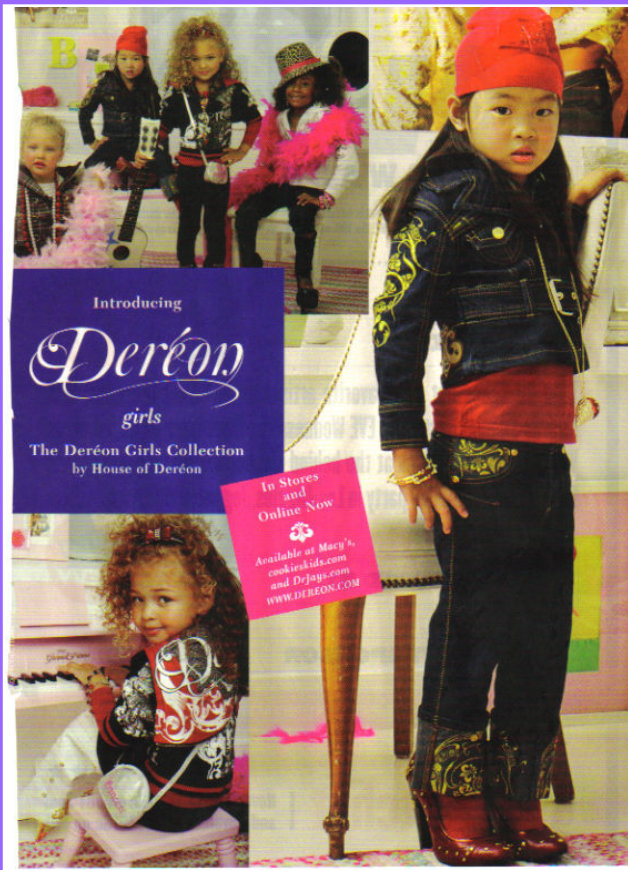
# Scenario's

Sexual bullying or  
not?

# Why does it happen?

- Gender Socialisation- giving boys a sense of male entitlement to girls and women's bodies and sexuality
- Lack of choice- boys and girls not being offered alternative versions of masculinity and femininity
- Sexualisation/'pornification' of mainstream culture

# The culture grooms young girls to accept a 'pornified' sexuality



Rape Crisis (Wyo  
South Bucks)

# Young boys



Rape Crisis (Wycombe, Chiltern and  
South Bucks)

# What can we do?

- Challenge sexist language & name-calling
- Address gender stereotyping, sexualisation of culture, pornography and sexual bullying in PHSE, SRE
- 'porn free zone'-clothing, badges and magazines

- Showcase positive female role models in all subjects
- Make sure sexist bullying is included in whole-school Anti-Bullying Policy
- Provide opportunities for pupils to report sexist bullying

# Use existing legislation

- GED-gender equality duty
- DCSF guidance
- Anti-bullying legislation



Any Questions?