

Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls

What do you think when you see an advertisement on TV, or in a magazine, or on the back of a bus that shows a woman's torso (often without a face) dressed only in flimsy lingerie? What do you do when your 8 year old daughter tells you she needs to get a crop top bra because other girls in her grade have one? How do you feel when your 6 year old daughter is watching music clips on Rage and copying the dancers' moves?

For most families a word containing 'sex' sitting next to the word 'girls' generates a strong reaction. The book *GETTING REAL – Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls*, edited by Melinda Tankard Reist, taps into that strong reaction and asks of us as parents to stand against this 'Sexualisation'.

However, the reality is that most of us are unaware of how this is happening all around us, in advertising, in magazine articles, in TV shows, even in the children's fashion industry. Being unaware of it makes it impossible to stop something from happening.

The editor of this book, Melinda Tankard Reist, is a Canberra author, speaker, commentator, blogger and advocate for women and girls. She has compiled articles detailing how this sexualisation happens, its potential impacts on our girls specifically, and the effects on society in the long term. Fortunately, there are also chapters telling us how to do the challenging.

This is an emotive topic that is confronting to face, but after reading this book you may be even more motivated than before to take some small action.

By Tauba Naftal - Student Counsellor