

Why are talent shows bad for children?

Fill in the gaps with the words from the box:

distortion choke kickstart callous generate fluke

1. Too much practice ruins a good childhood

Michael Jackson spent his entire adult life trying to re-live his childhood, which was sadly filled with practices and performances. Every parent wants their child to shine, the ones with prodigies even more so. But parents need to remember that their children also need time to just be regular children and be allowed to do fun stuff with their friends.

2. Competition adds unnecessary stress

Though a little healthy completion is always good for children, the kind of pressure a child is exposed to be the best and beat the rest at such an early age can be devastating and life altering if the child fails. Sometimes even the truly gifted can 1) _____ on national television from the pressure to perform and get it “just right” for the sceptical and often 2) _____ panel of judges. Very soon the dream turns into a nightmare as young aspirants are facing judgement not just from the show critics but from the world at large and to say that can be a humbling experience is to understate the enormity of pressure they encounter. This experience can leave consequences on the self-esteem and confidence of minors, affecting their emotional well-being in the long term.

3. The limelight - too soon?

Many opposers of TV talent shows will argue that a show like X Factor is the wrong way to 3) _____ a career in music. Traditionally, artists started at the bottom and worked their way up, working long and hard hours with little reward, driven by passion and huge determination. Of course, there would always be artists who would sail to the top by means of a lucky 4) _____, but for the most part, success was finally ‘making it’ after a long, dedicated struggle. Not so with the winners of modern-day TV talent shows. Winners are thrust into the public eye with very little warning or preparation. Even for the most balanced, grounded individual on earth, this would be quite a challenge to handle. Constant media and public attention can put additional pressure on children to maintain a perfect image and meet the expectations of others. This can lead to a 5) _____ of self-perception and a constant search for external validation.

4. Exploitation and commodification of childhood

Another worrying aspect of children's talent shows is the exploitation and commodification of childhood that they can promote. These programs often turn children into entertainment products, using their talent and image to 6) _____ audiences and economic benefits. This objectification of minors turns them into objects of consumption and can have negative consequences on their psychological and emotional development.