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SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



ODIA CONTENT ON OTT SPACE

A Reality Check

P
3,4 COVER STORY



Emerging glamour girl of Odia film industry Suryamayee Mohapatra, who is now basking in the success of her last movie 'Daalcheeni', loves to spend quality time with Silver, her quadruped child



A still from her movie Samapaju Ra Raghu

K-drama addiction

Lately, I have become addicted to Korean dramas. Often, I spend sleepless nights during the weekend to enjoy them. Besides, I also explore movies of different languages and genres to improve my acting skills.

Busting health myths

There have been a lot of misconceptions and myths around women doing weight training. Vigorous weight training makes women look masculine, it is believed. I find such notions wrong. Moreover, I have managed to get a toned physique through weight training.

Spending time with pet

Spending time with my pet dog Silver is my favourite pastime. I take care of him and go for a walk with Silver on non-working Sundays.

Virtual meet with BFF

My sister Swati Mohapatra, a designer, is my BFF with whom I share my secrets. As she lives in Dubai, physically visiting her is not possible. So we chat for long hours on video calls on Sundays. Needless to say, I mostly wear clothes designed by her.



With her pet Silver

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes received to: features.orissapost@gmail.com And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Sometimes I wish I were an octopus, so I could slap eight people at once.
- Three words more beautiful for a married woman than I LOVE YOU are 'No Cooking Today'.
- When I die, I want my grave to offer free Wi-Fi so people will visit more often.
- Women's apology: I'm sorry, but it was your fault.

LAUDABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Dear Sir, Your Republic Day cover story 'Basking in brilliance'(Jan 23) was a good read and highly inspirational. The three different personalities highlighted in the write-up are making an effective impact on the society through their individual endeavours in their respective fields. The special concern of Mrs World Navdeep Kaur for educating 1,000 girls and devoting time for teaching autistic children is highly praiseworthy. Acclaimed filmmaker Amartya Bhattacharyya has made the country proud with his innovative celluloid creation *Adieu Godard*, a tribute to the legendary French New Wave film director, which has earned him widespread critical acclaim in the international film circuit. Kamala Kanta Nayak, the differently-abled wheelchair-borne marathoner and basketball player deserves compliments for his perseverance and indomitable courage in overcoming his physical limitations.

AMIT BANERJEE , NEW DELHI

LETTERS

A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Please send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to features.orissapost@gmail.com B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948

ODIA CONTENT ON OTT SPACE

A REALITY CHECK

While content creators in several regional languages have managed to make their presence felt on streaming platforms, their counterparts in Odisha are yet to catch up with the OTT boom

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

The OTT space in India is growing like never before. With the theatres operating in half of their capacities, people now turn to the streaming platforms to get their regular dose of entertainment. The pandemic, which shows no sign of abatement any time soon, has made viewers more accustomed and reliable on OTT space. No wonder, we have now nearly 40 streaming platforms in India who have created a niche for themselves. From regional contents, documentaries and short-films to international movies, online streaming services have enabled audiences to explore new cultures through diverse contents.

Content creators in several regional languages like Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi and Bengali have managed to take their slices of the pie. However, filmmakers, back home, are yet to catch up with the OTT boom. **Sunday POST** talked to a few filmmakers, actors and a couple of local OTT services providers to ascertain the reasons behind



classical language of India. I am sure the OTT platforms have a good market in Odisha and the Odia speaking community, so it should not be too difficult for them to keep their doors open.”

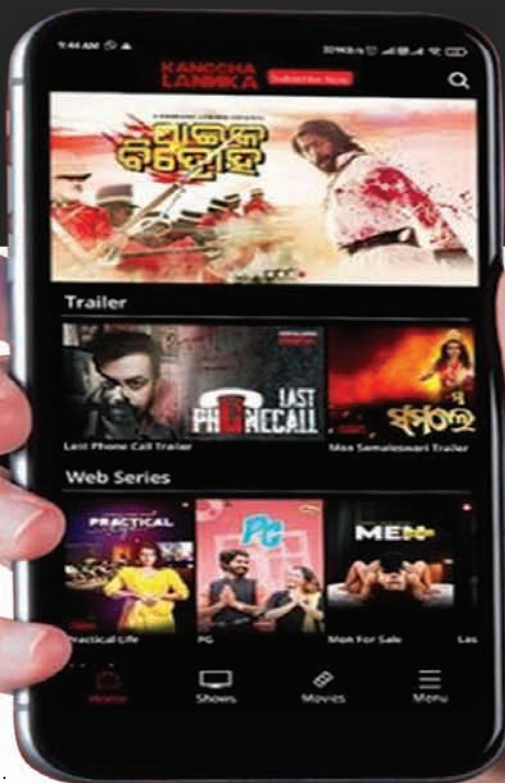
“I am very hopeful that Odia films will soon be seen on major OTT platforms, not just across the world, but also here in India,” concluded an optimistic Amartya.

Documentary filmmaker **Pranab Kumar Aich**, who has about 30 national and international awards to his name, says the films made these days lack quality content which is a major reason they aren't picked by the streaming platforms.

Besides, most OTT platforms are looking at bigger markets and Odia films are not up to their expectations. Not too many subscribers also seek Odia movies as they are skeptical about Odia content creators' ability to churn out good content. Even the Odia subscribers prefer to watch popular cinema of other languages than Odia, adds Aich.

Volume of production also matters a lot, believe the director of *City's Step Child*.

“OTT platforms mostly look for volume of works for specific language categories which they get in Bengali and Telugu languages. Even if we make a few good content once in a while, they



are not enough to meet the requirements

of the streaming platforms,” says Pranab who is looking forward to release his upcoming documentary films *Torch*, *Manayun*, *Nanda Master nka Chatasali* and *Rasagola Eka Mitha Juddha* on OTT space.



the lack of visibility of Odia content on OTT space. On Odia films' lack of visibility on streaming platforms, acclaimed filmmaker **Amartya Bhattacharya**, whose two films *Khyanikaa - The Lost Idea*, and *Capital I* were on Amazon Prime worldwide, says, “I think it has to do with the policies of OTT services providers. In India, Amazon Prime supports only nine Indian languages, and Odia is not among them. I can only hope that major OTT platforms become a little more welcoming to all languages, especially to Odia, a



Award winning filmmaker **Snehasis Das** is known for conveying a strong social message through his documentaries and short films like *Ghar Jaana Hai*, *Spandanam*, *Kokoli* and music video *Mu Sei Kalinga*. He says, "Meaning of original content varies from one filmmaker to another. Some filmmakers copy others' style and content without inhibition. In the name of 'trend', they forget our own culture, lifestyle, and the stories of our soil. But they must understand that viewers living outside want to watch original Odia stories, not poor remake of other languages. We are unable to present genuine Odia content to the viewers even as we have the best of technicians, actors, storytellers and directors with us. As we fail to create original content, no wonder, we are not visible on streaming platforms."

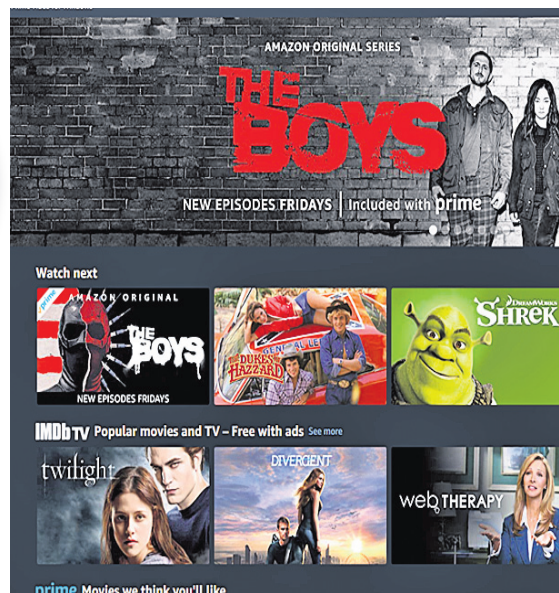
Subrajit Pradhan, producer of *The Mountain Hockey* which was the first ever Odia documentary film to be streamed on OTT platforms like MXPlayer and Disney +Hotstar, maintains, "The primary reason is Odia people don't watch Odia movies at single theatres, multiplexes or through online streaming services as the content don't excite them. Besides, giant OTT platforms always focus on content in bulk to retain their subscriber base which they don't get in case of Odia films. This apart, when a new filmmaker tries to offer something fresh, he is always compared to his counterparts of Hindi, Telugu languages. This puts more pressure on him to deliver."

Young minds deliver when they get the required support from the industry as well as the viewers, says Pradhan.

The success of *The Mountain Hockey*, which premiered in five countries including France and Germany, is a case in point. "Some young talents from Odisha like Brajaraj, Avinash, Debasish and Raj put in their best to take Odia movies to international OTT platforms. Such Odia talents who have the passion, exposure and dreams can become the gamechangers. However, they need all round support to scale new highs," adds Pradhan.

Actor **Partha Sarathi Ray** says, "Controversy erupted after Amartya Bhattacharya's *Khyanikaa* was taken off air by Amazon Prime India after streaming for a day. But to be honest, Odia movies are not of that quality to be watched on streaming platforms. However, recently I have seen some good Odia projects which can be at par with other regional movies. But unfortunately they were not promoted properly. As a creative person, I feel most of the producers here do not understand the impact of good content and they don't have the patience and energy to go to collaborators and consolidators who can pitch and take the contents to OTT platforms. However, the solution to the problem is we have to keep making quality content on a consistent basis and they have to be marketed well. There has to be a demand for Odia contents outside Odisha then only OTT platforms would think of buying them and airing them."

He continues: "Producers here are not interested in pitching their movies to OTT platforms. They are scared they might not get their investment back. That's the reason that they make very cheap and substandard kinds of movies and try to sell them to Odia television channels



here and get their movies satellite premiere. They don't want to release it in theaters fearing loss. But at the end of the day, quality matters. Look at what *Pushpa* and *Spider Man* did. *Pushpa* has collected nearly ₹1.2 crore from Odisha market while an Odia movie strug-

WHAT OTT SERVICES PROVIDERS HAVE TO SAY

Prolific filmmaker and owner of OTT platform Kancha Lanka **Akshay Kumar Parija** says, "First of all we don't make films in Odisha which can qualify into Netflix and Amazon standard. Second, popular OTT platforms being business-



centric, they want good viewership. Unfortunately, the numbers of remake films are more than the original ones for which streaming platforms shy away from airing them. Being a proprietor of OTT platform Kancha Lanka, our motto is to stream only original movies. We also invite stories from famous writers to make movies. Our aim is to stream 24 movies in a year. So far we have made three movies with original content. Though ours is only two and half months old platform, our OTT has so far attracted record subscriptions. Though everyday filmmakers visit us asking to air their movies, we have to refuse them as we have zero tolerance towards copy-paste and remake movies."

Kaushik Das, CEO and founder of Odisha's first streaming platform AAO NXT, says, "Most of the Odia films lack original contents for which they are not seen on streaming platforms. In a bid to release original content, we came up with Aao Nxt in 2020. We had talks with Odia filmmakers asking them to come up with original contents so that we can stream them. However, discussion with them did not yield any results as they lacked professionalism. We are now generating our content and airing them. Much has been said about copy-paste movies. I would like to say that Hindi movies are being copied and pasted from Telugu language movies. However, the mountings of the Hindi movies are big. At times, they outshine the original films. On the other hand, the producers in Odisha end up making a substandard copy of the original film."



gles to make a profit of even ₹10 lakh."



Telugu film *Pushpa: The Rise* has collected nearly ₹1.2 crore from Odisha market while an Odia movie often struggles to make a profit of even ₹10 lakh **Partha Sarathi Ray** | Actor

The numbers of remake films are more than the original ones in Odisha for which national level OTT players shy away from airing them. **Akshay Kumar Parija** | Producer

People don't prefer to watch Odia movies at single theatres, multiplexes or through online streaming services because the content of films produced in Odisha doesn't excite them **Subrajit Pradhan** | Producer

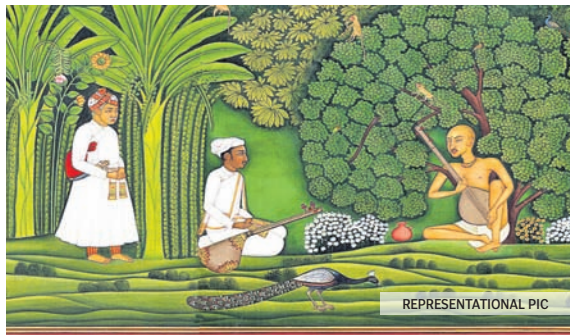


REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

The Mughals and Hindustani Music

The traditions and musical techniques which originated during the Sultanate period became more robust with the arrival of the Mughals

give us a glimpse of the status that music enjoyed during the Mughal era. As the protagonist Khojasta prepares to meet her lover, she asks the parrot Tuti about the correct way to evaluate a man. Tuti responds by saying that the “art of music” is one of the “manifestations of man’s knowledge” and infants who “respond gleefully” to music are of “noble birth”. In this anecdote, as in many others of that time, the enjoyment and knowledge of music and art, is associated with one’s status. The Tutinama is also relevant in that it explicitly talks about the “purposeful process of musical synthesis” of Indian and Persian techniques which were going on at that time. This synthesis was actively patronized and expanded during the Mughal era.



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

In Ain-i-Akbari, Abu'lFazl talks about the diversity of musicians at Akbar’s court, listing “Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiri” as well as from Persia, Khorasan and present-day Afghanistan. The bin or the vina was the primary instrument of Mughal court, associated with the great musician Tansen. Bin was played alongside na’i (a flute known throughout the Muslim world which is markedly different from indigenous flute). An illustration from “Divan of Anvari” provides a powerful example of the synthesis of musical as well as cultural synthesis. In the painting, the Indian bin is being played with western Asian instruments. The women playing the bin and na’i are wearing Indian dress while the dancer is wearing the central Asian dress of the Chagatai Turki Mughal women.

It was during Shah Jahan’s reign that music started developing into a minute science with theories and principles, which influenced the creation of musical treatises on theory and performance practices of contemporary Hindustani music.

Court patronage of musicians was affected with the invasion of Nadir Shah as the Mughal rulers were deprived of their riches.. The musicians now performed at Mehfils in accordance with the preferences of their patrons. While this resulted in the loss of sophistication and elitism, it also ensured that music became accessible to a wider audience. Sitar replaced bina as the more popular instrument. The integration of qaul-tarana with composite

musical styles led to the development of Qawwali.

BUSTING MYTHS

A myth still held by many is that Aurangzeb’s reign was devoid of any musical development. This isn’t entirely true. Music was prominent during the first decade of Aurangzeb’s reign. Faqirullah’s 1666 treatise Rag Darpan contains the names of the emperor’s favourite musicians and instrumentalists. It is only during the latter part of the second decade of his reign that musicians were pulled out of court and assigned other jobs at enhanced salary. In a letter to one of his sons in his late years, Aurangzeb mentioned music as a proper royal activity. As a consequence, many of his sons sponsored musicians and treatises. More Indo-Persian treatises on music were produced during Aurangzeb’s rule than the prior 500 years.

Musicians continued to be patronized during the declining years of the Mughal Empire. The last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar patronized ghazals from Tanras Khan, sarangi players, the blind sitar player Himmat Khan and most notably the poet MirzaGhalib. The mutiny of 1857 ended royal patronage and resulted in the dispersal and music and musicians outside their customary locations. This resulted in the emergence of gharanas and a compulsion by Muslim Ustads to negotiate with oriental nationalism privileging Hindu past and institutional music education.

The development, extension and consolidation of contemporary Hindustani music as well as its instruments wouldn’t have been possible without the royal patronage of the Mughals.

THE WRITER IS AN AUTHOR, BLOGGER AND A STUDENT AT JINDAL SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

ANWESH SATPATHY

It is not possible to understand a civilization or an empire without attempting to comprehend its music, literature, art, architecture, faith and cuisine. The richness of Mughal culture can be attested by the fact that its influence is still deeply felt in the Indian subcontinent. Yet the influence of Mughals on Hindustani music is rarely talked about in the public discourse.

The Origins

The performing arts in India has traditionally been categorized as an amalgamation of dance, music and acting. Performing arts, especially dance and music, were seen as being expressive of devotion. The importance of performing arts in the Pre-Sultanate period can be gauged by the fact that Bharata’s *Natyashastra* enjoyed the status of being the fifth Veda.

The Sultanate period brought some significant changes to the cultural set-up of northern India. The influence of Turko-Persian cultural tradition led to a change in the connotations associated with “sangit”. The influence of theatre was minimized and the term “sangit” became associated with vocal music, instrumental music and dance.

The Sufi musician and poet Amir Khusrau played a foundational role in the consolidation and early development of Hindustani music. Khusrau synthesized Persian and Indian lyrical as well as musical techniques. Under Khusrau, the traditional Sufi ritual of Sama became Indianized. The Qawwals incorporated new techniques like handclaps and regulation of vocal volume in a manner which made a single tan appear like a piece of intricate music. The lyrical synthesis of Indian and Persian languages can be glimpsed through many of Khusrau’s poetry. For example, Khusrau’s poem *Zebaal-e-miskeen Makum Taghafil* is written in both Braj Bhasa and Persian.

Music during the Mughal era

The traditions and musical techniques which originated during the Sultanate period became more robust with the arrival of the Mughals. The early Mughal emperors (Humayun and Babur), though conforming to the cultural traditions of Hirat, were largely silent on Indian musicians. It was during Akbar’s reign that Indian musicians across a variety of regions were patronized.

Akbar loved narrative stories, many of which were explicitly based around the subject of music. One of the earliest texts which Akbar ordered to be gorgeously illustrated was Nakhsabi’s *Tutinama*. Some of the stories within *Tutinama* are of significant importance to our discussion since they

Alaya F wraps up shoot for *U-Turn*

Actress Alaya F has wrapped up shooting for her upcoming thriller film *U-Turn*.

Alaya shares: "This film is very special to me and being the last day of this beautiful journey, it is just unbelievable. I am very grateful for the very lovely crew who was giving their all, every day, no matter how difficult some days were. Everyone really pulled through."

She says that the entire team was always filled with enthusiasm for the project and we all worked together so wonderfully to make it all come together.

Alaya adds: "So much has happened during the shoot but each moment has made this film a labor of love. As this journey comes to an end, I can't wait for everyone to watch and experience the same."

The actor began shooting for the film early last year and as the shoot came to an end, team *U-Turn* decided to celebrate on the sets.

Set against an urban backdrop, *U-Turn*, will be produced by Cult Movies, which is the new division under Shobha Kapoor and Ekta R Kapoor's Balaji Telefilms, which focuses to produce new age and edgy content.

In *U-Turn*, Alaya dons the character of a journalist.

The film is produced by Cult Movies, a new division under Shobha Kapoor and Ekta Kapoor's Balaji Telefilms.



Madhuri all set to make digital debut

Actress Madhuri Dixit Nene is all set to make her digital debut with the Netflix series *The Fame Game*, which is slated to release February 25.

The *Fame Game* also stars Sanjay Kapoor, Manav Kaul, Lakshvir Saran and Suhasini Muley,

Muskaan Jafari.

The story revolves around film icon Anamika Anand, who has it all but is her life perfect or a perfectly crafted facade.

The Fame Game, formerly known as *Finding Anamika*, will take the viewers into the world of superstar Anamika played by the evergreen, ever-gorgeous Madhuri Dixit Nene!

Produced by Dharmatic Entertainment, the series marks her streaming debut.

The Fame Game brings together Sri Rao as the showrunner and writer and Bejoy Nambiar and Karishma

Kohli as directors.

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Sanya helps paparazzo, earns kudos

Actress Sanya Malhotra, who has managed to impress the audience with her solid performances, was recently spotted in the city. While the paparazzi were clicking her pictures, one of them slipped and fell down on the pavement. The actress was quick to go and help him get up.

The video has been shared on social media and Sanya is seen showing her concern towards the paparazzo. She is seen repeatedly asking if he's okay. She is heard saying, "Lagi toh nahi na sir aapko? Araam se. Pehle pair dekho apna."

One of the photographers who was present there told Sanya that she didn't stop walking and hence the paparazzo tripped. She was seen apologising to him while leaving the venue.

Fans were extremely proud of Sanya and her sweet gesture. They were seen praising her 'down to earth' nature. One of the fans commented, "She's a really caring person." Another fan wrote, "She is really down to earth."

AGENCIES

Bravo dances to *Srivalli* from Allu Arjun's *Pushpa*

The song *Srivalli* from the Telugu blockbuster *Pushpa — The Rise*, featuring Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna in the lead, truly seems to have taken the cricketing world by storm.

First, it was Australian cricketer David Warner, who loved the number so much that he put out a video of him replicating actor Allu Arjun's dance moves for the superhit number. Soon, Suresh Raina followed the Australian batsman.

The Chinna Thala of Chennai Super Kings showed his dancing skills, by dancing for the same song's Hindi version.

Hardik Pandya too was not to be left behind and tried shaking a leg for it. Now, DJ Bravo, who is known to be a sport and an absolutely chilled out guy, too has joined the fun.

The Caribbean cricketer put out a video of him dancing for the number and wrote, "Going with the trend!!" and asked his friends, David Warner and Suresh Raina, "How did I do!!"

AGENCIES





Dealing with negative body image



Fear of rejection and non-acceptance due to a person's physical appearance can leave deep emotional scars and drive an individual to self-harm and even suicide

AGENCIES

Certain teenagers are body shamed at school or by their families, which can change their relationship with their bodies. Teens are frequently influenced by their peers and family members, and they tend to adopt their views on what constitutes an acceptable body image. A person's physical and emotional health can suffer as a result of a negative or distorted body image. It can lead to a variety of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, OCD, and eating disorders. A poor self-image can lead to frequent mood swings, social isolation, and dysfunctional relationships. Fear of rejection and non-acceptance due to a person's physical appearance can leave deep emotional scars and drive an individual to self-harm and even suicide.

Here are a few things parents can do to help their teens who might be struggling with a negative body image:

Encourage Open Honest Communication

Teenagers, at times, feel that their parents don't understand them. They feel that either their parents are always lecturing them. Then there is always a feeling of a generation gap. Teenagers are quick to go into a shell and limit their conversations with parents if they feel unheard, disrespected or misunderstood by their parents. It is important that parents take a neutral stand

and give teenagers the space to vent and to share their point of view. Encourage your teens to have an unfiltered conversation with you. Don't interrupt them when they speak and take genuine interest on what they have to say.

Don't focus on looking a certain way

It is important that parents walk the talk and not set expectations from their teenagers to look a certain way. Some teenagers love to shop for branded clothes or certain types of clothes and it becomes a challenge for parents to stop their children from doing so. How do you tell a teen that a certain type of top or dress will not look good on them? How do you pre-warn them that if they wore a dress, top or jeans it may open them up for ridicule from their friends or classmates? Talk about the importance of dressing for comfort over dressing for looks.

Stop projecting your own insecurities on your child

If you are a parent who has grown up in an environment where looks have been given a lot of importance then you may unknowingly be transferring your views to your offspring. Beauty is aligned with fair skin. Lean and thin people are more attractive than overweight individuals. It is important that the family is seen as a 'fit' and an 'attractive' family. It's imperative to receive compliments on one's looks to feel complete. They all may be things which you may give importance to but it's not healthy or important for your teenagers to share the same views as you on the matter.

Talk about the Importance of Health and Exercise

Teenagers these days have so many tools of distraction like their smart phones, social media, OTT (Netflix) and gaming to keep them occupied and distracted from exercising. It is important to encourage teens to maintain an exercise routine. Encourage them to pick up a new sport, to continue with a sport they are familiar with (like cricket, squash or tennis).

Look for signs of BDD

Body dysmorphic disorder is where a person becomes overly anxious over a physical aspect of themselves. Often, people hyper focus on one area or a perceived defect in their physical appearance, a scar or even a mark on their skin. They then tend to obsess over this defect. At times these thoughts and feelings are so intense that they find it difficult to think of anything else. This can then impact their academics and work performance. Body dysmorphic disorder is not gender specific. It tends to manifest in teenagers and young adults.

Be aware of your words

Be careful of the words you use and the language you are using with your teens. Some parents shame their children by calling them 'fat'. Stay away from hurtful statement like: "If you don't lose weight then no one will marry you", "Look at your friend, he/she is so fit, why can't you be more like him/her?" or "That dress would look better if you were slim." Statements like these can do further damage to someone who might already have a negative self-image of themselves or have a negative relationship with their body.

Encourage Self Love

Self acceptance promotes self-love. Teenagers need to be accepted as they are by their parents. They should be encouraged to feel comfortable in their own skin. Use words of encouragement and remind them that your love for them is unconditional. A teen who has a negative self-image needs supportive parents. They don't need judgemental and critical parents. The world may be judging them already for their looks. You as parents need to create a house environment that is safe, warm and accepting of them. Tell your teens to look in the mirror and tell themselves that they love and accept themselves for who they are with all of their flaws.

If a teenager's negative self-image is impeding their growth and negatively impacting their day-to-day life, please consult a mental health professional as soon as possible. Psychotherapy and counselling can be extremely beneficial in assisting your adolescent in dealing with such issues. If they are not treated, it can change their personalities and make them feel less confident and bitter about themselves.



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