

The background of the image is a dark stage with several spotlights shining down from above, creating a dramatic effect. The spotlights are arranged in a semi-circle, with the central one being the brightest. The light beams are visible as soft, white cones against the dark background.

Children in the Spotlight

Katie Gavin and Liz Fanfera

Michael Jackson



“The King of POP”

- Michael Jackson was one of the biggest child stars of his time
- Many people adored him because he was such a great presence on stage and moved like no other
- On stage he always looked happy, but that was only an act
- When he was 5 years old, his career started when he joined his siblings in the Jackson 5
- He would later emerge as the group's lead vocalist
- The group signed with Motown records and moved to LA

Childhood

- In LA, the group played in small clubs and bars where they became exposed to bar violence, nudity, and alcohol
- His father would subject his children to anything, good or bad, to achieve fame and fortune
- By the time Michael was 9, it was almost like he was an adult in a child's body
- He would be in school for about three hours a day and then it was straight to the recording studio, interviews, or performances
- He had no time to be a kid, no time to play or relax, no other friends except for his other siblings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y492bY07mts>

Childhood

- He was lonely, but his father didn't care, he overworked Michael and abused him throughout his childhood
- Michael would cry from loneliness and become depressed
- There was just no time for Michael to be a real kid

"People wonder why I always have children around. It's because I find the thing that I never had through them. Disneyland, amusement parks, arcade games – I adore all that stuff because when I was little, it was always work, work, work."



- Michael Jackson



Impact on Michael

- He changed his face because his father called him ugly when he was a child
- He hung around with kids because he never got to play with other kids when he was young
- He acted childish and silly when he was older because he never got to when he was a child
- His life as a child star affected him so much and all he wanted to do was make up for lost time

How does Stardom affect a Child's Emotional Growth?

- No Privacy
- Lost sense of self, have no idea who they are
- Increased scrutiny
- People don't see them as children, hold them to higher standard
- Financial issues
- Trust issues

What are the Signs that a Young Star is at Risk Emotionally and Physically?

- These children are at high risk of becoming emotionally unstable and of becoming drug, alcohol, or sex abusers
- Children at different ages display **behavioral changes** that might indicate that they are at risk.
 - **Ages of 2 and 8:** aggression, thumb-sucking, **bedwetting**, **depression**, crying, anxiety, clinging, and temper tantrums.
 - **Teens:** poor grades, change of friends, isolation, distancing from family, oversleeping, drug or **alcohol abuse**, eating disorders, **cutting**, **lying**, and keeping secrets.



Theories



Quest for media spotlight immortality

- Many celebrities fear their fame is fleeting, which leads them to constantly obsess about losing the attention of their fans and the media. After a celebrity's fame peaks, it is often a brutal ride downward as they garner less attention from others. The loss of the spotlight can leave people feeling bereft of purpose and importance. In the wake of this loss, they often turn to self-destructive behaviors as a means to cope with overwhelming feelings of failure

Imposter syndrome

- Concept describing individuals who are marked by an inability to internalize their accomplishments and have a persistent fear of being exposed as a "fraud"
- Michael was so famous, but he was such a perfectionist that he didn't think his work was ever finished or good enough. He never saw himself as being as successful as the public saw him.

Questions

1. Do you think there is anyway to prevent these things from happening to child stars?
1. Do you think that child stars who have more media spotlight on them experience these effects more then child stars who are less of the media's attention?
1. Do you think there is a "safe" way to be a child star?

Sources

Villarreal, C. (2017, May 29). The psychological impact of being in the spotlight: the emotional struggle of celebrities. Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <https://drchristinavillarreal.com/2010/03/26/psychological-impact-being-spotlight-emotional-struggle-of-celebrities/>

Thompson, A. (2014, July 07). For celebrities children, the spotlight can burn. Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/people/2014/07/06/there-are-no-limits-when-it-comes-to-bullying-celebs-kids/11312603/>

The Life of a Child Star: Why Some Go Crazy and Others Dont. (2016, June 15). Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <https://www.medicalbag.com/pediatrics/the-life-of-a-child-star-why-some-go-crazy-and-others-dont/article/472544/>

Behrens-Horrell, W. (2011, June 22). The Child Performer. Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/in-the-trenches/201106/the-child-performer>

Lewis , N. (n.d.). Michael Jackson: A Tragic Childhood. Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <https://sites.jmu.edu/103fall14/mj-draft/>

Michael Jackson. (2018, January 18). Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <https://www.biography.com/people/michael-jackson-38211>

Promoting Healthy Social-Emotional Development in Your Child. (n.d.). Retrieved March 27, 2018, from <https://www.lapetite.com/parent-resource-center/parenting-articles/promoting-healthy-social-emotional-development-in-your-child/>