

Living In Live Time: Surgery For Selfies

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Strive for skinny. The bigger the booty, the better. Flat abs are fab.

On any given day, young girls are exposed to these types of messages on social media and if you scroll through your daughter's Instagram feed, it might reveal images like these:

Social media has changed the way we communicate but it has also changed the way in which we view ourselves. When "likes" and positive comments are predicated on the "best" photo, image is paramount. The desire to look their "best" leads girls to purchase light-up phone cases (that aid in taking the perfect selfie) and download apps like Instacurves Pro HD, which, according to its description, "allows you to enhance your curves or drop inches with just the touch of a button."

For some though, the technology fix is still not enough. They want a more permanent solution.

Meet 16-year-old Jianna and 28-year-old Kristina. They are part of a growing number of young women who are so unhappy with how they look on social media that they have chosen plastic surgery to improve their selfies and their self-esteem. Within a week of each other, both Jianna and Kristina got nose jobs. Kristina also got lip injections and liposuction. Both say social media played a major role in deciding to undergo the procedures.

"Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and then you see everybody else how they look almost perfect, it kind of makes you think about it [your appearance] more than you would normally," Kristina said.



Kristina before. Photo Credit: The Plastic Surgery Center

Just thinking about her nose brings Jianna to tears.

“People would take pictures from the side and zoom in and then screenshot it and be like, ‘wow your nose is really big’ or like the bump on it,” the South Brunswick high school student said.



Jianna before. Photo Credit: Dr. Sam Rizk

She says she feels social media has lowered her self-esteem.

“Seeing other people and seeing how their faces and how their body is, it affects how I see myself,” she said.

Many doctors say social media has changed the plastic surgery landscape. Dr. Sam Rizk, Jianna’s doctor and the director of Manhattan Facial Plastic Surgery, says it has put an emphasis on the face and how people appear in pictures, but he adds it’s important to note that selfies are not necessarily true to reality.

“Selfies are not 100 percent accurate because of the angle that they [people] are using,” he said.

According to the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, “the face of plastic surgery is getting younger.” The Academy says, “64 percent of facial plastic surgeon members saw an increase in cosmetic surgery or injectable treatments in patients under 30 due to social media and selfies.” Locally, Dr. Rizk says over the last three years requests for rhinoplasty in his practice have increased by 10 percent because of social media.

Despite Jianna’s age, her father says he had no reservations about letting her go under the knife.

“I could tell what she was saying- her self-esteem- I didn’t want her to have issues growing up as she got older,” he said. “I don’t know, I felt bad for her honestly.”

WEB EXTRA: Dr. Rizk performed an endonasal rhinoplasty on Jianna, which he says is, “a less invasive type of rhinoplasty to remove the bump [on her nose] with no external scar.” He adds the procedure is, “done from inside the nose using high-definition telescopes and...power instruments to reduce the bump, which makes it a very accurate operation with less recovery, less bruising, less bleeding, and so forth.” Watch as he explains how the procedure works.

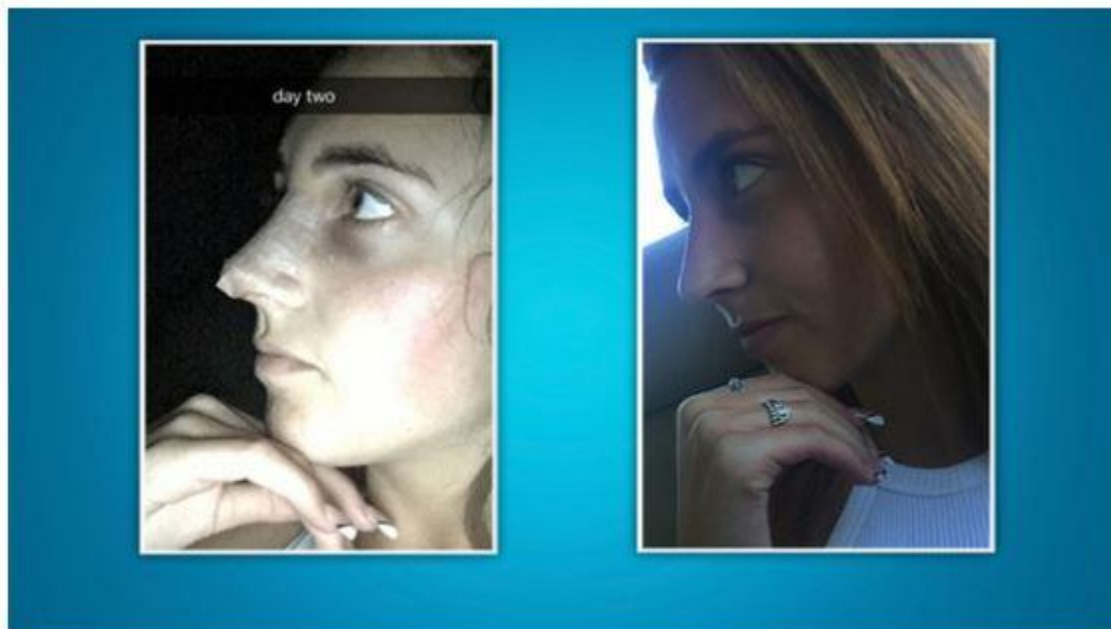
1010WINS.com was inside the operating rooms as both doctors got to work shaping the girls' noses.

"Her profile really looks super," Kristina's plastic surgeon, Dr. Andrew Elkwood, said.

In just a few hours Jianna and Kristina were ready to go home, relieved and excited to see the results.

"I feel good," Kristina said.

The doctors say both girls can get back to normal life in three to six weeks. But that didn't stop them from snapping selfies just days later.



(Photo Credit: Jianna Pagano)



(Photo Credit: Credit: Kristina Cruz)

In response to some of the negative discourse associated with beauty online, Dove worked with Twitter to launch the #speakbeautiful campaign in 2015. The multi-faceted endeavor encourages positive

conversation when it comes to beauty and appearance. Dove's Brand Director, Jennifer Bremner, says as part of the campaign this year they launched 'The #SpeakBeautiful Effect' which analyzes the way in which a person tweets. She adds that in working with Twitter, they found "there were 5 million negative tweets a year around beauty and body image and we've seen a reduction since we've started [the campaign]." In a conversation with 1010WINS.com, Bremner shares more information about the effort and explains how you can have your own tweets analyzed.

A January 2015 article published in the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) newsmagazine also strongly suggests that parents pay attention to "what their children view on social media," including looking out for "search phrases such as, 'thinspiration,' 'thigh gap,' and 'pro-ana/pro-mia.'" The AAP suggests that, "parents who suspect their child is overly concerned about body image...talk with their pediatrician about screening and ways to guide children in a healthy direction."

1010WINS.com reached out to Instagram to request an interview regarding the type of content posted on their platform. They pointed to their Instagram Help Center with links on how to address abuse, block people, safety tips, and tips for parents, but declined to comment further for this series.