

Parents and Caregivers' Information Sheet

4th to 6th Grade - 2024-25

SAYING NO TO GENDER STEREOTYPES

WHY TALK ABOUT GENDER STEREOTYPES IN PRE-ADOLESCENCE?

Pre-adolescence is a crucial period for children's development, as they begin to explore their own identity and understand social expectations. Here's why it's important to address gender stereotypes at this age:

- **Understanding social roles:** Children start to notice the roles and expectations often associated with boys and girls. By discussing gender stereotypes, they learn to question these norms and develop a more inclusive perspective.
- **Development of critical thinking:** Learning to identify and deconstruct stereotypes helps children better understand inequalities and promotes respectful and egalitarian behavior.
- **Self-acceptance:** This helps children feel comfortable with their own interests and passions, without feeling constrained by expectations based on their gender.

THE IMPACT OF STEREOTYPES AND MEDIA ON YOUNG PEOPLE

Gender stereotypes and media play a significant role in shaping young people's perceptions. Here's how:

- **Influence of media:** Movies, TV shows, video games, and social media often portray stereotypical images of what boys and girls should be or do. These representations can limit young people's aspirations and access to certain opportunities.
- **Impact on self-esteem:** Stereotypes can affect young people's self-esteem by making them believe they must conform to specific expectations to be accepted or succeed.
- **Reinforcement of biases:** Media can perpetuate gender stereotypes, contributing to discriminatory attitudes and sexist behaviors.

WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM DANGERS OF GENDER STEREOTYPES?

In the long term, gender stereotypes can have several negative consequences:

- **Limitation of opportunities:** Children may avoid certain careers or activities that don't align with gender stereotypes, which can reduce their professional and personal opportunities.
- **Reinforcement of inequalities:** Stereotypes perpetuate unequal roles and behaviors, contributing to inequalities in areas like education, work, and social relationships.
- **Social pressure:** Individuals may feel constant pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, leading to stress, frustration, and a lack of well-being.



HOW TO FOSTER A GENDER-STEREOTYPE-FREE ENVIRONMENT AT HOME?



Encourage a diversity of interests: Give your children the opportunity to discover and engage in various activities, regardless of gender stereotypes. Encourage them to explore their passions, whatever they may be.



Lead by example: Demonstrate that gender roles should not limit choices and opportunities. Be a role model by showing that interests and talents are not determined by gender.



Discuss stereotypes: Talk openly with your children about the gender stereotypes they encounter and help them understand and question these ideas. Use concrete examples to illustrate your points.



Create a supportive environment: Ensure that your children feel accepted and valued for their unique talents and interests. Encourage mutual respect and understanding of differences.



Use diverse resources: Introduce your children to books, movies, and programs that present diverse and positive role models. This can help them see beyond traditional gender stereotypes.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD STARTS TO SHOW INTEREST IN THINGS THAT ARE STEREOTYPICALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE OPPOSITE GENDER?

Encourage your child to explore their interests freely. Let them know it's okay to like what they like, regardless of stereotypes. Support their choices and create an environment where they feel safe and accepted.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MY CHILD FROM FEELING PRESSURED BY GENDER STEREOTYPES AT SCHOOL OR IN SOCIAL SETTINGS?

Talk openly about gender stereotypes and how they can limit people. Encourage your child to be confident in who they are and to respect others' choices. Advocate for inclusive practices at school and model acceptance at home.


WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF REINFORCING OR CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHILDHOOD?

Reinforcing stereotypes can limit a child's self-expression and opportunities. Challenging them can lead to greater confidence, creativity, and respect for diversity. Children who grow up free from rigid stereotypes are more likely to develop a healthy sense of self.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS BEING TEASED OR BULLIED FOR NOT CONFORMING TO GENDER NORMS?

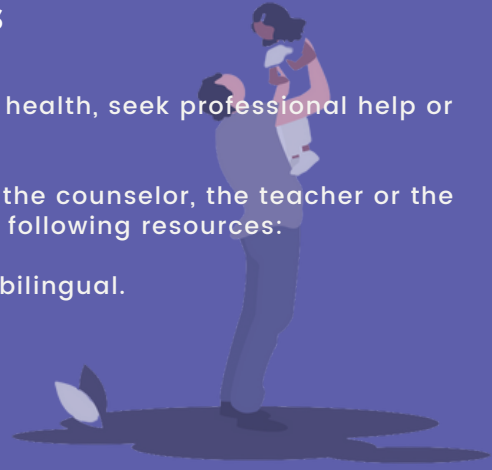
Take the situation seriously. Listen to your child and reassure them that it's okay to be different. Work with the school to address the bullying and educate others on respect and inclusion. Encourage your child to stay true to themselves and seek support from trusted adults.

Resources

 **Important!** If you are concerned about your child's health, seek professional help or call the helplines listed below.

Do not hesitate to communicate with the school staff: the counselor, the teacher or the principal. Your family doctor can also help, as can the following resources:

- **Kids Help Phone:** to confide, 24/7. Anonymous and bilingual.
Toll free number: 1 800-668-6868
Website: kidshelpphone.ca



RESOURCES IN FRENCH

[Ressources Parents Teljeunes](#)
Un répertoire de ressources pour les parents d'adolescents.

[La Boîte à outils SansStéréotypes du Gov Québec](#)

[Bonjour Sam : sensibiliser les jeunes par le jeu – Jeunes identités créatives \(primaire\)](#)



RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

[How to Combat Gender Stereotypes as a Family](#)

Podcast on Gender Stereotypes to help parents explore ways they may be perpetuating gender stereotypes.

[Talking to Young Kids About Gender](#)
Gender Spectrum offers an [actionable PDF](#) that outlines how parents can talk with their kids about gender diversity and promoting gender equality.

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