

Gender Stereotypes

The What, How and Why for Families



What Can Families Do?

Are Girls and Boys In Your Family:

- Offered toys & books based on their interests and skills?
- Provided with play equipment that includes cooking utensils, action figures, dolls, trucks and lego?
- Encouraged to explore a range of situations and role play?
- Provided with books & activities that depict women and men in diverse roles?



What Are Gender Stereotypes?

Gender stereotypes are generalisations about the characteristics of an entire group based on gender. Gender stereotypes dictate behaviours that are considered acceptable or desirable for males and females. For example, boys are naturally rough and aggressive and girls are nurturing.

How Are Gender Stereotypes Reinforced?

Gender Stereotypes are reinforced to children through toys, sports, games, clothes, books, the media, advertising/marketing and sometimes through messages from teachers, families and friends.

Other Considerations:

- When talking to girls & boys, does language and tone of voice vary according to gender?
- Are boys sometimes excused for aggressive behaviour because "boys will be boys"?
- Are a variety of roles modelled by parents and other family members e.g. cooking, cleaning, caring for children, paid employment, mowing lawns?

Why Avoid Gender Stereotypes?

Gender stereotypes have a major influence on children's interests and skill development. Stereotyping in the early years can limit children's choices and aspirations. This impacts on the roles that they take on as adults, leading to gender inequality.

By breaking down gender stereotypes, girls and boys are able to 'dream big'. They are able to develop and learn based on personal skills and interests, unhindered by society's expectations.

Look for opportunities to have conversations with children about gender stereotypes

Use books, movies, media etc to stimulate discussion



Ideas for books

Provide books & stories that depict men & women, boys & girls in a variety of roles. Contact your childcare centre/kinder for a suggested reading list.



Women's Health East

Any questions?
For further information, contact
Women's Health East - 9851 3700

This project was proudly supported by
Manningham City
Council's Community
Grant Program

