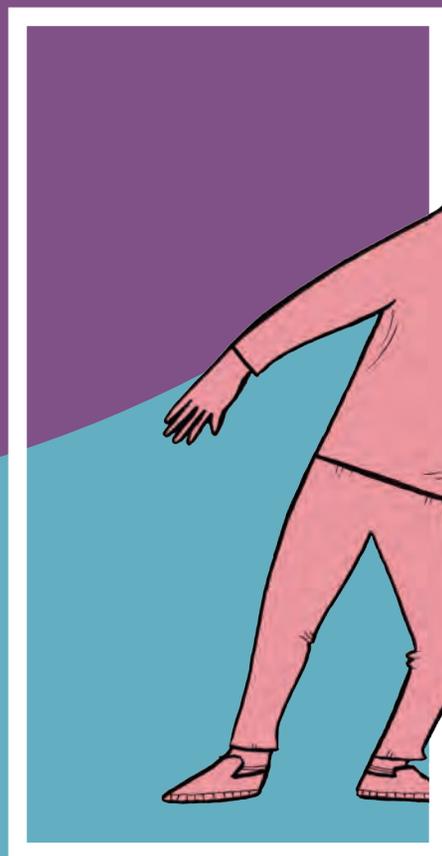




TALENT DEVELOPMENT OF BOYS
A GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONALS IN AND AROUND EDUCATION



This is a publication of **Emancipator** in collaboration with **VHTO** (national expert organisation on girls/women and science/technology) in the context of the **Alliantie Werk.en.de Toekomst** (Alliance Work and the Future).

Werk.en.de Toekomst (Work and the Future) is committed to breaking through gender stereotyping in education and the labour market and to improving the possibilities for combining work, care and education. Werk.en.de Toekomst is a collaboration between *Atria*, institute on gender equality and women's history, *Emancipator*, *NVR* (the Dutch Women's Council), and *VHTO*, National expert organisation for girls/women and science/technology and is supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

This toolkit, including clickable references, can be found here:
<https://www.emancipator.nl/werkendetoekomst>

Production: Schenk Amsterdam

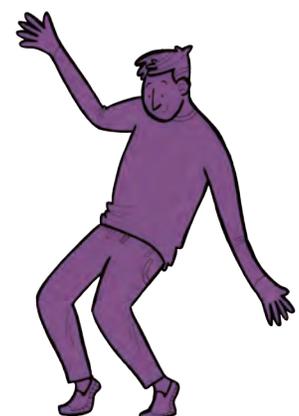
Text: Stijn Schenk and Hannah Mars

Editors: Jens van Tricht, Akke Visser and Jules Schaper.

Translation and adaptation English version: Jules Schaper

Design and images: Jan Klinkhamer

Copyright: Illustrations on pages 8 and 9 commissioned by Jens van Tricht Creative Commons license: Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)
www.matterhornamsterdam.nl



INTRODUCTION

Boys are more interested in rough outdoor play, while girls want to play indoors, with dolls. Boys are better at math and girls have more talent for languages. Boys make a mess and girls like to clean it up. These are ideas we all grew up with. Often these differences, and the unequal treatment that results from them, are seen as the logical outcome of a natural difference. But is that justified? Are boys and girls really that different?

We believe that this requires nuance. And that we can all benefit from that nuance.

The consequences for women of this unequal treatment have been highlighted by the women's movement since the 1960s. But how unequal treatment also harms boys has been mostly ignored. As the direct consequences were less obvious, there was a lack of urgency to do something about it. But the impact is enormous and the need to do something about it is considerable.

This toolkit explains why it is important to start working on this issue and provides tools and direction for interventions and adjustments in education.

Stijn Schenk and Hannah Mars



TABLE OF CONTENTS

How to use this toolkit?	4
● Organisations	5
MODULE 1. Boys and girls	6
Stereotypes	7
Masculine and feminine	7
Actual differences	8
Using our full human potential	9
● Inspiring videos	10
Key Concepts	11
Exercise 1. The man-box (part 1 of 2). Expectations	12
● Interesting books	16
Module 2. More care in boys	17
Status	18
Sanctions	19
Exercise 2. The man-box (part 2 of 2). Sanctions	20
● More inspiring videos	21
Revaluation	22
Conscious approach	23
Role models and the ongoing conversation	24
● Clarifying Reports	25
Exercise 3. Discussing gender equality	26
● More inspiring videos	28
Module 3. More boys towards care and education	29
Getting started	30
Educational and vocational orientation	31
Methods and interventions	32
● Useful tools	33
Why it is important to address masculinity	34
● Inspiring people and more	36
Tips for classes, lessons from programmes for girls	37

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit contains information and materials that can be used directly and indirectly in and around education. It contains information and methods that you can use individually, as a team of teachers or with students. There are links to inspiring videos, methods, books and more. There is something there for all levels and ages.

In addition to this toolkit, a training can be followed at Emancipator. In the training, teachers reflect on their own context and learn how to get started with the theme of gender and gender inequality within their educational institution.

Emancipator also offers training courses and workshops for young people, parents, professionals and organisations, tailored to the demand and situation. We maintain a network of male role models who can be invited to guest lectures, teacher meetings, training sessions and parents' evenings.

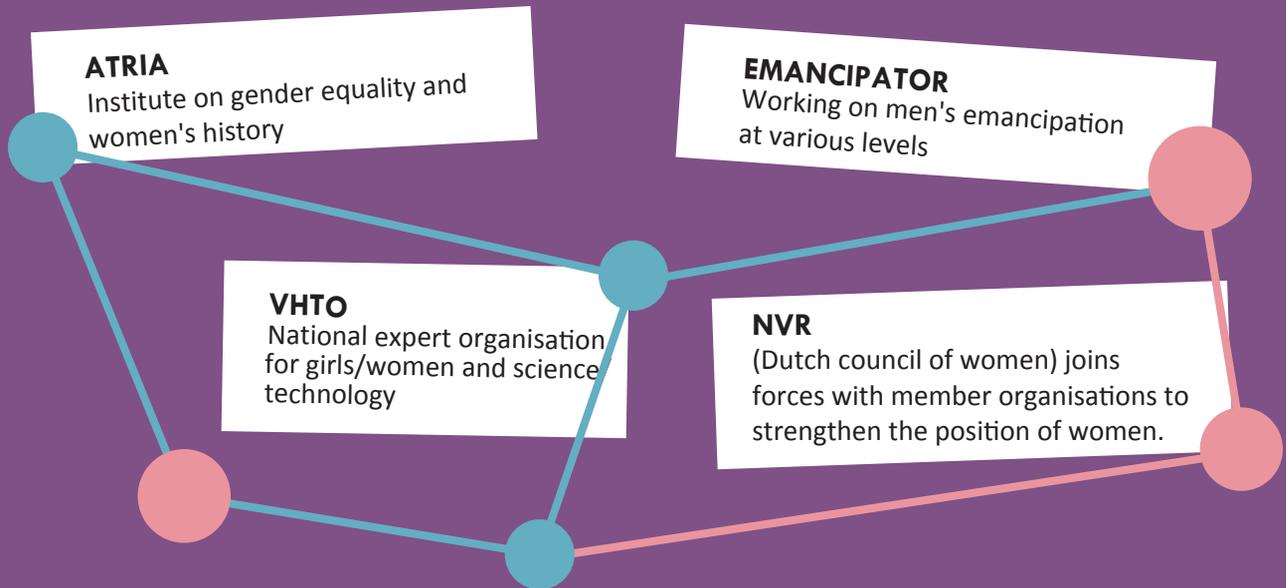
More information about training can be found at www.emancipator.nl. Or contact us directly via info@emancipator.nl

“YOU ARE BORN A BABY WHILE YOU ARE JUST A HUMAN BEING. FROM NOW ON YOU CAN ONLY WEAR PINK OR BLUE. FOR BOYS, QUALITIES LIKE OPENNESS AND VULNERABILITY GO OVERBOARD. WOMEN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE LEADERS, TO BE POWERFUL AND TO CLIMB TREES. THE CONSEQUENCE IS THAT EVERYONE IS GOING THROUGH LIFE WITH ONLY 50% OF THEIR POTENTIAL”.

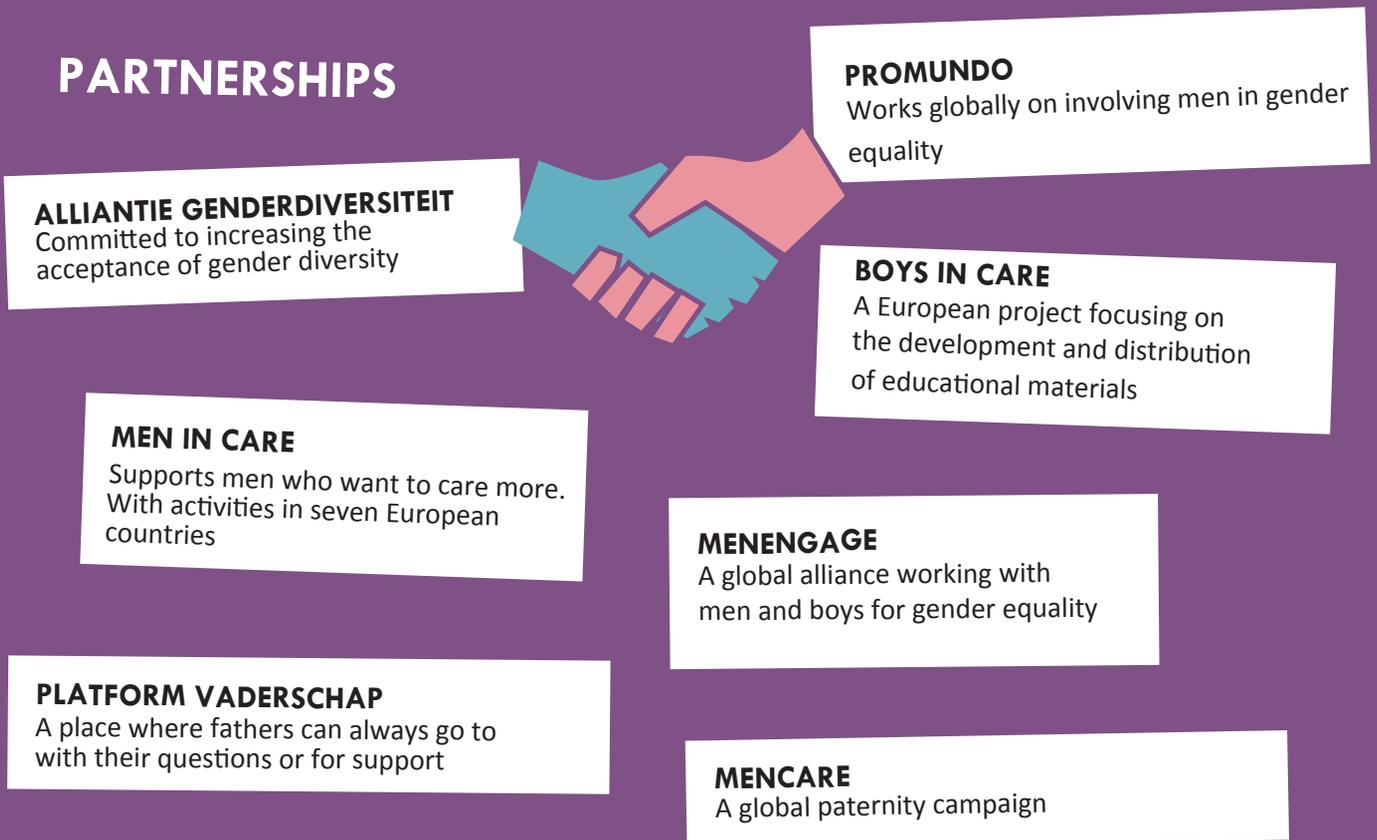
Rikkert van Huistede, Theatre maker

Organisations

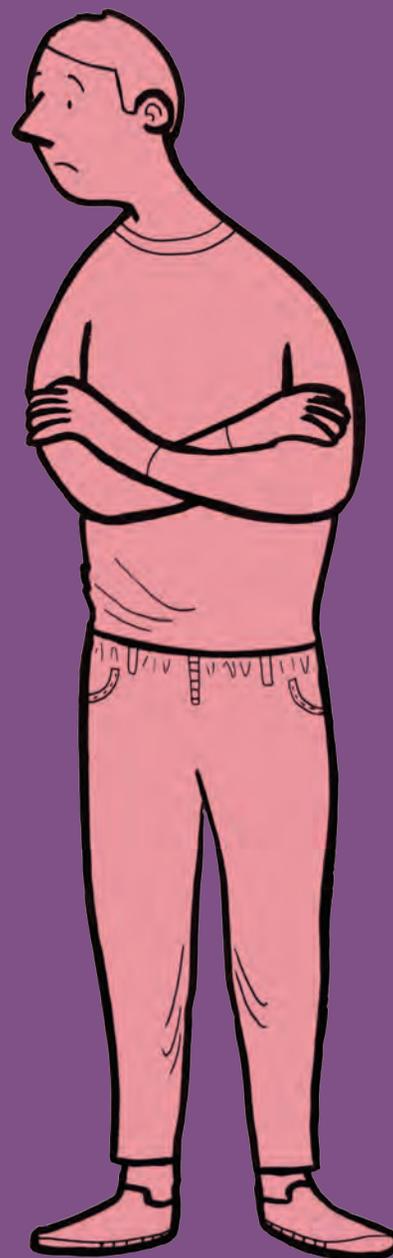
WERK.EN.DE TOEKOMST



PARTNERSHIPS



BOYS AND GIRLS



MODULE 1.

	Stereotypes	7
	Masculine and feminine	7
	Actual differences	8
	Using our full human potential	9
●	Inspiring videos	10
	Key concepts	11
	Exercise 1. The man-box (part 1 van 2). Expectations	12
●	Interesting books	16

STEREOTYPES

Whenever you meet someone, almost the first thing you notice is: is this person a man or a woman?

Whether you conceive someone to be male or female forms the framework for much of your further interaction with that person. It affects the characteristics, wishes and preferences you expect in someone and anticipate for. And it affects your choice of words, your feelings and all of your communication. This is because of the existing stereotypes about men and women.

The stereotypes about men and women have been mapped by TransAct into the following stereotypes and codes:

Women

- Emotional and empathetic; considerate of others/conform to/subordinate
- Who you are is connected with relationships
- Primary responsible for the atmosphere in the house, the quality of relationships, housekeeping and the upbringing and care of (young) children
- First of all, be sweet, kind, attractive and caring
- Dependence and vulnerability are allowed (victimization allowed)
- Emphatic and not (too) individualistic
- Sexuality through intimacy

Men

- Acting, performing and work are central
- Who you are is connected to what you do
- Primary responsible for family income
- Self-reliant, independent, protective
- Dependence, vulnerability and fear not visible (no victim)
- Dominant, aggressive, in control
- Intimacy through sexuality

MASCULINE AND FEMININE

The stereotyping of men and women translates into the concepts of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' and what we see as 'masculine qualities' and 'feminine qualities'.

The problem with this is that these 'masculine' and 'feminine qualities' are then linked to the men and women around us, as if they will always have those qualities. This makes it seem as if men and women are by definition very different.

But not a single study has shown that men and women are fundamentally different from each other: the brain of boys and girls differs only to a very limited extent. And the few differences that do exist can almost all be explained by the plasticity of the brain: they adapt to their environment and input.

If we decide that boys are better than girls at things like caring or cleaning, for example, and we start treating them that way, that will eventually become a reality. Nothing in boys' brains stands in the way of this.

It is therefore important to distinguish between characteristics that we call masculine and the actual characteristics of individual men. And the characteristics we call feminine and the actual characteristics of individual women.



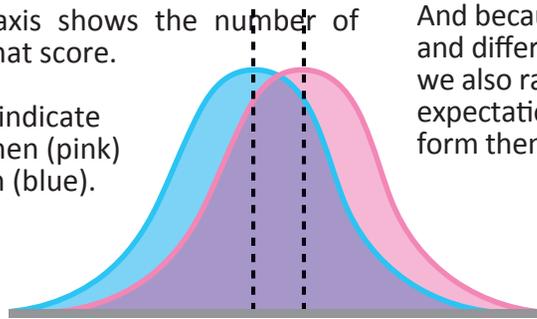
ACTUAL DIFFERENCES

Scientific research on men and women repeatedly shows that there are few differences between these two groups. This chart shows that.

The horizontal axis shows people's score on, for example, math, care, parking and empathy.

The vertical axis shows the number of people with that score.

The two lines indicate the curve of men (pink) and of women (blue).



Although research shows that differences between men and women are marginal, we often fall back on stereotypes when talking about a group of boys or a group of girls

Part of the reason stereotypes are so persistent is that we expect differences between boys and girls and therefore focus on them. People are better at perceiving differences than similarities. And because we expect different qualities and different behavior from girls and boys, we also raise them differently: we impose expectations on children and they form themselves accordingly.

This chart is stylised, in reality for most properties the purple piece is much larger and the black lines are even closer together.

Graph 1

The graph shows (in purple) the overlap between the scores of men and women. It is immediately clear that the differences within the groups are greater than the differences between the average of the groups (the black dotted lines). This means that most men and women score about equally well in parking, providing care, math and empathy. The difference between the averages says nothing further about differences between individual men and women.

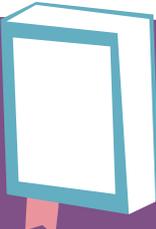
There are, as you can see in the graph, a lot of women who can park better than a lot of men.

This figure refutes the image that men and women are natural opposites or structurally different in characteristics and possibilities



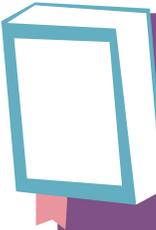
Further reading: BOYS' BRAINS LAGGING BEHIND? THAT IS A NEUROMYTH

A brain researcher went looking for the differences in the brain development of boys and girls, but couldn't find them. Lara Wierenga (Leiden University)



POSTER: GENDER IN THE CLASSROOM

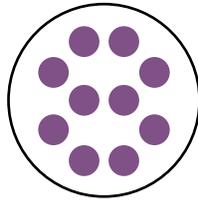
Tips to promote gender equality in the classroom
Educate to empower education



Further reading: MEN AND WOMEN: NO BIG DIFFERENCE The Truth about Gender "Differences"

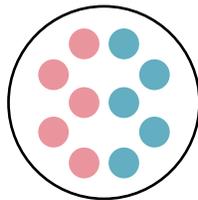
EXPLOITING OUR FULL HUMAN POTENTIAL

A plea by Jens van Tricht, founder and director of Emancipator, the Dutch organisation for men and emancipation

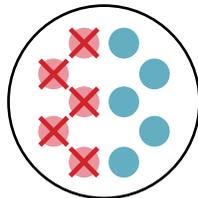


Every human being has a gigantic potential of human characteristics, feelings, qualities, interests and talents. It is up to each individual to allow this natural potential to blossom.

But even before we are born, some of these elements are labeled as desirable and some as undesirable.

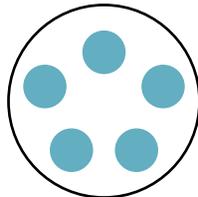


IT'S A BOY!

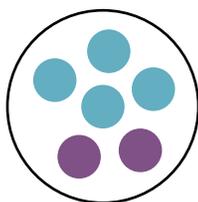


Depending on whether a person is a boy or girl, they are expected to ignore, deny and suppress their so-called masculine or feminine qualities, respectively

IT'S A BOY!

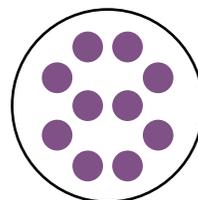


We teach them to cultivate and exaggerate sex-specific traits, so as to leave no doubt that they are a real man or woman.



But nobody possesses exclusively masculine or feminine characteristics. In reality, who we are, and how we feel, is constantly evolving and subject to change. Masculinity and femininity blend into each other and cannot be strictly separated from each other.

Therefore, it is important to create more space and freedom for people to explore all their qualities and talents: the full human potential. For this purpose, the environment must create a safe space and offer the freedom to question, explore and manifest.



Graph 2

“SOCIETY VALUES MEN AND MASCULINITY GENERALLY HIGHER THAN WOMEN AND FEMININITY. THEREFORE, THERE IS A LOT TO GAIN FOR WOMEN BY CHANGE AND FOR MEN, IN FIRST INSTANCE, A LOT TO LOSE”

Jens van Tricht

Inspiring videos



GIRL TOYS VS BOY TOYS: THE EXPERIMENT

A confrontational view of how gender-specific we approach children
BBC Stories
3:25 min (Engels)

GENDER STEREOTYPES AND EDUCATION

Educational video on gender stereotypes in education
European Institute for Gender Equality
1:23 min (Engels)

MENCARE - JOIN THE MOVEMENT: TIME FOR ACTION

A Global Campaign for Engaged Fatherhood
2:28 min (Engels)

THE MAN BOX

An excerpt from the educational video 'Tough Guise'
TED Talk door Jackson Katz
1:34 min (Engels)



WAT IS GENDER? | HUH? |

(What is Gender?) Gender explained to children
Het Klokhuis
1:54 min (Dutch)



RAISING BOYS TO BE MEN WHO CARE

A call for a less unequal upbringing of men and women

MenCare
1:47 min (English)

NO MORE BOYS AND GIRLS



An experiment in which a class full of seven-year-olds is approached in a gender neutral way
NTR
54:00 min (English)

MAN MADE - GENDER COMPENSATION



At a school in Iceland, girls rough-and-tumble play outside while boys take care of each other inside
VPRO 3 min (Dutch)



KEY CONCEPTS

When it comes to the unequal treatment of boys and girls and its impact, a number of terms are often used. Four of which we explain here: sex, gender, gender norms and gender identity.

These terms are often associated with people from the LGBTQIA+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other sexualities and gender identities). It is true that these terms concern them, but they are just as much about everyone else. In fact, the L, H, B and A in the abbreviation are about sexual orientation and that only partly touches on the concepts we are talking about.

Sex

Sex is about the physical characteristics on the basis of which someone is classified as male or female at birth.

It involves a combination of chromosomes, hormones, and internal and external sex characteristics. About 1 percent of people are born with a body that cannot be classified as male or female: they have an intersex condition.

Gender

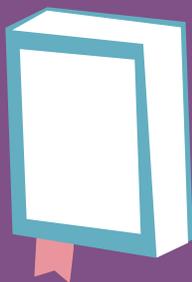
Gender is the way in which cultural and social meaning is given to sex. It is a set of norms, values, opinions, behaviour and practices. Gender is what we expect someone to be, want, can, do or show based on their gender. These gender expectations are deeply anchored in our society and are to a large extent internalised.

Gender norms

Men and women are 'supposed' to do certain things and not to do other things, based on their gender: these are gender norms. These are the rules you have to comply with in order to receive social recognition as a 'real' man or woman. Gender norms change, and differ per time, place and context.

Gender identity

Gender identity is about how a person identifies himself: male or female or something else. It is therefore about one's perception of their place on or outside the spectrum between man and woman. Gender identity is invisible and internal and changeable. Although people can choose to give it visibility... for example by clicking on one of the 56 (!) gender identities that you can choose from when creating a Facebook profile.



Further reading:

Of course there are a lot of other terms that matter too. The Gender Unicorn is a good example of the diversity in gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual and romantic attraction.

Illustrated by TSER (Trans Student Education Resources.)

“EMANCIPATION IS THE PRACTICE OF LIBERATION AND WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY AND JUSTICE”

EXERCISE 1.

THE MAN-BOX (PART 1 OF 2): Expectations

The man-box is an exercise that makes norms, stereotypes and power relations visible. It is an exercise you can do alone, with colleagues or with a group or class. The man-box makes it painfully clear how unequally boys and girls are approached and how great the impact of this is.

Please note: this exercise can be confronting. It investigates how stereotypes of men and women relate to the lived reality of men and women. The exercise allows the participants to name and experience inequality, which makes the impact on ourselves and others tangible. Therefore, it is important to consciously and actively support the group dynamics.

The exercise is divided into two blocks. The second part can be found on page 20. It is important to complete the entire exercise.

Emancipator offers supporting training courses to school classes, professionals and organisations to work with this exercise even more consciously.

Requirements:

- Two flipcharts, or two large sheets, a large whiteboard, or the illustrations on page 14 and 15.
- Markers or crayons
- A calm, safe group dynamic

Step 1: On each sheet, draw a large square with enough space to write something outside it.

Explain that you are going to do a brainstorm, that it is not about right or wrong answers and that there will be no discussion yet.

All associations that come up can be mentioned and are written down anonymously (about 5 minutes).

Step 2: Ask the question:

What do boys learn about masculinity? What are they supposed to do, or be, to be considered a 'real man'?

Write all answers in the first square (men) (takes about 10 minutes).

Step 3: Now do the same exercise for the second sheet (women). Ask the question:

What do girls learn about femininity? What are they supposed to do, or be, to be considered a 'real woman'?

Write the words in the second square (about 10 minutes).

Step 4: Discuss the results of the two brainstorms. Ask what the participants notice...

This could be, for example, that there are very different words on the different sheets for men and women. Or that there are interesting similarities.

What often happens is that on the women's side the word 'mother' is mentioned but on the men's sheet the word 'father' isn't. For men, words about high-status matters are often mentioned, whereas lower-status matters are more associated with women.

It is worth addressing that the brainstorm shows norms and expectations and is not a representation of actual differences between men and women (about 10 minutes).

Step 5: Then you ask the question:

Are there any terms written down that apply only to men or only to women?

It often turns out during this conversation that there are very few of these differences. And the differences that do exist are often purely physical. Depending on the group, this could also be a moment to talk about transgender people.

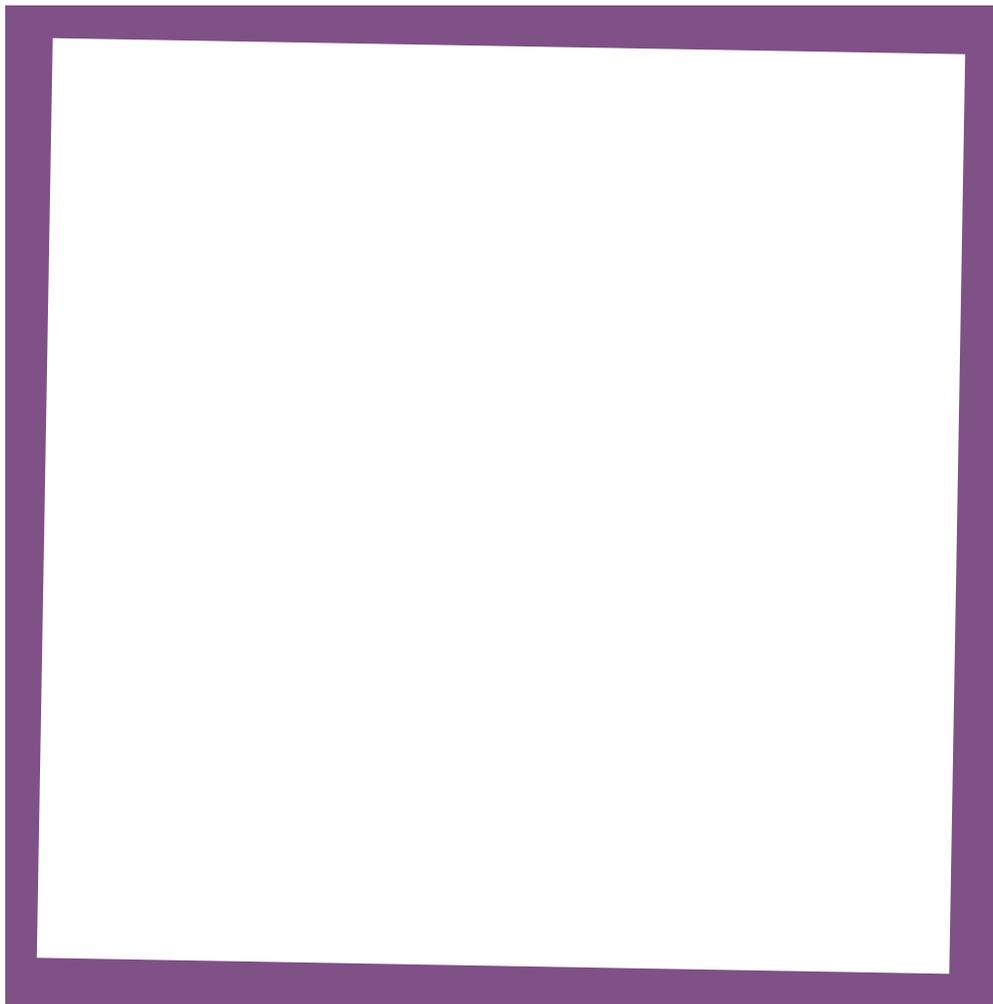
The conclusion now is that all those traits of which we expect to find half in boys and the other half in girls are just human traits. And that there is a lot to be said against the strict division between men and women as people with only male or only female characteristics (approx. 15 minutes).

After this, the step can be made to the second part of the exercise on page 20.

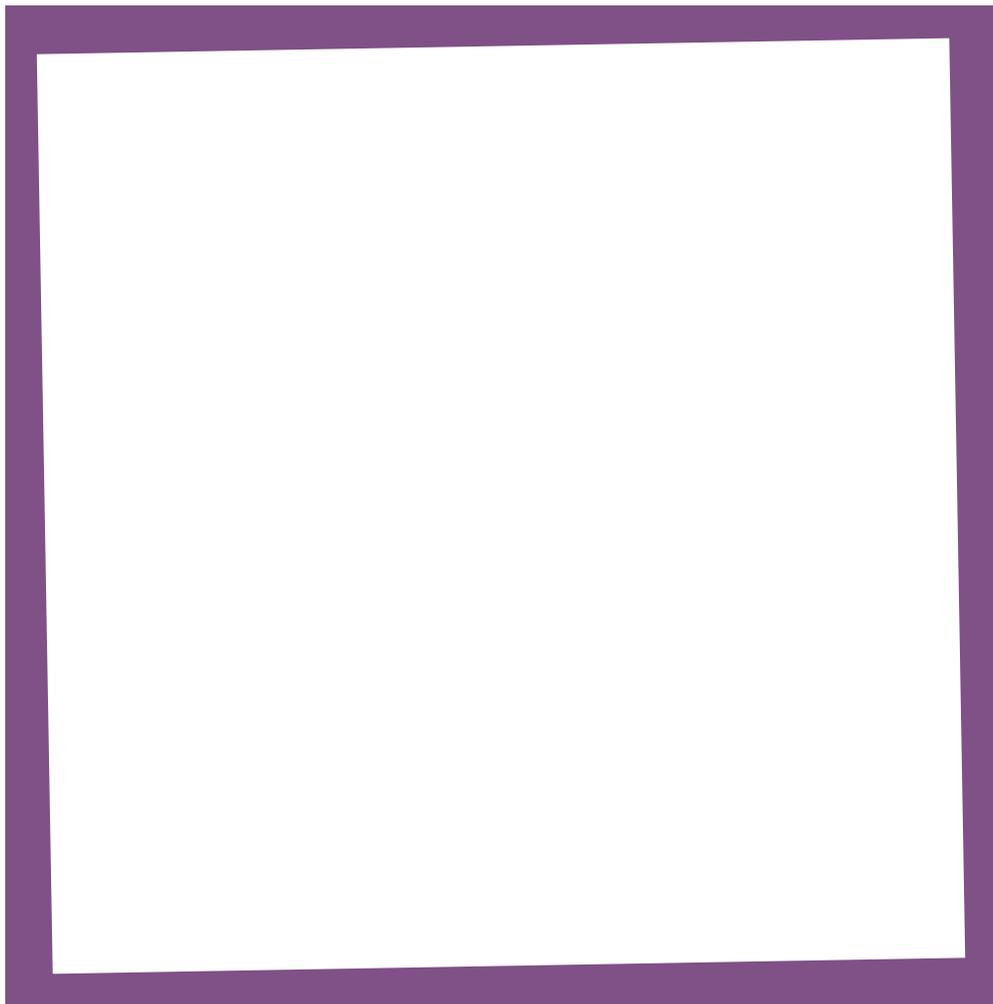
“MANY OF THE PROBLEMS THAT BOYS AND MEN EXPERIENCE AND CAUSE START WITH AN UNREALISTIC IMAGE OF WHAT THEY SHOULD BE”

Hannah Mars

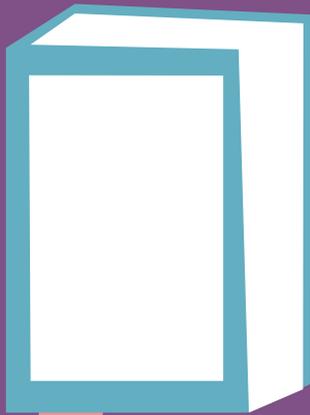
MEN



WOMEN



Interesting books/articles



GENDER EQUALITY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: a guide for teachers

How to implement gender equality and respect in the curriculum, and in all areas of school life
Helen Griffin

WAAROM FEMINISME GOED VOOR MANNEN IS (Why feminism is good for men)

How men can contribute to a better world and gain something from it in the process
Jens van Tricht (Dutch, link is to English abstract)

NAVIGATING GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Narrative Insights from Students and Educators

BOYS ARE SMARTER THAN GIRLS

35 myths about learning and education show how harmful presuppositions in education are
Pedro de Bruyckere, Paul Kirschner en Caspar Hulshof

FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY

A popular theory of feminism rooted in common sense and the wisdom of experience
bell hooks

DELUSIONS OF GENDER

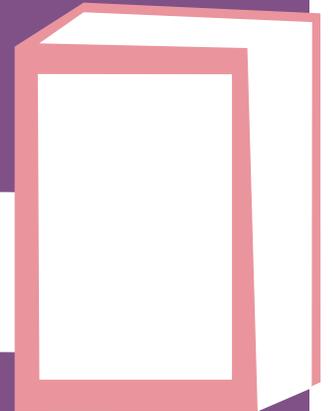
Debunking the gender gap
Cordelia Fine

TESTOSTERONE REX:

Myths of Sex, Science, and Society
Cordelia Fine

RESPECT

Everything a Guy Needs to Know about Sex, Love, and Consent
Inti Chavez Perez



MORE CARE IN BOYS



MODULE 2.

Status	18
Sanctions	19
Exercise 2. The man-box (part 2 of 2). Sanctions	20
● More inspiring videos	21
Revaluation	22
Conscious approach	23
Role modes and the ongoing conversation	24
● Clarifying reports	25
Exercise 3. Discussing gender equality	26
● Even more inspiring videos	28

STATUS

We have learned to see masculinity and femininity as two extremes on a spectrum, as opposites that are mutually exclusive. Men are taught not to be feminine and women not to be masculine.

Fortunately, in recent decades, many traditional male domains have become more accessible to women. And so-called 'masculine' characteristics are becoming more widely accepted in women. But men have, unfortunately, not kept pace in this development. Embracing their so-called 'feminine' qualities often encounters discomfort, resistance and disapproval for men.

It is important to strive to allow boys to embrace their full human potential, including their supposedly 'feminine' qualities. This will increase their possibilities in the 21st century with all its new opportunities and - challenges. When men no longer have to define themselves based on their career and performance, there will be more room for relationships, connection and personal growth. Acknowledging more diverse qualities in men will therefore lead to more happiness and health, less loneliness, less 'keeping up appearances' and being allowed to be yourself more. There is much to be gained in this area. However, things are moving slowly.

One of the reasons that men conform strongly to the ideal of masculinity is because of status: men are taught to always strive for status. And 'masculine' qualities are often rewarded with an increase in status, while 'feminine' qualities receive little status, especially in men. Just compare the rows of characteristics in module 1 on page 7

The road to more acceptance of 'feminine' characteristics in men is therefore particularly difficult. When men display traits that are considered feminine, they lose status, security and opportunity.

Therefore, we cannot leave the broadening of masculinity norms to the individual - without also working on social change. Otherwise, the burden will fall on the men who take the lead. There must be a safe environment for men to explore who they want to be.

Status affects many areas. Changing status differences is therefore a battle on many fronts at once. We need to work for change everywhere at once: in the language we speak to people, the stories we tell, the toys children play with, the images we present to our children, and the examples we give. The change must happen in legislation and regulations, in institutions, in communities, in the interaction between people, on the labour market and in education.

Fortunately, there are also glimmers of hope. We've already come a long way. More and more people are choosing to share the care and responsibility for children, household, and income more equally. Increasingly diverse images of masculinity are visible in the media. And through women's emancipation, gender inequality has already been reduced.

At the same time, there is still a long way to go, fraught with discomfort, resistance, social barriers and power imbalances. The role that education can play in this is considerable and the individual commitment and enthusiasm of teachers is essential.



SANCTIONS

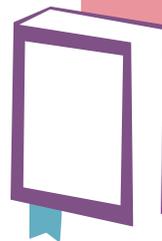
How can boys and men find out who they want to be if they are constantly challenged when they deviate from the norm? When they are told not to behave like a sissy, not to cry 'like a girl', to pull themselves together and to carry on like a man?

This social pressure, which boys feel from an early age, inhibits their mental and social-emotional development. Boys and men are constantly being told to emphasise and exaggerate their 'masculine' qualities and to suppress and ignore their 'feminine' qualities.

Constantly having to prove masculinity through competition, achievement and aggression, combined with suppressing qualities such as empathy, compassion and caring, obviously creates problems. The negative consequences of this cocktail affect us all. An anthology of the consequences is included on page 34.

When a boy or man decides not to meet the masculinity standard, this inevitably leads to obstruction. A system of implicit or explicit social sanctions and punishment comes into effect. This happens in many ways, in varying degrees of seriousness: from jokes, correction, rejection and scorn, to exclusion and violence.

When a boy or man does adhere to the standards and expectations that apply to him, when he shows that he is a real man, he will be rewarded with respect, prestige and love, and specifically with, for example, higher wages and increased social opportunities. How this process works becomes tangible in exercise 2.



Further reading:
**HOW SCHOOL BULLYING
IMPACTS LGTB YOUNG ADULTS**
Research Link McClellandinstitute



Watch the video:
PISNIGHT THE MOVIE
Nicolaas Veul's research into
the effects of swear words such
as sissy, wimp, etc.

VPRO - 3 DOC
45:31 min (Dutch)



Further reading:
**WHY PATRIARCHY IS KILLING
MEN**

Gender equality isn't just good for
women. It also saves men's lives.
Liz Plank in The Washington Post

Exercise 2.

THE MAN-BOX (PART 2 OF 2): Sanctions

This assignment is a continuation of assignment 1 on page 12. You will continue to work with the squares you have filled in on the board or a sheet or on pages 14 and 15.

We have learned that there is a difference between the behaviour and characteristics expected from boys and girls. While in principle we all have equal qualities, society imposes rules on us, and we ourselves impose rules on each other, that limit us in how we think we're allowed to be. In this assignment we will explore how rules and norms can keep us from showing ourselves completely. The exercise shows in a confrontational way how people are forced to conform.

Step 1: Take the completed square about men. Ask yourself, each other or the class:

What happens if a man doesn't show the characteristics mentioned in this square?

What are the names he will get then?

Have the group think about this and write these terms on the outside around the square (approx. 10 minutes).

Step 2: Now take the completed square about women. Ask the question:

What happens if a woman doesn't show the characteristics mentioned in this square?

Have the group think about this and write these terms on the outside around the square (approx. 10 minutes).

Step 3: Together, take the time to look at what has been written down. What stands out? What are the differences between the two squares? How do they relate to each other, and is that positive or negative? It is good to provide space for the personal experiences of the participants. Together, the words give an impression of the penalties for deviating from the gender norm.

If the injustice of this is not automatically addressed from within the group, it is good to mention it. For example, if a group of boys find it difficult to sympathise with the position of women, it can be helpful to make it personal by asking them to relate it to their mothers, sisters and aunts. Or link it to their own experiences of other forms of exclusion, bullying, racism, oppression or violence. As a result, sometimes suddenly the penny drops.

The aim is for the group to understand the injustice that follows from gender norms and the sanctions for deviations (approx. 15 minutes).

Step 4: Together with the group, look for ways in which you can change this on a small scale: to reduce the consequences of deviation from the norm.

Based on the results of this, you can search on the next page for interesting videos that can help to continue the conversation in a next meeting (approx. 10 minutes).

Step 5: At the end of the exercise it is good to ask about the feelings of the participants. The terms that have been collected and written down can be experienced as hurtful and can bring up old pain. It is important to finish together, calmly and with attention for everyone in the group (about 5 minutes).

More inspiring videos

WE SHOULD ALL BE FEMINISTS



A TED Talk that sparks an international conversation about feminism
TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
29:20 min (English)

A CALL TO MEN

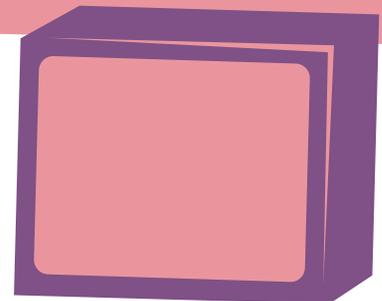


A TED Talk on the Man Box and its harmful effects
TED Talk by Tony Porter
11:45 min (English)



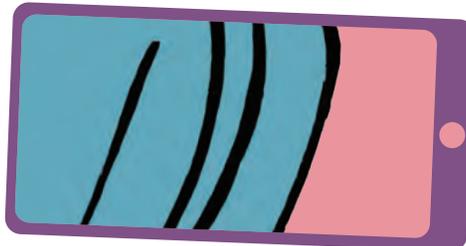
EMMA WATSON CALLS FOR HEFORSHE AT UN

Actress Emma Watson invites men to join the global campaign for gender equality
United Nation
13:15 min (English)



RUIMTE IN JE HOOFD (Space in your head)

video on task distribution within families
Women INC
1:56 min (Dutch)



THE MYSTERY OF THE BASKET

Amusing film about unequal division of labour in relationships
Troy Kinne 1:47 (English)



BECOMING A FATHER: JOIN US IN MAKING THE MENCARE COMMITMENT

What prevents men from being more involved in the care of their child(ren)?
MenCare
2:06 min (English)

WHY GENDER EQUALITY IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE. INCLUDING MEN.

On equal treatment and the prospect of a happier life for all
TED Talk by Michael Kimmel 15:44 min (English)



REVALUATION

The lower status of characteristics that are considered 'feminine' is not only harmful to women. It also prevents boys from developing freely. Boys are less likely to choose school subjects, fields of study, roles and occupations associated with women. When boys are asked what they expect from their future, few will talk about children, housekeeping, parenting and other care tasks in the private domain. And at a later age, men are less likely to choose professions in care, education and social services. And why should they, if they lose status with it, will not be seen as 'real man', and society turns its nose up at those sectors?

Inequality in the labour market works like a vicious cycle. Low status and low salary roles, occupations and positions are shunned by men, causing their status to fall further, salary lags, men stay away even more, status falls even further.

This vicious cycle can only be broken if we, as a society, explicitly discuss these status differences. To ensure that care, upbringing, housekeeping, relief work and education are seen as at least as valuable and important as being a breadwinner, having a career, work at an office, or technology and power.

A hopeful development in this area is the formulation of '21st century skills'. Our society is becoming increasingly complex and challenges such as climate change, scarcity, violence and globalisation require a different way of working. That is why the *21st century skills* have been introduced in education: the most important skills to be successful in the twenty-first century.

Communication, empathy, cooperation, reflection and self-control – which we traditionally associate with women – are mentioned in it as important skills. This is an important step towards a social revaluation of 'feminine' qualities.



“WHEN IT COMES TO EMANCIPATION ISSUES, THE PERSONAL OFTEN BECOMES POLITICAL.”

CONSCIOUS APPROACH

As a teacher or tutor, you can play an important role in breaking harmful stereotypes. By changing your own behaviour and by calling others to account for theirs. Change requires everyone to self reflect and adopt a critical attitude towards their own position. Addressing this together and being vulnerable can create a safer, more inclusive and open atmosphere. When working on gender norms, the way you approach it is very important. Even the best intentions can lead to a reinforcement of what you had hoped to tackle.

Four approaches are distinguished, of which only the fourth will lead to true and positive change.

Gender Exploiting Approach

To involve and activate boys, 'boy's stuff' is often organised: sports, romping, barbecues or building something. It's a way to get them interested: you use what interests they should have according to the gender norms. That is logical and understandable, but if boys are only addressed on those stereotypical activities and preferences, those stereotypes are reinforced.

Gender neutral approach

A gender neutral or gender blind approach ignores the existence of gender norms and stereotypes. This approach does not confirm or reinforce stereotypes, nor does it help to broaden or transform them. If the negative consequences of gender norms are not recognised and addressed, they will continue to exist.

Gender-sensitive approach

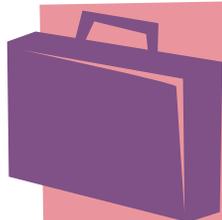
When gender stereotypes are recognised and their negative consequences are discussed, we speak of a gender-sensitive approach. This offers some room for change, but does not actively break through and broaden gender stereotypes. It opens a door to the conversation. This is important, but it does not yet encourage change.

Gender transformative approach

A gender transformative approach recognises harmful gender norms and proposes an alternative: look, it can be done in another way. This can be done, for example, by showing counter-stereotypes.

This approach goes through three steps:

1. Critical reflection on how gender norms work
2. Raising awareness of the consequences and harmfulness of gender norms
3. Replacing gender norms with diverse, positive norms, which explicitly assume equal rights and opportunities for everyone



Further work on this:

IMAGINE

Various lessons and methods of teaching to get started with gender in the class

Emancipator

Further work on this:

PROGRAM H

Material that encourages critical reflection on rigid gender norms

Promundo Global



ROLE MODELS AND THE ONGOING CONVERSATION

Gender awareness of students starts with personal awareness and reflection from their teachers. In order to actually pass on and live the change, it is essential that the change is really felt and internalised first.

Gender transformative teaching is difficult and involves trial and error. Teachers are in constant interaction with their students and naturally fall back on what they know or think they know about them. Gender provides a lot of support in this regard. Letting go of the certainty that gender seems to offer and seeing children more as individuals, independent of their gender, may feel uncertain and difficult. And yet it is necessary, because what we currently teach young people about differences between men and women has too many permanent harmful effects.

Young people are taught gender norms both explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly when, for example, girls are asked how they hope to combine work with children in the future. Or when guys are rewarded for acting tough.

But more often, it happens implicitly. For example, when a teacher routinely says that the boys are too busy, or the girls are so well-behaved and quiet. Or that boys get extra praise if they read well, and girls if they do their maths well.

This way, the unconscious expectations and prejudices of teachers seep into the classroom, and children pick it up. Through the continuous repetition of these, in itself innocent, messages, children form associations that ultimately stand in the way of their freedom to express themselves authentically.

For example: a dilemma we encountered while writing this toolkit was what words to use. We chose for 'jongens en **meiden**' instead of the more common 'jongens en **meisjes**' (in English this would very roughly compare to Grrls vs Girls, the situation it is not translatable). 'Meisjes', is a diminutive word and conveys an unconscious message about the position of girls in relation to boys.

In addition to setting a good example as a teacher, it is important to engage in a conversation with the class about sex, gender and gender identity.

It is important that both the boys and the girls are actively involved in this conversation. The conversation must be separated from sexual preference: gender is not only about LGBT people. It is about giving all young people the space to develop in all their facets. Sexuality is only a small part of that. It is true that sexuality and sexual orientation are often used as a way to keep people 'in their gender box': a 'real man' should fall for women, a 'real woman' for men.

It takes courage, energy and dedication to reconsider the status quo passed down from generation to generation..

And it requires a lot from both the teacher and the student to dare to engage in conversation about this. Exercise 3, on page 26, can help.

Further watching: NO MORE BOYS AND GIRLS



An experiment in which a class full of seven-year-olds is approached in a gender neutral way
NTR
54:00 min (several episodes) (English)



Clarifying reports

CAN GENDER-FAIR LANGUAGE REDUCE GENDER STEREOTYPING AND DISCRIMINATION?

Key requisite knowledge and productive pedagogies

Sabine Sczesny, Magda Formanowicz and Franziska Moser, Department of Psychology, University of Bern

A FRAMEWORK FOR 'BEST PRACTICE' IN BOYS EDUCATION:

Key requisite knowledge and productive pedagogies

Amanda Keddie

ENCOURAGING MORE MALE PRIMARY TEACHERS

An article about how to attract men to become a primary school teacher

Teaching Expertise

BOYS' 'UNDERACHIEVEMENT'

A critical feminist approach to the issue

Gender and Education Association GEA

SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF YOUNG LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LGBT) PEOPLE IN EUROPE

Judit Takács, ILGA-Europe

Why Don't People Care That More Men Don't Choose Caregiving Professions?

Scott Barry Kaufman in Scientific American

GETTING IN EARLY TO AVOID GENDER STEREOTYPING CAREERS

Overcoming gender segregation in occupations matters to industry and to the economy. *Karen Struthers*

IMAGES: International Men and Gender Equality Survey

An inventory of attitudes and practices around gender themes

Promundo

CAPTURING THE POTENTIAL

A hopeful view on the increasing gender equality on the Dutch labour market

McKinsey Global Institute

THE IDEA THAT THE BRAINS OF BOYS LAG BEHIND IS A NEUROMYTH

A brain researcher went looking for the differences in the brain development of boys and girls, but did not find them

Lara Wierenga (Leiden University)

WHAT WORKS TO REDUCE PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION?

A review of the evidence

Dr. Maureen McBride

EXERCISE 3. DISCUSSING GENDER EQUALITY

There is a lot of video material about gender that can also be used in the classroom. In this exercise, we offer some suggestions for discussion topics, point out some inspiring videos, and suggest a lesson plan to help get the class conversation going.

Videos can be used to start the conversation in class, with colleagues or at a parent-teacher conference.

Topics of conversation

1. Boys who do 'girl things'

Discuss why we value so-called boy and girl things unequally. Why we appreciate boyish qualities in girls but not the other way around. And what we could do to stimulate boys to develop or show their 'feminine' qualities more.

Layout of a lesson plan

A lesson plan might look like this.

- Phase 1. Gaining knowledge: watch the video
- Phase 2. Increase empathy: evaluate in groups what stood out
- Phase 3. Learn from each other: start the conversation. Look for recognition in participants' own lives
- Phase 4. Gain insight: look together for changes that could improve the situation
- Phase 5. Apply: writing assignment or an assignment to take a position on this in a small group



Watch the video:
MAN MADE - GENDER COMPENSATION

Watch the video:
GENDER INEQUALITY EXPLAINED BY CHILDREN

Also read the column

GENDER ISSUE

Richard Howerson

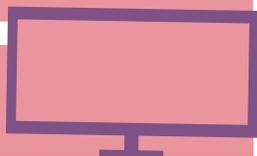


2. More care in the lives of boys and men

It is interesting to consider the role that care-taking can or will have in the lives of boys and men. Also for boys who are in more traditional masculine occupations and hope to have a successful career: they too may get children and have to combine work, household and care. The question is how they hope to combine their work and private lives. And of course it is also about taking care of themselves in their busy lives.

Watch the video:
THE MYSTERY OF THE BASKET

Watch the video:
RUIMTE IN JE HOOFD
(space in your mind)



Discuss what you recognise from these videos, from yourself and possibly from others. Then explore with the group the underlying patterns.

How do we see the differences between boys' and girls' expectations reflected in this dynamic? And what can we do to encourage boys to take on more care responsibilities?

You can also use a game such as: That's a (gender) stereotype, to raise awareness and stimulate discussion about choices regarding daily routines and future work choices.

PLAY THE GAME: THAT'S A (GENDER) STEREOTYPE!

Children learn to decide for themselves what they want to be when they grow up

GLSEN.org

3. Involved fatherhood and caring masculinity

In the Netherlands and globally, the involvement of men in the upbringing of their children is growing. Many of the men and the organisations involved, find each other in MenCare: an international campaign for more involved fatherhood. In the Netherlands, after years of struggle, birth leave for partners has been expanded considerably.

Discuss the following questions with each other:

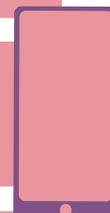
Who is or was your father?
How is or was your relationship with him? What good things from your father would you like to pass on?
What things would you like to do differently? What would help with that?

A number of interesting videos can help to give this conversation more depth.

Watch the video:
RAISING BOYS TO BE MEN WHO CARE

Watch the video:
BEING A FATHER: JOIN US IN MAKING THE MENCARE COMMITMENT'

Watch the video:
JOIN THE MOVEMENT: TIME FOR ACTION



Even more inspiring videos



INTRODUCTION TO GENDER STEREOTYPES & UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

An introduction to gender issues

Education Scotland 1:15:05



MENENGAGE

A powerful plea to contribute to a different kind of masculinity

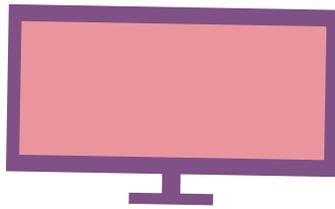
MenEngage 2:49 min (English)



THE BEST A MAN CAN BE

This advert raises the issue of harmful masculinity and calls for change

Gillette 1:45 min (English)



IS IT OKAY?

Advert that questions the viewer about masculinity

Axe 0:51 min (English)

DOCUMENTARIES



MAN MADE

Sunny Bergman examines societal ideas about masculinity

VPRO - 2 DOC 57:00 min (Dutch)



PISNIGHT THE MOVIE

Nicolaas Veul's research into the effects of swear words such as sissy, wimp, etc.

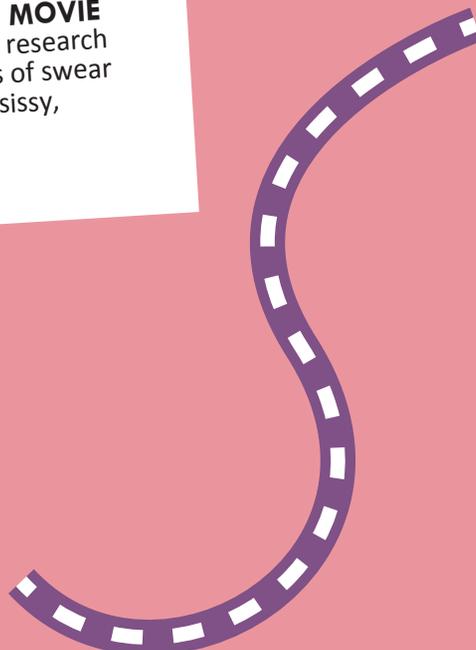
VPRO - 3 DOC 45:31 min (Dutch)

COMEDY

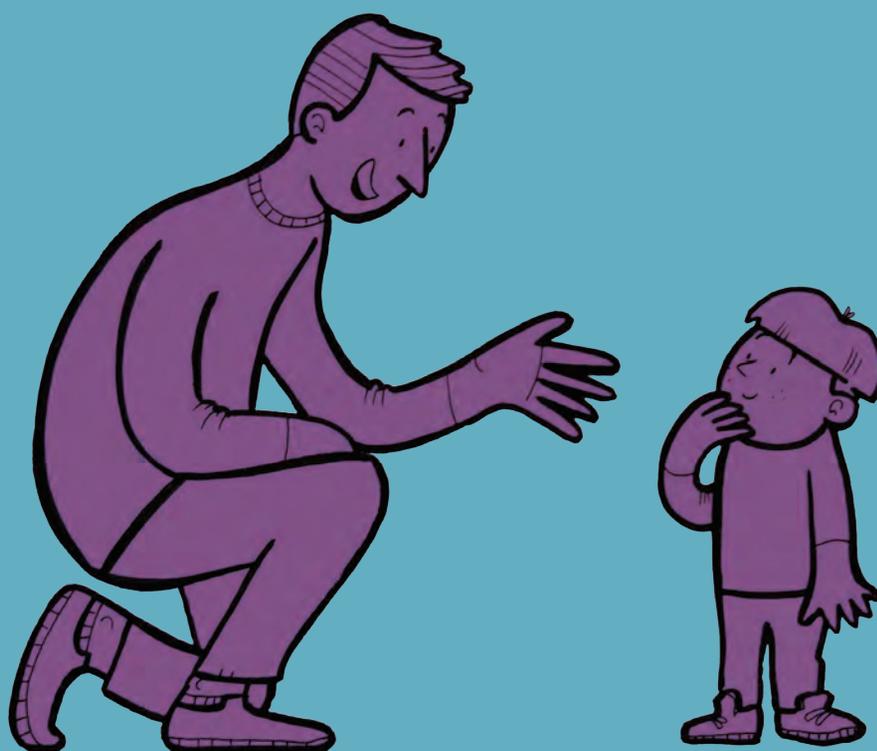


NANETTE trailer of a stand-up show about the impact of gender inequality

Hannah Gadsby 1:26 min (English)



MORE BOYS TOWARDS (HEALTH) CARE AND EDUCATION



MODULE 3.

Getting started	30
Educational and vocational orientation	31
Methods and interventions	32
● Useful tools	33
Why it is important to address masculinity	34
● Inspiring people and more	36
Tips for in the classroom, lessons from programmes for girls	37

GETTING STARTED

Didactics, teaching materials and role models

Gender norms are transmitted in various ways in the classroom. As we mentioned earlier, choice of words is of great influence, but so are illustrations and the examples you use. Many books used in schools reproduce stereotypes in examples and characters.

But the layout of the space can also have a counter-productive effect. A pink cooking corner and a blue handicraft corner in the lower groups make it immediately clear to the children what they are supposed to be aiming for.

Changing all of this on your own is difficult. But you can discuss it with colleagues and with the class. And you can actively change it by supplementing teaching materials.

If children are exposed to images and people that are different from the norm from an early age, they will later feel more able to deviate from what is expected of them and use their full potential.

Put it on the school agenda

It is essential to put the theme of gender on the agenda within your school. When there is no active school-wide effort to reduce stereotypes and inequality, separate lessons on gender equality can actually confirm the norm: if something is treated in a separate lesson, it is labelled as special. Just pointing out the issue is not enough for change.

Get parents involved

Because gender stereotypes are deeply ingrained in our society, change will stir up a lot of emotions. Especially in parents who are not aware of the impact and the need to do something about it. The influence of parents on the world-view and the choices of young people cannot be underestimated.

That is why, in order to break through norms and stereotypes, you also need the parents. Consider putting the topic at the center of a parent evening. You can then work with one of the modules from this toolkit or engage a trainer via Emancipator.

Further reading: **ANALYSING GENDER REPRESENTATIONS IN SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS**

A practical approach to analyse male and female representations in the various printed media intended for a child readership
Sylvie Cromer and Carole Brugeille

Further work: **GENDER EQUAL PLAY IN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE**

offers practical and helpful tips on how to promote gender equality in an accessible way



Further work:

THE ABC OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Aptitude, Behaviour, Confidence
OECD

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION

Young people decide on their further education and future profession at the end of secondary school. But children orientate themselves much earlier on those choices. The focus of this is between the ages of nine and fourteen. Even then, children form an idea of the professions that might suit them. Gender appears to be the biggest determining factor when it comes to this choice. When care and education are mainly associated with women in the early years, it will be difficult to convince boys at a later age to opt for this.

In short, when we want to move boys and men towards health care, welfare and education, we should start at an early age. Gender awareness and a wide range of examples and role models are of great importance here. This applies to both primary and secondary education.

Already at primary school, children should be given the confidence that they can follow their feelings and that gender is not a limiting factor. Not for girls, but not for boys either. As long as boys feel that they are not allowed to show their 'feminine' qualities too much, this will continue to translate into an underrepresentation of men in care and education.

It is important in study and vocational guidance conversations to listen carefully and to approach young people as individuals: with their own talents, interests, weaknesses and strengths. It is difficult but important not to let your own expectations play a role in this. The choices that boys make around school, study, work and relationships are choices that last a lifetime. It's important to identify the patterns that keep these boys from making authentic choices.

Therefore, also have a conversation about what makes them happy. Look for the vulnerability, ignore the expectations they have been given. Be aware of the enormous pressure that many boys experience from their family and environment.

To guide boys effectively in this process requires warmth, compassion and discipline. Behavioural change happens gradually and must come from the young people themselves instead of being imposed by the environment.

“WE’VE BEGUN TO RAISE OUR DAUGHTERS MORE LIKE SONS... BUT FEW HAVE THE COURAGE TO RAISE OUR SONS MORE LIKE DAUGHTERS”

Gloria Steinem

METHODS AND INTERVENTIONS

You can actively work with the class on reevaluating, questioning and countering stereotypes. Counter-stereotyped role models can appear in the classroom in all kinds of forms: in reading books, teaching materials, class discussions and/or assignments.

To this end, Emancipator also has a group of 'role models': men who have made non-traditional life choices. These role models can be brought into the classroom through various programmes. This can be done through freely available films, books and teaching materials. Or a role model programme.

Successful programmes for girls have been available for some time. An excellent example is 'Beeldenbrekers' (role breakers) by VHTO. In this program for groups 1 to 8 of primary education, female technical and science professionals visit the classroom.

Programmes that encourage boys into less science-oriented professions are still not very common. But nevertheless, there is a number of interesting programs and sources available in this area. For example, Emancipator offers various workshops and training courses through 'Rent a huMAN', and IMAGINE has been giving workshops to young people in education and youth work for many years. 'Aan jou hebben we wat' (You are an asset) offers a role model project. And Plan International also has an interesting gender-transformative programme: Champions of Change.

There are also fun class interventions on the Let Toys Be Toys website. The Belgian website *genderklik.be* has great material that students can use themselves. For the smallest children, there is the toolkit 'Gender in Kindergarten' by Rosa. An overview of these and many more interventions can be found on the following pages:



Further reading: MEN STAND OUT AS DAYCARE WORKERS

Article about a male daycare worker in Canada
Paul Irish in the Toronto Star



Further reading: TIPS FOR TACKLING DISCRIMINATORY BULLYING

Top tips for schools on how to reduce discriminatory bullying
Equality and Human Rights Commission



Further work: INSPIRING THE FUTURE - REDRAW THE BALANCE

How role models can break existing stereotypes and broaden children's horizons
Video by MullenLowe London

Useful tools

TOOLKITS

IMAGINE

Lessons and teaching methods for working with gender in the classroom
Emancipator



GENDER 10: GENDER EQUALITY TOOLKIT FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Providing guidance and practical examples
EAC HWB team, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, East Ayrshire Women's Aid and staff and pupils at Dalmellington Primary school

DAD'S TOOLKIT

Building Blocks & Talking Tools for dads with children 0-8 years
FamiliesNSW Fathers toolkit project Northern Sydney

BREAKING THE MOULD

A series of resources to help challenging gender stereotypes in the classroom
National Education Union

PROGRAM H

Programme to encourage critical reflection about rigid norms related to manhood
Promundo Global

TRANSFORMING GENDER NORMS

Lessons learned from international gender programmes
Gender diversity Alliance

EDUCATION FOR EQUALITY - Going Beyond Gender

Teachers Tool Kit for Gender Equality in preschool and primary school education

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS

Resources for fathers
National Fatherhood Initiative

PROGRAM P

Provides concrete strategies and activities to engage men globally in active fatherhood
Promundo Global

THE "BOY TURN" IN RESEARCH ON GENDER AND EDUCATION

Overview of research and perspectives on the increased focus on boys in education
Marcus Weaver-Hightower

MANHOOD 2.0

Encouraging young men to become agents of change
Promundo

TIPS

THE GENDER-FRIENDLY CLASSROOM

Article and video on how to make the classroom inclusive
Dr. Lee Airton

TEN TIPS FOR PUTTING INTERSECTIONALITY IN PRACTICE

The opportunity agenda

9 TIPS FOR PARENTS

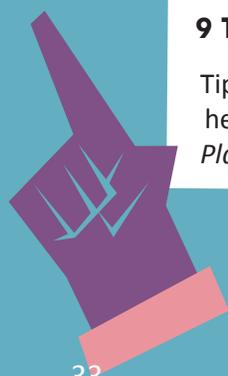
Tips on how to raise boys who embrace a healthy positive masculinity
Plan International and Promundo

THE TRANSGENDER TEEN

A handbook for parents and professionals supporting transgender and non-binary teens
Stephanie A. Brill

A GUIDE FOR FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN SYSTEMS OF CARE

This guide offers strategies for systems and families, especially those who are involved in systems of care, to help fathers become more involved.



WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS MASCULINITY

An anthology

In the Netherlands, too, the position of men and women is still not equal, and there are many social and personal problems related to gender and gender norms. The Netherlands is ranked 38th in the Global Gender Gap Index 2020, with a score of 74 percent (WEF, World Economic Forum). In the Gender Equality Index of the European Institution for Gender Equality, the Netherlands is in sixth place (EIGE).

Boys are performing worse than girls in education and choose different studies

Boys and girls score about equally well on the CITO test (a test at the end of primary education), but in secondary education the difference between boys and girls increases quickly (source: CBS, central bureau for statistics). Boys more often than girls have to repeat a year, are suspended more often, drop out more often and more often obtain a lower diploma than girls (TNO, an independent research organisation). Girls do better than boys in both secondary and higher education and are more often highly educated (Emancipator monitor 2018).



In higher education, women are much more likely to opt for studies in education, care, culture and society; while men are more likely to choose law, science, computer science, and studies in the field of technology and industry (CBS). Three times as many men as women work in science and technology professions, three times as many women as men work in health care (CBS).

There are major staff shortages in care and education and far fewer men work in these fields.

In 2016, more than 1.2 million people worked in healthcare: almost 1 in 6 working people (CBS). At the end of 2018 there were more than 31,000 vacancies in the care sector, and it is predicted that by 2022 there will be a shortage of 80,000 employees (Government sources). Only 10 percent of people who graduate in a care profession are men (CBS).



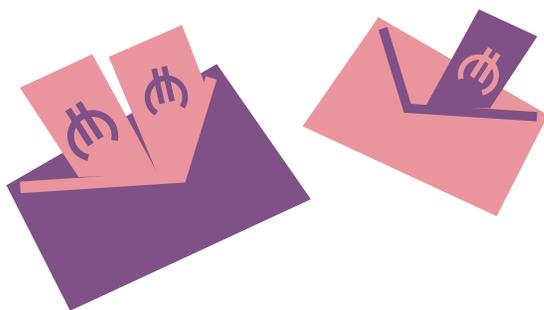
According to estimates by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, there will be a shortage of more than 4000 FTE in primary education in 2022. Only 19 percent of the teachers are male (Education in Figures).

Women earn less, men care less

Women in the Netherlands earn less than men. The unadjusted pay gap was still 15 percent in 2017. Corrected for, among other things, level of education, professional level, working hours and work experience, a 5 per cent difference in wages remains unexplained in the public sector and a 7 per cent difference in the private sector (source: Atria, institute on gender equality and women's history). Nearly three quarters of women work part-time, and less than half of women are financially independent (source: Women Inc.).

Although most parents would prefer to divide the care for their children equally, this is only possible to a limited extent. In most families, fathers work more hours in a paid job and mothers take on more care tasks (Emancipator monitor 2018).

Women spend almost twice as much time on unpaid (housekeeping and care) work as men (WEF). 60 percent of caregivers are women (Women Inc.). Many patterns and problems are passed on inter-generationally, from parents to children: not only gender stereotypes but also patterns of violence, poverty, and inequality. The extension of birth leave through the Wet invoering Extra Geboortverlof (Act for Extra Birth Leave, WIEG) in 2020 is an important first step to give fathers more room to develop in their fatherhood, and also an essential



contribution to the prevention of intergenerational transmission of problems.

Violence against women and the LGBTQIA+ community is a major problem, mainly committed by men

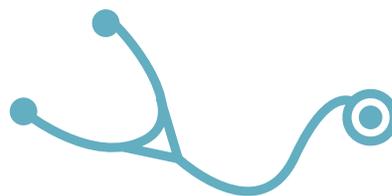
45 percent of women in the Netherlands have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of fifteen, 20 percent of women even before the age of fifteen. 10 percent of women have experienced rape. More than half of women avoid situations or places because of fear of violence.



In nine out of ten cases this violence is committed by a man (FRA, Atria).

Men have more health and other problems than women

Men are more often less educated than women (TNO), are more often unemployed (CBS), and more often display criminal behaviour than women (CBS). 84 percent of the homeless are male (CBS). Men are much more prone to alcohol abuse than women (Jellinek, organisation for addiction treatment), and use cannabis and other drugs twice as often as women. The life expectancy of men is also lower than that of women (CBS).



Inspiring people and more

ROLE MODELS

THINK NURSING IS JUST FOR WOMEN? THINK AGAIN.

Three male nurses explain why more men are joining the profession

JOHAN BAVMAN

An inspiring photo essay with stories about caring fathers

THE MAKING OF A MALE MIDWIFE

When a teenage boy in Birmingham said he wanted to become a midwife, he found himself swimming against the tide.

MEN STAND OUT AS DAYCARE WORKERS

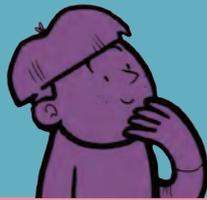
Article about a male daycare worker in Canada
Paul Irish in the Toronto Star

INSPIRING THE FUTURE - REDRAW THE BALANCE

How role models can break existing stereotypes and broaden children's horizon
Video by Mullen Lowe London

HOW PARENTS INFLUENCE KIDS' GENDER ROLES

How parents can contribute to balanced gender roles. The importance of role models (video The Atlantic)



PLATFORMS

LET TOYS BE TOYS

Challenging gender stereotypes in childhood

GENDERKLIK

Belgium website (in Flemish) with lots of tips and links to videos and articles about gender

GENDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Toolkits for kindergarten and primary education (in Dutch, but the posters can provide materials for discussion)
Rosa VZW

SCHOOLS OUT UK

Website with resources to address LGBT+ issues at school

SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRE

Information and resources about sexual health

THE MEN'S STORY PROJECT

Men and Boys Taking a Stand for Healthy Masculinities and Gender Justice

BOYS WON'T BE BOYS

Theatre about the diversity of masculinity. Under the inspiring leadership of *Rikkert van Huisstede*

TIPS FOR THE CLASSROOM. LESSONS FROM PROGRAMMES FOR GIRLS

VHTO, the national expertise bureau for girls/women in science and technology, has decades of experience in advising teachers and schools to organise education in such a way that girls are more stimulated to opt for studies and professions in science and technology, and IT.

These domains are traditionally seen as masculine and the number of girls choosing these directions is very limited. What can we learn from these experiences when it comes to encouraging more boys to consider studying or working in traditional female fields such as education and care?

Tip 1: Bring non-stereotypical role models into the classroom

Get people with non-stereotypical professions in the classroom. Preferably from an early age. There is nothing as effective in combating gender stereotypes as examples of people who do things differently, so-called contrast stereotypes or counter-stereotypes. Invite them as guest lecturers or to a class on a particular topic.

Whether it concerns women with a technical profession - as VHTO does now - or men who work in care, childcare or education. Examples of people who have made non-stereotypical choices show children and young people that they have more choices than they might think. In addition, they are important as role models for the boys and girls who are considering a different choice, but have doubts because you see so few men or women in a certain profession. VHTO developed a special lesson on this subject for primary schools: *Beeldenbrekers* (Image breakers). After an assignment to draw someone with a technical profession, they meet someone who has that profession. Nine out of ten children turn out to have drawn a man and they are surprised when a female technical professional walks into the classroom. Such a lesson can, of course, also be done with men in non-stereotypical professions.

Tip 2: Check if the room is agreeable for everyone

Take a critical look at the space in which you teach. Is it recognisable and attractive for everyone, for boys and girls? For example, are boys and girls equally represented on posters, banners and other visual material?

And are they depicted in a non-stereotypical way? But also, what kind of material do you offer and what does that look like? Who mainly uses which material? Does the layout of your classroom unintentionally emphasise gender stereotypes? It can be fun to discuss this with your students and to explore what could be done differently.

Tip 3: Take a closer look at your teaching materials

Research shows that gender stereotypes are confirmed in many teaching methods and textbooks. For example, it contains more men than women and women are more often described or depicted in a care taking (non-working) role. Involve your students in the research. For example, have them work in groups to review parts of the lesson material using questions such as:

- How many pictures of men and women do you come across? What are they doing? What exactly is in the picture?
- How many men and how many women are described in the text?
- What is the occupation of the men and women you encounter in the text or in the image?
- If the man or woman has no profession, what does he or she do?

That will probably provide many ingredients for a conversation about gender stereotypes.

Tip 4: Treat boys and girls the same

In practice, boys and girls are often treated differently at school. It is often about small things of which we are hardly aware. An inequality that often emerges, for example, is that boys are given more turns, receive more feedback, and are asked more thinking questions (which increase self-confidence and creative ability) and less knowledge questions (which imprint material on memory). Conversely, initiative and interactive behaviour of girls who more often take turns or ask questions is often condemned as 'not girlish'. The consequences of this are not only negative for girls but also for boys. Because boys will also get a message about what is 'normal' for them. The less initiating and interactive boy who asks less or demands less gets the implicit message that there is something wrong with him: that he is not 'boyish' enough.



The rules that dictate how men and women should behave are strict, and the implications are severe if you deviate from them. This has consequences for the choices children make and the way in which they can develop. Not only for girls, which has been the focus of attention in the past, but also for boys. That's what this toolkit is about.

This toolkit offers professionals in and around education support and inspiration in tackling these topics. Here you will find:

- Tools for conversations with yourself, students and colleagues
- Lessons that you can use in the classroom and within a teacher group
- Treasure chests full of inspiring books, articles, videos, organisations, workshops, and teaching materials

This toolkit allows us to work together towards a safer, more inclusive and healthier society for all.

Those who are already well acquainted with the importance of the subject will find the tools to get started here. Those who are exploring the subject will find an excellent introduction to the field.

“IF WE SUCCEED IN TRULY VALUING ALL HUMAN QUALITIES EQUALLY, WE WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE CHOICES IN FREEDOM AND EQUALITY ABOUT THE LIFE WE WANT TO LEAD, TOGETHER AND ALONE. THEN WE CAN WORK TOWARDS A MORE PEACEFUL AND JUST WORLD. THIS CHANGE CANNOT BE LIMITED TO ORGANISATIONS AND SYSTEMS, IT HAS TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN US AS HUMAN BEINGS.”