

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Gender issues

Sexual harassment and violence which occurs in all schools/ organisations supports and maintains unequal gender relations.

Teachers often expect that girls will be neat, quiet and well behaved, and often assumptions are made about girls sexuality if they are assertive, fight back and/or resistant to boys' or teachers' authority.

Teachers often expect that boys will be naughty, demanding and difficult to ignore and spend a great deal of their time trying to 'manage' their behaviour.

Girls who remain quiet and withdraw from participation in classroom activities are often not identified as behaviour 'problems'.

In many schools groups of boys establish and maintain advantageous access to playground space and other resources.

Ways in which schools/ organisations can address issues

Develop processes and programs which teach that aggression and violence are unacceptable behaviours.

Develop curriculum which provides opportunities for girls and boys to understand sexual harassment and learn that it is unacceptable behaviour.

Develop grievance procedures for student-student, student-teacher sexual harassment.

Involve students and other teachers in analysing classroom interactions and involve students in developing strategies for changing inequitable practices.

Provide opportunities for staff to challenge their preconceived assumptions and expectations based on gender.

Undertake surveys to ascertain the use of space and resources and develop strategies to ensure equitable access.

Provide opportunities for women/girls to express their views about their need for space and access to resources.

Indicators of effectiveness

Students and staff interact positively and are sensitive to the effects of their behaviour on others.

Students and staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities and are confident in using grievance procedures.

Sexual harassment, construction of gender and effective communication skills are dealt with in the curriculum.

Teachers spend much less time dealing with discipline problems and their time and attention is given equally to female and male students.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Gender issues

Teachers often approach and interact with girls and boys differently. They can tend to be more chatty and friendly with boys, while girls are often ignored or their contributions undervalued.

To survive in a classroom some girls choose not to seem bright, not to speak up, not to challenge boys or teachers and not to ask for what they want.

Girls experience considerable sexual harassment from boys and from some male teachers.

Girls have a much more negative perception of their capabilities than the boys. Teacher attitudes and behaviour can reinforce this perception.

Boys participate more in classroom activities and gain more of the teacher's time and attention than do girls.

Girls do not participate in subjects that they do not see as being relevant to their lives or set within a social context.

Ways in which schools can address issues

Monitor and analyse the interactions that take place in the classroom eg. who questions are directed to, the number of times boys and girls speak or are spoken to, the nature of these interactions.

Confront dominating, disruptive and harassing behaviour and address sexual harassment when it occurs.

Ensure that all students can take an active part in class discussions, express feelings and take risks without fear of being considered to be 'wrong'.

Devise activities where students can control the direction and pace of learning, provide for a range of learning styles, encourage students to compete against themselves rather than against each other and to support each other in their learning.

Have high expectations for all students.

Be explicit about the outcomes students are working towards, and the criteria to apply for assessment.

Use on-going assessment processes and a variety of assessment procedures.

Provide opportunities for students in single sex groups to provide feedback on their teaching and learning experiences.

Indicators of effectiveness

Students take an active part in discussions and feel that their opinions and feelings are valued and acted upon.

Girls participate actively in lessons, take risks and are less concerned with being wrong.

Group and team work is based on harmonious and equal relationships and well constructed tasks.

Boys and girls treat each other as equals and listen to others' points of view.



INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM STRATEGIES

Curriculum is the product of social, historical, political and economic forces. It involves the selection, interpretation, representation and assessment of culturally-based knowledge, skills and values.

Curriculum work should:

- » be informed by political, social, economic and historical analysis;
- » involve explicit identification and evaluation of the values on which it is based;
- » be a collaborative experience for all participants;
- » involve collective critical reflection;
- » be resourced to ensure active participation by teachers, students and parents;
- » be based on action at personal, school, community and system levels;
- » acknowledge that individuals will experience the same learning activities in very different ways; and
- » acknowledge that curriculum should be flexible and responsive to the experience of learners.

Examples of Inclusive Curriculum Strategies

Viewing popular media productions in order to consider the construction of femininity and masculinity in Australian society.

A science lesson which uses the home as a context for the study of chemistry.

Encouraging block corner times for girls and home corner times for boys.

Considering the way in which gendered violence is constructed through video and computer games.

Discussing how issues of paid and unpaid work are valued differently in society.

Eliminating boys' and girls' lines outside the classroom and boys' and girls' groups for activities.

EXPLORING THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER THROUGH INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

Identifying and addressing barriers that limit students' opportunities and success:

Gender issues

All areas of the curriculum may be 'available' to all students but gendered notions of appropriateness of subject selection, work options etc. mean that choices are still very gendered.

Boys' domination of classroom interaction means that many girls often have less access to teacher time and attention.

Sexual harassment of girls and boys who don't conform to masculine norms restricts quality of participation.

High retention rates for girls mask significant differences in outcomes for girls post-schooling.

Language used may be sexist and discriminatory.

Girls may not be participating fully in areas which rely on technical competence.

Boys may not have educational experiences which focus on family and domestic responsibilities.

Content often draws on examples of activities which boys are more likely to have experienced, or which will presumably appeal to 'disengaged' boys.

Women's achievements, contributions and experience are often excluded or trivialised.

Subjects which are more often taken by boys (eg. Maths, Science, Technology) are still more highly valued than those girls may be more likely to choose (eg. Arts, Humanities, Home Economics).

Ways in which schools/organisations can address issues

Professional development for teachers/parents on issues of construction of gender and its impact on boys and girls behaviours, relationships, aspirations, choices and learning.

Fair, negotiated classroom rules based on explication of gender issues.

Sexual harassment addressed through curriculum and behaviour management plans.

Single-sex classes where appropriate to ensure girls can build skills and participate fully in all areas.

Use of non-discriminatory language.

Ensure all students have opportunities to develop technical competencies, and learnings about family and household management.

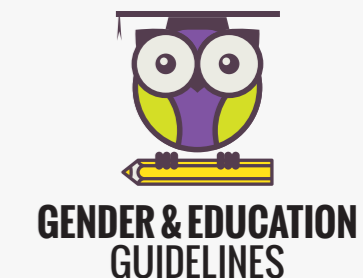
Schools consider models provided in school communities which challenge gender stereotyped roles.

All curriculum areas include content which values the interests and experiences of women (including family and parenting responsibilities, unpaid work, sexuality and relationships).

Curriculum material includes material about a diverse range of women from different social and cultural groups.

Subject/curriculum areas that girls 'like' are equally valued with those of boys.

Teaching and learning strategies that girls (and many boys) prefer eg. questions in familiar and real life contexts, consideration of social implications and relationships, collaborative group work are used.



Indicators of effectiveness

Reduced gender segregation in subject/activity selection (including use of playground space etc.).

All school community members are informed about the nature of sexual harassment and are able to access procedures to address it.

Non-discriminatory language used in all school contexts including publications.

Students post-school options are less gendered.

Material used in class more equally reflects the interests, experience and achievements of diverse women and girls, boys and men.

Subjects girls prefer and select are equally valued.

A range of strategies are used which cater to diverse learning styles.



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EXPLORING THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER THROUGH INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

Diverse perspectives, contributions and experiences of different social, cultural and ability groups are included and valued and used as a basis for learning:

Gender issues

Content often draws on examples of activities which boys are more likely to have experienced, or which will presumably appeal to 'disengaged' boys.

Women's achievements, contributions and experience are often excluded or trivialised.

Subjects which until recently were mainly taken by boys (eg. Maths, Science, Technology) are still more highly valued than those girls have chosen (eg. Arts, Humanities, Home Economics).

Ways in which schools/ organisations can address issues

All curriculum areas include content which values the interests and experiences of women (including family and parenting responsibilities, unpaid work, sexuality and relationships).

Curriculum material included material about a diverse range of women from different social, cultural groups.

Subject/curriculum areas that girls 'like' are equally valued with those of boys.

Teaching and learning strategies that girls (and many boys) prefer eg. questions in familiar and real life contexts, consideration of social implications and relationships, collaborative group work are used.

Indicators of effectiveness

Material used in class more equally reflects the interests, experience and achievements of diverse women and girls, boys and men.

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EXPLORING THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER THROUGH INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

Curriculum is used as a vehicle to challenge rather than to accept social injustice and to skill learners to participate as equals:

Gender issues

Curriculum/society often is presented as neutrals—all students have equal access to all opinions—only that which is 'important' is included.

Curriculum contributes to the unequal gender relations (privileging the experiences of white, male, 'classist' interests).

Students are often unaware of their rights and responsibilities, legislation and grievance procedures, informal (personal) and formal options available to effect change.

Ways in which schools/ organisations can address issues

Providing girls and boys with the skills to enable them to understand and unravel the ways in which social and political structures (past and present) including the curriculum, act to maintain and support the dominant position of particular forms of masculinity in society.

Students and teachers are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of various legislation, their rights and responsibilities and channels for personal and social action.

Providing students with the skills to recognise and analyse sexist behaviours and practices.

Actively engage students in examining, deconstructing and challenging the construction of gender in written texts, classrooms and their lives.

Indicators of effectiveness

Curriculum not only includes the perspectives and experiences of women but examines why they have been excluded, devaluated or 'lost'.

Students work demonstrates critical awareness and broader views of what it means to be male/female.

All students feel able to take personal and social action when they perceive discriminatory/ exclusionary practices are occurring.



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A CHECKLIST'S CHECKLIST

What does your school say in relation to:

People

» Leadership images

» Authority figures

» Discipline

» who

» style

» strategies

» Organisational figures

» Welfare role

Policies

» Uniform

» Sport

» Discipline

» Staff allocation

Activities

» What achievements are valued?

» how are they expressed?

» by whom is approval or reward given?

» How are activities organised?

» sports carnivals

» order of events, official roles, names of houses

» assemblies

» awards nights

» socials

» musicals

» Curriculum organisation—
timetabling

» Lunchtime or extracurricular
activities

Things

» Visuals around the school

» photos

» trophies

» murals, posters

» newsletters

» school magazine

» school uniform

Resources

» Space and equipment

» Representation of gender issues
reward given?

Questions to consider

» How much money is allocated
and to what?

» Who makes the decisions?

» Who or what groups are
advantaged or disadvantaged?

» What values and attitudes are
supported and promoted?

Data collection

1. Do male and female
administrators play different
roles in the school?

2. Is there active mentorship
of female teachers by male
administrators in terms of
leadership roles within the
school?

3. Is more time spent in the
playground in responding to
boys' misbehaviour than girls'
misbehaviour?

4. Are boys in the school expected
to be more boisterous and to
swear more in the playground?

5. Do administrators deal with
female and male breaches of
discipline in a similar manner?

6. Do females and males have
access to the same personal
space in the school?

7. Are girls and boys treated
equally by ancillary staff?



CHECKLIST HOW INCLUSIVE IS YOUR TEACHING?

This checklist can be used as a tool to monitor practices in relation to the preparation and presentation of the 'curriculum' that you teach. For each item tick whether the situation described occurs always (A), usually (U), sometimes (S), rarely (R), or never (N). As this is a starting point, you may be unsure about some of the statements, if so, tick the not sure (NS) column.

ASPECTS OF INCLUSIVE TEACHING

The language and content of the range of units taught over a semester reflect and value in an equitable way, the contributions and achievements of women and men.

Content includes the contributions made by women and men of all cultures in areas where they have been traditionally overlooked.

You use a variety of experiences to help students understand that the total range of human emotions if applicable to all people.

Classroom activities and examples are monitored with a view to achieving a balance of interests and experiences of girls and boys and all social and cultural groups.

The responsibility of boys to participate equally in family care, household management and community work as well as paid work is explicitly taught.

To help students develop an understanding of the ways in which the curriculum can perpetuate current inequitable social structures, the units of work you prepare provide opportunities for critically examining the ways in which women and men and people from particular social and cultural groups are portrayed.

Across the range of units taught students are given the opportunity to learn the skills to critically explore the construction of femininity and masculinity and what it means for them in their lives.

Curriculum resources used reflect equity. (For example, posters and other material on display depict men and women, girls and boys from a variety of cultures participating in a wide range of family, work-force, recreational and community based activities.

Attempts are made to offset the effects of stereotyping that may be present in existing resources through examining such resources critically and through the provision of more appropriate materials.

The language you see in the classroom is inclusive and non-discriminatory.

You can take care to develop teaching and learning models which cater for the varying learning styles of students.

A U S R N NS



CHECKLIST HOW INCLUSIVE IS YOUR TEACHING?

ASPECTS OF INCLUSIVE TEACHING

When grouping students you use a range of criteria in groupings to help avoid the reinforcement, and therefore the promotion, of stereotyped roles for students based on gender, race, class or ethnicity.

You have established processes to ensure that all children participate in classroom discussions and help negotiate the curriculum.

You consciously examine your own assumptions and expectations concerning both girls and boys, other cultural groups, low socio-economic groups and the disabled with regard to:

- » classroom behaviour
- » skills and achievements in subjects
- » presentation of work
- » future life options and employment.

You monitor your own practices paying particular attention to the following:

- » differential voice tone with girls and boys
- » frequency of interaction with girls and boys when observing student work and offering feedback
- » the amount and kind of praise and criticism which might be applied differently to girls and boys
- » different expectations of girls and boys from different cultural and social groups.

The range of resources you use (texts, posters, games, DVDs, performances, etc.) reflect and value in an equitable way, the contributions and achievements of all groups in:

- » language
- » content
- » images.

The range of resources used show both men and women in a wide range of family, paid workforce, recreational and community roles.

Meeting arrangements and communication with parents have been examined to ensure that stereotyped assumptions are not made regarding parent participation in activities and information sessions.

Professional and curriculum resource materials in use, that promote an understanding of gender equity, are displayed for students, teachers and parents.

Timetabling arrangements ensure and promote opportunities for collaborative planning with classroom teachers.

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REVIEW OF UNIT OF WORK

1. Are there equal numbers of boys and girls participating in the subject or activity? Is this subject/unit perceived by girls and boys as being of importance and relevant to their lives?
2. Are there any differences in the quality of the participation by groups of girls and boys in the activities? Do groups of girls and boys equally like and enjoy the unit and content?
3. Are there any differences in the types of activities that girls and boys engage in (eg. in the areas of technical competence or group work)?
4. Do any groups dominate the use of your time through disruptive and off-task behaviour?
5. Has any of the content been selected or omitted to ensure the most 'difficult' students are kept occupied or interested?
6. Examine examples used in teaching and resource materials. Are examples used which equally draw on the achievements and contributions of women as well as men?
7. Do examples, scenarios and resources used draw on the area of unpaid work and parenting as well as the public spheres of human activity?
8. Are incidents of inappropriate gender role stereotyping or sexist language dealt with when they are encountered in texts, in classroom discussions and student work?
9. Is any of the content of this unit attempting to address any previous 'gaps and silences' within the curriculum eg. about the experiences of women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, people from diverse cultural backgrounds?
10. Are students provided with opportunities to develop skills to deal with instances of harassment and discrimination that they might experience in the classroom, the school or wider community?
11. Are students taught the skills to be able themselves to recognise and critically analyse situations or texts that are sexist or exclusive of women's experience?
12. Does this unit give students the opportunity to understand how or why inequalities exist and what might be done to overcome these?
13. Were students involved in the selection of the topic or content for this unit?



GENDER & EDUCATION GUIDELINES



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QUESTIONS FOR IMPROVING TEACHER PRACTICE

1. What provision allows diverse girls and boys to advise whether they receive teaching relevant to their needs and interests?
2. How are opportunities provided for all teachers to become informed about and reflect on gender and learning?
3. By what means do teachers become aware of the gender assumptions which underpin current teaching practices—especially assumptions in relation to girls and boys from different cultural and social backgrounds?
4. How are students taught to develop co-operative and non-violent behaviours, so that the learning needs of all students are respected and supported?
5. What variety of assessment instruments are used in each curriculum area? Are all stated course objectives assessed? Are the different experiences, interests and aptitudes that girls and boys bring to school taken into account when developing assessment instruments?
6. In classrooms, what assessment is made to see if students listen to each other without interruption or harassment? Are gender differences evident?
7. What teaching practices are used to emphasise democratic principles, critical thinking and social action to ensure that girls from all groups develop the skills to participate fully within the school and wider community?
8. What strategies do teachers use to provide a range of teaching styles which allow for differences?

Adapted from the *National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993-97:26*.



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PLANNING QUESTIONS

1. What processes has your school put into place to implement your identified priority?
2. Who are the key people in the school who are implementing this priority?
3. Who/what are the groups to target in the school in relation to the implementation of this priority?
4. What do you think would be necessary to get these people to consider the construction of gender in the planning and implementation of this priority?
5. What resources would be necessary to help people look at construction of gender issues in implementing this priority? Are the ones provided in this module useful? What else might be needed?
6. Looking back to the action area sheets, can you identify some key issues that are pertinent to your particular school setting that may provide impetus or starting points for action?
7. Are there issues that can be addressed within your own classroom, in particular year levels or across the whole school? Choose an area where you think some success may be likely, draw up a strategic plan or plan of action for the school, for a group within the school, or for yourself.
8. Consider how outcomes might be measured? What initial measures can be used or taken for comparison?

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