

Gender A B C

Education Programme
for Primary Schools



Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes

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and implemented by



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This educational module was developed by **AIDOS**
in the framework of the project GenderABC.

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Section I

INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose

The aim of this module is to identify and explore gender differences, specifically gender social norms and stereotypes related to work, family roles and beauty. The purpose is to recognise these differences and their links with cultural factors, which can change over time; to promote reflection on how common stereotypes and prejudices are and how much they can hinder personal fulfillment and the achievement of personal goals and inclinations.

2. Main topics

- Gender differences and roles
- Gender stereotypes and social norms
- Sexism in language
- Recognition and overcoming of prejudice
- Gender equality






3. Keywords

Gender • Gender roles • Gender equality
Gender stereotypes • Sexism in language

4. Learning objectives

- Promote reflection on gender differences and stereotypes
- Identify sexism in language
- Increase self-awareness and knowledge of gender stereotypes within family and work
- Add value to positive, prejudice-free gender images
- Promote critical thinking and free self-expression

5. List of activities

	 Activity name	 Target age	 Total duration	 Materials	 Importance ¹
1	Jobs	6-8 years	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sheets• Colours	☆☆☆
2	Ideal of beauty	9-12 years	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sheets• Colours• Magazines• Poster	☆☆☆
3	The shoes of the other	9-12 years	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cards with guiding questions	☆☆☆

¹ Activities are ranked from one to three stars, in increasing order of importance, i.e. three stars for “highly recommended”.

Section II
ACTIVITIES

Activity I Jobs ☆☆☆



Total delivery time
45 minutes
Preparation: 5
Delivery: 20
Follow-up: 20



Materials
☐ Sheets
☐ Colours



Target age
6-8 years

→ BACKGROUND

The aim of the activity is to **stimulate children’s reflection on gender stereotypes**, with a special focus on professions; to reflect on work options considered by women and on those considered by men; to encourage a reflection on one’s gender identity, desires and job aspirations.

→ SCENARIO



Educators introduce the topic of the day: the world of work and the jobs of your family members.



They ask participants to draw the jobs of their family, choosing one female role and one male role (it can be the job of their grandparents, parents, aunts/uncles or any other member of the family circle).



After the drawing, educators ask participants to speak about the jobs they have chosen and encourage a general reflection on work and gender: are there jobs only restricted to men or women? Does the language we use suggest who has to do specific work? Which are the jobs that have been mentioned the most? Are they associated to one gender in particular?



Following-up on the debate, educators show the book without words (or the related video) *Et pourquoi pas toi?*² written by Madalena Matoso in 2011, with the aim to promote equality between men and women. In the book, with the mechanism of mobile strips, every gender stereotype or division seems to disappear, no words are needed to explain; just turning the page, the meaning is intuitive and immediate. We meet here men and women who make the most disparate jobs: women who are scientists, farmers, magicians or rock musicians; men who are baby-sitters, teachers or who care for their children when they are sick.

→ BRIEF

Educators ask participants the following questions:

- Are there any differences between female and male jobs? Why?
- Are there jobs that are only restricted to men or women?
- Do you think that gender differences can preclude the choice of some jobs?



²See the presentation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uPdrfWhWf4>

Activity 2 Ideal of beauty ★★



Total delivery time

45 minutes
Preparation: 5
Delivery: 25
Follow-up: 15



Materials

- ☐ Magazines
- ☐ Poster
- ☐ Sheets
- ☐ Colours



Target age

9-12 years

→ BACKGROUND

The aim of the activity is to **foster reflection on the most widespread ideals of beauty** in one's own culture and to recognise female and male beauty stereotypes.

→ SCENARIO



Educators place advertising and magazines in the middle of the room.



Educators ask participants to choose one picture that, according to them, represents male and female beauty (the number of pictures could change according to the amount of time available). It is important to provide as many representations as possible, to choose advertising of various products (cars, clothes, cooking, games) and to change the recipient of cultural messages (adults, young people, children). Consequently, participants describe the pictures and educators mark down the main characteristics.



Then the debate starts: are female and male ideals of beauty the same or are they different? What characteristics should a male/female body have to be considered beautiful? In this step, the purpose of educators is to encourage the reflection on the differences of the two overall representations of masculine and feminine beauty (male beauty is associated with a muscular and strong body, female beauty with lean body and abundant breasts, etc.). Once the discussion is over, educators encourage reflection on the ideals of beauty in connection with real life. Do the real people you meet reflect these notions of beauty? If you buy the sponsored product in advertising, will you become like the advertising models? Think of a person you know who looks very beautiful to you: what are her/his characteristics?



Asking participants to draw someone who “is” beautiful, instead of drawing someone who “looks” beautiful helps them to realise that fat people are beautiful, old people are beautiful, people with disability are beautiful, etc. Then educators ask participants to draw a friend (a man or woman of any age) or a family member who they think is beautiful.



A poster is built with the portraits, reflecting the real ideal of beauty of the group. In the end, educators and participants can consider and discuss the activity.

→ BRIEF

Educators ask participants the following questions:

- Are there any differences between female and male beauty?
- Think of a woman you know who looks very beautiful to you: what are her characteristics?
- Think of a man you know who looks very beautiful to you: what are his characteristics?



Activity 3 The shoes of the other³ ★★



Total delivery time

45 minutes
Preparation: 5
Delivery: 20
Follow-up: 20



Materials

□ Cards with guiding questions



Target age

9-12 years

→ BACKGROUND

The aim of the activity is to encourage participants to **realise that the roles and behaviors stereotypically associated with women and men** are constraining and that they prevent people from expressing their individual abilities or interests.

→ SCENARIO



Educators divide girls and boys into 3 or 4 same-sex groups.



Educators give the following assignment – description of the situation (also written in cards to help the groups):

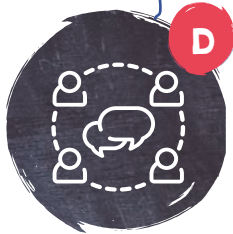
Imagine that you wake up in the morning and you find out that for some mysterious reason you have been transformed from a girl into a boy or vice versa. You don't know how long this transformation will last.

- What are you going to do?
- How are you going to behave with your family and at school?
- Are you going to change friends or sport practice?
- Would you try something you couldn't do while you were a girl/boy?
- What does this transformation would allow you to do differently?
- What would you like about your new situation?

³ Inspired by Cviková, *Pink and Blue World. Gender Stereotypes and Their Consequences*, Jana, 2003.



Educators let participants discuss the issue in groups.



Afterwards, participants are reunited in a plenary discussion where educators encourage girls and boys to think about what characteristics they associate with being a woman or being a man and what consequences this has for both women and men.

→ BRIEF

Educators ask participants the following questions:



- Are there any elements that changed after the transformation?
- Are there any behaviours and characteristics only associated to women or to men?
- Did you like to be in “the shoes of the other”?
- Would you like to stay in this transformed form forever? Why or why not?
- After the change, did you feel more or less free to choose how to behave?
- In the transition from girl to boy or vice versa, did you feel you had more rights?

Session Plan

Name of the module: Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes

Venue / school: _____

Focal point / teacher: _____

Class (grade and reference): _____

Nº of participants: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Duration: _____

Activity/(ies) chosen: _____

Materials (all checked): ☐ yes ☐ no

NOTES:

[illegible]

MODULES LIST

- 01 *Body Safety / Female Genital Mutilation*
- 02 *Empowerment and Communication*
- 03 *Gender-Based Violence*
- 04 ***Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes***
- 05 *Human Rights and Children's Rights*
- 06 *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*

- 01 *Cyber Violence*
- 02 *Early Forced Marriage*
- 03 *Empowerment and Communication*
- 04 *Female Genital Mutilation*
- 05 *Gender-Based Violence*
- 06 *Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes*
- 07 *Group Building*
- 08 *Human Rights and Children's Rights*
- 09 *Intimate Partner Violence*
- 10 *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*
- 11 *Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights*
- 12 *Sexual Violence*

- 01 Risk Assessment
- 02 General Methodology
- 03 General Glossary

✉ For more information please contact: info@endfgm.eu



A project by:



End FGM
EUROPEAN NETWORK



ASSOCIAÇÃO PARA O PLANEAMENTO DA FAMÍLIA



AIDOS
ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA
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