



Tips for Parents: Girls—Sexism and Stereotypes in School

The fact that girls are at a disadvantage to boys at school isn't news. Women and girl advocacy groups have been working for decades to make sure girls get equal opportunity in education. But you may be interested to know how school currently inhibits your daughter and what you can do about it.

Boys Receive More Attention in Class

Studies show that boys are given significantly more attention in the classroom, are called on more often, and are expected to perform better—especially in classes such as math and science. However, by teaching your daughter to be confident in class, to raise her hand often to answer questions, and to refuse to be overlooked in favor of male students, she has a better opportunity to receive equal attention.

For more information, see [Helping Girls to Break the Mold](#).

Slight Difference in Brain Ability

Recent research shows that there are some differences between girls' and boys' brains, and that these differences do influence behavior and ability. Some girls may have more of a natural tendency for nurturing and care giving behaviors, may be more inclined to talk about feelings and issues they face, and may perform slightly worse than many boys in activities requiring spatial thinking. However, it should be noted that experts agree that these differences are very small, and that environment is a much stronger influence.

What this means for your daughter is that while she may display behaviors strongly associated with being female, she is no less able to do well in math, science or any other subject area than her male peers—assuming she is encouraged, confidence in her ability is expressed, and that she receives the support and opportunity the boys receive.

For more information about the difference between boys' and girls' brains, see: [The Effects of Nature](#)

The All Girl School

A new trend is emerging that shows promise in helping girls overcome classroom preference for boys: the all girl school. Evidence from numerous all girl schools across the country indicate that when girls don't have to compete with boys in the classroom,

they develop more confidence in their abilities, achieve significantly better, and experience less social trauma relating to fashion, appearance, and competition for boys' romantic attention.

To learn more visit [The National Coalition of Girls' Schools](#).

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