

GENDER ROLES & RELATIONSHIPS

Source: Lesson adapted from “Chapter 9: What Are Stereotypes and Gender Roles” from Advocates for Youth. Stereotypical beliefs listed in instructional sequence are provided by “Gender Advantages and Disadvantages” lesson. Case studies and discussion points have been borrowed from the “Gender Roles and Relationships” lesson. <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/chapter9.pdf>

GRADES 8th-9th

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITIES

Purpose:

Today, we will learn about the stereotypes that our society has developed for men and women, and understand how these expectations can affect our relationships.

Objective:

- Students will learn what stereotype means.
- Students will examine and increase their awareness about gender stereotyping.
- Students will see how gender roles can affect relationships.

Defining Words:



Stereotype: the idea or expectation that all members of a group (people who share the same age, race, or gender and so on) are very similar, with no individual differences.

Materials Needed:

- Flipchart paper
- 1 copy of each of the “Gender Role Case Studies”

Time: 25-30 minutes

Preparation:

- Obtain two pieces of flip-chart paper and label one of them “male” and the other “female.”
- You will distribute a “Gender Role Case Study” to each group for their discussion.

Icebreaker:

Have you ever felt that you had to act or talk a certain way because of your gender? Have you ever felt pressured to make a purchase based on what other people of your gender would “normally” purchase?

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



LESSON ACTIVITIES:**Instructional Sequence:**

1) Explain to students that some of the most damaging stereotypes are related to gender. Brainstorm with students these stereotypes that they have heard about males and females. Refer to the comprehensive list of stereotypes below that you should look for in students' responses.

Males: Stereotypical Beliefs About Masculinity	Females: Stereotypical Beliefs About Femininity
Be in control and appear unemotional	Be emotionally sensitive and vulnerable
Be the dominant partner in a relationship	Submit to the wishes and demands of a sexual partner
Exert pressure or force on their sexual partners	Have children
Become sexually active early and have many partners	Meet the needs of others before their own
Work in careers that are mechanical or analytical	Choose careers in the "helping" professions
Assume responsibility as the "breadwinner" of the family	Be physically attractive
Achieve status by earning lots of money	Tolerate sexually harassing behavior without complaint
Take risks to prove their manhood	Be nurturing and take care of the household
Resolve conflicts with violence	Be docile
Avoid traditionally "female" work in the arts or human services	Avoid nontraditional careers in math or the sciences

2) Explain to students that stereotypes about gender roles can often affect our actions and relationships with others. The next activity will help explore situations where gender roles and stereotypes could affect goals, decisions, and relationships for teens.

3) Divide students into 7 small groups and distribute a different Gender Role Case Study to each group.

- Students should examine their case study and analyze how stereotypical beliefs affect how we might initially respond to these situations.
- For each scenario, students should address the following questions (write on board for class):
 - o Which stereotypical belief does the scenario address?
 - o How do you/your group personally feel about the situation?
 - o Do you agree with the traditional/contemporary response?
 - o What advice would you give to the people involved in the situation?

Question/Answer:

Facilitate the following discussion questions with your class.

- ▶ Is it easy or hard to look at male and female roles in a nontraditional way?
- ▶ How do men or women accept changes in gender roles? Why?
- ▶ What are some of the ways changing gender roles have affected relationships between men and women (a) in social settings, (b) in families, and (c) in the workplace?
- ▶ Do you think your parents would reach the same or different solutions?
- ▶ Which case study did you find to be the most difficult? Why?
- ▶ If you could make one change in men's gender roles, what would it be? In women's gender roles?

Closing Summary:

Stereotypes often contribute negatively to gender roles. Men and women often feel that they have to act a certain way because society has defined certain expectations for us based on our gender. Unfortunately, this can hinder the authenticity of our relationships and cause miscommunications. It is important for us to be open about behaviors typically assigned to men and women and be open about how we can be flexible in our relationships.

Gender Role Case Studies

Gender Role Case Study #1

Leo is about to ask Gloria out for the first time when she walks over to him and says, "Leo, there's a new movie in town, and I really want to see it. I was hoping you would go with me. Are you busy Saturday night?" Leo has no plans, and he was hoping to take Gloria to the movie, but he wants to do the asking. He's thinking he'll say he's busy. What should he do?

Gender Role Case Study #2

Charlene has been offered a special grant to apprentice with a master plumber after graduation. She's excited and she rushes to tell Lloyd. They've been planning to get married in the fall, and this way, she'll be able to start earning some good money. Lloyd is very quiet after Charlene tells him, then finally says, "I don't think I could marry a plumber, Charlene. You're going to have to make a choice." What should she do?

Gender Role Case Study #3

Sam wants to buy a doll for his nephew's birthday but his buddy Jay says, "No way!" Sam explains that dolls help teach little boys to take care of someone else and be loving, but Jay argues that they just teach boys to be sissies. Sam is concerned about what Jay might say to their friends if he buys a doll for his nephew. What should Sam do?

Gender Role Case Study #4

Susan and Fred have been going out for months, and things have been good. Her parents approve of him and the word is out at school that she is his girl. But lately Fred has been putting a lot of pressure on Susan to fool around more than she wants to. When she says "no," he says that it's her job as a woman to please him. What can she say to him?

Gender Role Case Study #5

Shaundra and Malcolm are arguing about their sister, Patricia, and her husband, Robert. Shaundra has noticed lots of bruises on Patricia's arms and shoulders lately, and this weekend she had a swollen eye. Malcolm says Patricia has been too "bossy" lately and their brother-in-law Robert is just trying to show her who's boss. Shaundra looks at Malcolm disapprovingly and shakes her head; she doesn't think that violence is the answer to anything. What should Shaundra say?

Gender Role Case Study #6

Keisha has decided to have sexual intercourse with her boyfriend Tony. She says they really like each other. She stops at the drugstore to buy condoms, but her friend Tanya says, "Girls don't buy condoms! That's the guy's business." What should Keisha say and do?

Gender Role Case Study #7

Katie and Michael have been going together for almost a year. Michael always pays for everything and makes most of the decisions about where to go and what to do. In Katie's health class, they talked about girls paying for dates and having more input into a couple's plans. Both Katie and Michael have part-time jobs and earn very little money, so pooling it seems to make sense to Katie, but Michael is furious at the idea. He says she doesn't think he is man enough to pay for her. What should Katie say to Michael?