

# GENDER EQUALITY

## GUIDELINES



SELF TRAININGS

APPEPTANCE

SUSPENSION OF JUDGEMENT

USE GENDER FREE WORDS

OPEN QUESTIONS

RESPECT

LACK OF INTEREST

MASCULINE UNIVERSAL

LANGUAGE LIMITATION

MY OWN STEREOTYPES

SINGLE MODEL

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

VISUAL / LANGUAGE LIMITATIONS



# GENDER EQUALITY GUIDELINES



# BEE



# BOOSTING GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION



# GUIDELINES

## Guidelines

Among BEE's outputs there are also the following guidelines. They represent some general recommendations for gender-sensitive, participatory and inclusive education modalities that can be easily replicable and adaptable to the school class contexts, and can respond to the needs of teachers/educators and communities engaging in educating childhood contrasting gender stereotypes. These outputs therefore represent very malleable and reproducible work tools and are particularly suitable for a large-scale dissemination.

### INDICATIONS FOR THE EDUCATORS/TEACHERS

- About ourselves: training, self-training, observational practices.
- Continuous self-training.
- Enhancement of the practices of (self)observation and work on education for differences as important educational material, not negligible and not secondary to the disciplines or the relationship with the class.
- More projects on issues regarding education for differences.
- Establishment of practices of (self)-observation of ourselves and our own routine work. It scares me to be their model, am I worthy of it? Talk to colleagues, participate at supervision meetings.
- Analyze our educational attitude, the values and attitudes that guide it.
- Suspension of judgment and acceptance; listening to the others.
- To be an example: accept stumbling blocks and automatisms, but observe and question ourselves.

### LANGUAGE

- Work on language not to convey gender stereotypes and to be inclusive also in work communications:
- Do not use the universal masculine.
- Do not use epithets for girls that would not be used for boys.
- Avoid group rebuking in which you address girls or boys in a general manner, for instance: Chatter-girls, be silent! Or Toughen up, boys, you're not girls!
- Change teachers' reactions to small quarrels between boys and girls. Replace classic explanations, such as: "If he pulls your hair in the school yard, he likes you" with open questions: How do you feel when somebody keeps teasing you? What do you think about people who keep taunting you? Why would somebody do that? In what other ways can one express their interest for a colleague, whether boy or girl?"
- Do not use stereotypes about families: there are many family models, and it is preferable not to focus on the traditional family, but to promote each child's account of their own family model.



## ON SPACE AND TOOLS

- Work on the bibliography of readings (collect texts that present plural and non-stereotypical models).
- Reflection on spaces and settings.
- Work on the space of symbolic games to offer plural models of identification, for example making possible to have not only a toilette corner, but also a carpentry bench, a mechanical and electronic corner.
- Work on the disguise corner, which typically contains more clothing associated with the feminine, with little representation of the masculine (e.g., also includes objects considered masculine, such as a brush, shaving foam, gel...); increase the number of clothes, disguises and objects available.
- Avoid stereotypes when organizing children into groups and designing their tasks, by ensuring equal access to toys, games--no toy should be dedicated to one gender only.

## ON WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

- Propose to the children equal tasks, regardless of gender.
- Work on the themes, elements and cues provided by the children, without judgment.
- Work on the stimulation of passions and emotions, regardless of gender.
- Stimulation of critical thinking (situating knowledge) and research.
- Encouragement of children's participation (ideas, decisions), even when it comes to daily activities and games.
- Stimulation of sharing and dialogue, to overcome resistance on the theme: also with children.
- Promotion of respect towards people, through work on words and empathy, respect for women and their bodies.
- Promotion of the relationship of care.
- Enhancement of male educational figures and involvement of male reference in children activities.
- Valorization of all caregivers (not only teachers and parents, but also other caregivers: auxiliary staff, other family members, significant figures...).
- Work on scholastic orientation from early childhood, in order to learn about all the professions and identify one's own desires for the future in a way that is not conditioned by gender stereotypes.
- Identification of gender discriminatory behaviors at kindergarten/school and conduction of various guidance activities such as observe children's play/interaction, conduction of role play activities to practice being in someone else's shoes.

## ON WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF A SPECIFIC GENDER

**Sometimes can be useful to work on different tasks for boys and girls, not to strengthen gender segregation, but to increase their possibility to deconstruct stereotypes:**

### THE AIM OF GENDER-EDUCATION FOR BOYS:

- Learn they can identify as boys in other ways than by disassociation from girls.
- Experience communication, storytelling, expressing what they feel, learn to welcome each other.
- Understand the importance of conflict resolution.
- Learn that all emotions are allowed, but not all behaviors: experience control techniques.
- Be able to have positive body contact with others.
- In time, have the courage to make their own choices, not just follow the leader of the group.
- Not be criticized and teased by adults, but be able to have a non-verbal, secret understanding with other children.
- Place an accent on the positive, learn to say what they want.
- Know the rules, the limits, and the expectations before they receive work materials or begin a new activity.
- Engage them in exercises that involve movement, rhythm, and balance.
- Give them opportunities to develop their fine motor skills.



## THE AIM OF GENDER-EDUCATION FOR GIRLS:

- In a girl-only group, implement activities to help them focus on their own identity and personal value instead of taking on the role of small teacher/caregiver.
- Welcome them kindly as individuals.
- Support them in developing a positive picture of themselves, become self-confident and trust their ability to rely on themselves.
- Appreciate them for their inner qualities and physical abilities.
- Help them perceive differences as positive and valuable.
- Find the courage to enter a competition, help themselves, be able to work in big groups, be the center of attention.
- Develop their curiosity, do experiments, math exercises, place them in contexts to notice causes and effects.
- Make their voices heard and say no.
- Choose what they want, make individual choices.
- Communicate by saying what they truly want.
- Talk in front of a group without being interrupted.
- Develop their gross motor skills, play with a ball.
- Take up all the space in a room.
- Make jokes and be noisy.
- See the opposite sex in a positive environment.

## ON GENUINELY SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO FIND THEIR OWN PATH:

- Authentic personal change: give children personal examples of how we make efforts to overcome one of our own stereotypes, how we learn to accept things we had never thought about in the past. Personal examples are the most important, especially at young ages.
- Having honest, open conversations about any situation that may come up, with all the pupils in the class, and making joint decisions about fair behaviors acceptable to all.
- Therapeutic self-knowledge stories and activities, to accept differences.
- Grant attention and importance to lifelong personal development in all activities conducted in the classroom.
- Emotional support and availability of the teacher for all pupils, making no discriminations.
- Design activities to encourage positive, constructive interaction between pupils.
- Educational extracurricular activities to reinforce collaboration and self-understanding outside the normal school context.
- Encourage, stimulate the development of their self-confidence through specific activities.
- Although schools do offer models, pupils must be encouraged to make their own decisions in certain situations and take responsibility for their own actions.
- Talks about the meaning of colors beyond gender (moods, seasons, flag, men's colors, etc.) to help children overcome stereotypes.
- Talks about home chores, jobs, etc. with non-stereotypical examples.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAMILIES

### ON RELATIONSHIP

Structuring a proactive relationship with parents, also accepting their possible doubts or stereotypes.

### PROPOSAL OF INITIATIVES DEDICATED TO FAMILIES (DISCUSSIONS, WORKSHOPS, AWARENESS MEETINGS): GRADUALLY, SO AS NOT TO ALIENATE ANY OF THEM:

- Organizing meetings sharing values regarding gender equality.
- Exploring families' arguments and limits.
- Tell families that they consider teachers as allies in answering children's questions about gender and so on.
- Reinforce the triangular relationship among families, teachers and the child.
- Always consider families as an extended network of adults around the child (grandparents, tutors, etc.).
- Sharing of educational reasoning, also on the structuring of spaces, with families:
- Sharing the schools' values.
- Sharing general educational objectives of a gender approach with families.
- Inform parents about gender activities and that they can ask teachers directly (not through children) about those after they are realized in the class.



## **PROPOSAL OF INITIATIVES DEDICATED TO FAMILIES (DISCUSSIONS, WORKSHOPS, AWARENESS MEETINGS): GRADUALLY, SO AS NOT TO ALIENATE ANY OF THEM:**

- Promoting inclusion concerning families (homosexual parents, single parents, etc) and general diversity through years.
- Organizing interactive workshops with external experts (at school or somewhere else addressed to families).
- Implement observation during the work with children, and if some strong opinion arises from the children, talk about this with families or organize confrontation moments.
- Never overwhelm parents.
- Organize three moments during the school year to share values, experiences and possible critical moments (balance the topics who are facing, not stressing gender roles).
- Promoting the chance of self organizing these moments (online, physically or on the phone – depending on families' possibilities).
- During events, experiment with the families and some of the activities made with the children.
- Inviting parents having alternative gender experiences (dad in parental leave, male educator, mother who works as a technician) to challenge stereotypes.
- Suggest experiences to do with the children (games, visiting places, doing collages, drawings, creative activities, etc.) and give them an online document to be fulfilled after the activities to get their feedback.

## **TOOLS**

- Construction of questionnaires to investigate the level of awareness of families on these issues.
- Suggest a bibliography also on gender – not only gender in order to avoid stressing this topic (books, articles, videos, podcasts, webpages).
- Sharing pictures and material of the activities (videos, feedbacks and sentences from the children) during an exhibition.

## **PROMOTION OF (SELF)-OBSERVATION ALSO IN RELATION TO FAMILIES**

- Preparation of a bibliography of readings to be recommended to families.
- Insisting on inviting and involving both male and female figures.
- Try to interrupt the automatic attitude of referring to mothers or female figures.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS INSIDE THE SCHOOL**

### **WITH THE EDUCATIONAL TEAM**

- Sharing vision and values.
- Importance of a common vision in the teaching staff: being united among teachers strengthens the relationship with families.
- Consideration of the team as an element of strength (living collectively the educational challenges).
- Training, information, practices of (self)-observation.
- Sharing of information acquired through this type of team training, detection of knowledge on the topic and promotion of information.
- Group sharing of methodological reflections and our role in the educational relationship.
- Formation as a group and dissemination of knowledge even to those who are less inclined to be informed.
- Mutual observation in the classroom between colleagues and proactive role of peer agents, who stimulate colleagues and colleagues on issues of education without stereotypes.
- Ensure gender info sessions that encourage exchanges between teaching staff, support staff and decision makers in the school.
- Organization of work and space.
- Division of tasks in a non-gendered manner among the educational staff.
- Demonstrate commitment to combating gender inequalities by delegating tasks in a non-stereotypical way inside the school.
- Whenever possible revise contracting and hiring procedures to accommodate non-stereotypical assignments.



- Reflection on the importance of informal spaces (e.g. bathroom) in gender education: planning inherent in their management and daily rituals.
- Activation of research-action processes, even on small things (being a supervisor).
- Ensure a gender balanced interior design of the school spaces (e.g representation of women in the illustrations on the walls).
- Sharing common tools.
- Exchange on tools available together (e.g. textbooks).
- Choice of new tools to propose disciplines in a gender perspective (e.g. textbooks).

## WITH THE EXTENDED TEAM

- Sharing visions and values.
- Valuing each educational figure! Each one is important: also the auxiliary staff, technical and administrative figures and coordination/management.
- Identification of shared values of the educational community to provide a clear image of the school/educational service.
- Training, comparison practices.
- Provision of training courses for all staff (educators, teachers, auxiliary and auxiliary staff, staff members, management).
- Construction of formal and informal moments of exchange with colleagues: keep everyone in (how do you do it if an external company is involved?).

## EXTERNAL AND NETWORKS

- Implementing communication.
- Management-level work on communication that addresses the outside so that it is inclusive, as well as internally.
- Structuring of the institution or service.
- Promotion of observation of institutional practices and how the school/educational service is constructed.
- Networking.
- Identification of actors and strengthening of the educational network between reference figures (families, agencies, etc.).
- Network with public authorities (Cred, Municipality, Region, Ministry).
- Public authorities: proposal of training on gender stereotypes at the educational level, and reflections on the theme also with other levels of the organization (managers, policy makers, etc.).

## FORMAL AND NORMATIVE LEVEL, DECISIONS-MAKER AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL, INSTITUTIONS

- Selection of personnel also with gender criterion, to contrast occupational segregation.
- Monitor the process of training and hiring gender experts as well as the impact if their work, to avoid gender washing practices.
- Interconnection with anti-discrimination law reforms (e.g.: laws against LGBTQIA+ discrimination and parental leave).
- Ensure properly trained gender experts on each school staff to elaborate a gender equality policy, plan gender awareness and gender research action, train and support teaching staff and decision making/ care staff, supervise and monitor implementation of school gender policy interconnected with other nondiscriminatory policies.
- Implement inclusive and gender equal policies for parental leave, healthcare and care related jobs etc.
- Stress specific local political critics concerning gender equality.



# BEE



## BOOSTING GENDER EQUALITY

**PER INFORMAZIONI:**

**Casa della donna APS:**  
[segreteria@casadelladonnapisa.it](mailto:segreteria@casadelladonnapisa.it)  
[www.casadelladonnapisa.it](http://www.casadelladonnapisa.it)

**COSPE**  
[info@cospe.org](mailto:info@cospe.org)  
[www.cospe.org](http://www.cospe.org)

