

• TIPS TO PROMOTE •

Gender Equality

IN THE CLASSROOM

Use gender-neutral language when referring to children, e.g. instead of saying, 'Choose a boy' say, 'Choose a friend'.

Avoid stereotyping children, e.g. boys are noisy and loud, girls are calm and sweet.

Monitor your own interactions with the children. We tend to comfort girls more and send boys on their way earlier.

Jumble together all the dress-ups, toys, games, blocks, etc. so all genders have an equal opportunity to use the equipment.

Children may come to school with traditional ideas about gender, e.g. if a child says, 'Marnie can't play. This is a boy's game.' Use the 'teachable moment' and unpack the comment.

Provide a wide range of diverse stories about the genders in non-stereotyped roles. If such books are limited, change 'he' to 'she' so girls have a leadership role.

When reading books where the tiger or bear is often a 'him' and the butterfly or bird is a 'she', change the gender around. Alternatively, use the gender-neutral term, 'shim'.

Hold a parent night to unpack the school's gender-equality policy.

Ask children to draw a fire-fighter, police officer and nurse. Invite a female fire-fighter and police officer, and a male nurse into the classroom. Have them talk about their jobs and unpack the children's drawings and expectations about the visitors.

Always use non-gender specific terms when referring to occupations, e.g. chairperson, flight attendant.

Devise a school gender-equality policy that promotes gender-neutral language and encourages non-traditional gender roles and activities.

Try not to assign classroom tasks that traditionally relate to a specific gender, e.g. boys moving desks, girls tidying up the home corner.

Be inclusive of a child who identifies as another gender to the one they were assigned at birth. Refer to the child in the gender they prefer. Your modelling of how this child is included and referred to will be paramount to the attitudes of the other children and their families.

