

Promoting gender equality in ECD



Siyalingana video 1: English

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgEG -
jJhhU&list=PLV_52AavLpDLzN7mtx0yYQV9a7Wb2VNH-](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgEG-jJhhU&list=PLV_52AavLpDLzN7mtx0yYQV9a7Wb2VNH-)

or

Siyalingana video 1: isiZulu

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzdqUcAZT04&l
ist=PLV_52AavLpDIZ0Pf6t2FlvF-sSbk9AzGf](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzdqUcAZT04&list=PLV_52AavLpDIZ0Pf6t2FlvF-sSbk9AzGf)

Objectives of the training

Support Early Childhood Teachers and Practitioners to:

- Promote gender equality
- Prevent discrimination based on gender

Overview of the training

DAY 1

Concepts:

Sex and gender

Gender stereotypes and biases

Gender equality

Gender in South Africa

Gender responsive pedagogy

1. GRP - Learning environment

DAY 2

2. GRP - Learning materials:

Toys

Pictures and visuals

Stories

3. GRP - Learning activities

GRP in the daily program

Talking about gender in themes

DAY 3

4. Classroom interaction & language use:

Teacher-learner interaction

Learner-learner interaction

5. Interaction beyond classroom

Continuing our learning after this training

Reflection and feedback



Sex or Gender?

sex

- Women get pregnant, men don't.
- Men's voices break at puberty, women's don't.

gender

- Men make career, women do the household.
- Women are emotional, men are though.
- Most soldiers are men.
- Most of the women have long hair, men have short hair.
- Men are natural born leaders.



Concepts:

sex

The assignment and classification of people as male, female or intersex, based on biological differences at birth.

gender

The personal and social characteristics associated with being male or female.



Siyalingana video 2:

Redraw the balance:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8UNOiwUTsg&list=PLV_52AavLpDIMhNf2L_HDCRIBSgIU99OJ&index=2

Concepts:

Gender stereotypes

Biased beliefs about the personal attributes, behaviours and roles of a specific social group (for example women should take care of babies while men need to provide for the family).

Gender bias

An unfair difference in the way people of different sexes and associated genders are treated.



Siyalingana video 3:

We are equal:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNESERuOmac&list=PLV_52AavLpDIMhNf2L_HDCRIBSgIU99OJ&index=1

Gender inequalities in South Africa

Girls are more likely to drop out of school and have lower pass rates for Mathematics and Physical Science subjects

Boys have higher expulsion rates and are more likely to repeat primary school grades

South Africa is currently the only African country to offer constitutional protection against discrimination based on sex, gender and sexual orientation

Traditional stereotypes – especially pressure to provide for their families – are difficult for many South African men to live up to

Because of high unemployment and poverty (a legacy of the apartheid era), many men struggle to support their family financially, causing feelings of helplessness and shame.

Only 10% of CEOs in South Africa are women

For each hour that a man spends on unpaid care work, women spend eight hours of equivalent work

Women and LGBTI* persons are at higher risk of sexual and physical violence

***LGBTI: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex**

Men are more likely to drink alcohol, take unhealthy risks and engage in violence. They are less likely to seek professional help or talk about their problems with friends and family.



Concepts:

Gender-based discrimination

Exclusion of a person from educational opportunities, meaningful careers, political influence or opportunities for economic advancement based on their sex.

Gender equality

The absence of discrimination based on a person's sex or gender. It implies that society sees everyone as equal regardless of their sex.



An overview of concepts

Gender equality: The absence of discrimination based on a person's sex. It implies that society sees everyone as equal, regardless of their sex.

SEX

The assignment and classification of people as male, female or intersex, based on biological differences at birth.

Intersex: a variety of conditions where a person's anatomy does not fit the typical definition of male and female

GENDER

The personal and social characteristics associated with being male or female.

GENDER IDENTITY

A person's internal sense of being male, female, a combination or neither.

GENDER ROLES

Activities, tasks and responsibilities ascribed to a group of people based on their sex.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING

When someone does not conform to typical gender roles.

Gender bias

An unfair difference in the way people of different sexes and associated genders are treated

Gender stereotypes

Biased beliefs about the personal attributes, behaviours and roles of a specific social group, (for example. women should take care of babies while men need to provide for the family).

Gender-based discrimination

Exclusion of a person from educational opportunities, meaningful careers, political influence and opportunities for economic advancement based on their sex.



Why gender in ECD?

Children learn and develop optimally when:

- they participate in a variety of learning and play
- They feel safe and supported
- they are encouraged to try different things and interact with others

Gender stereotypes and biases:

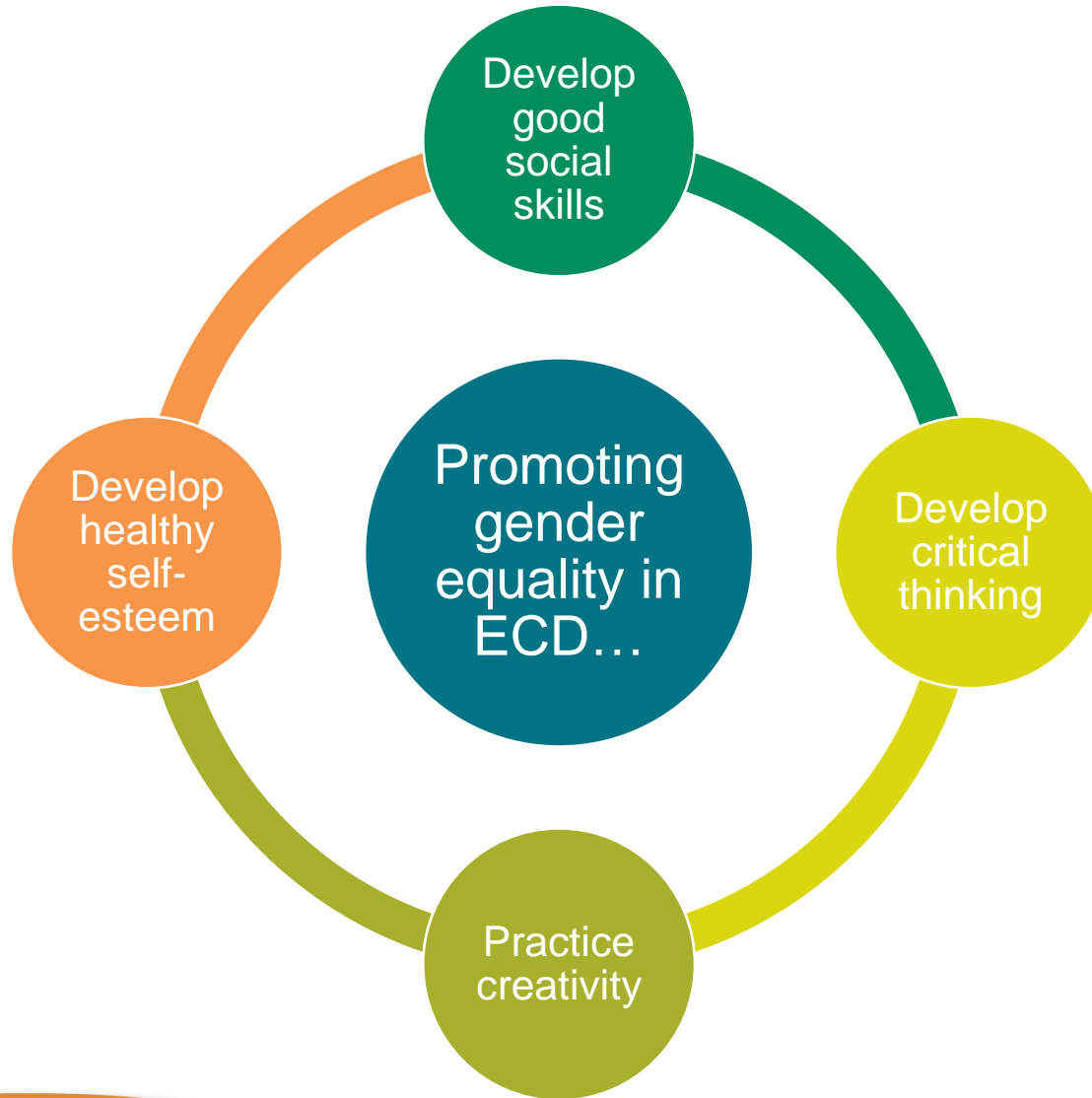
- Become set when children are young (by the age of seven)
- Limit children realise their potential

ECD teachers and practitioners play a central role!

Provide equal opportunities for all young children:

- to play, engage, learn
- to break free from harmful gender stereotypes that hold children back in life.

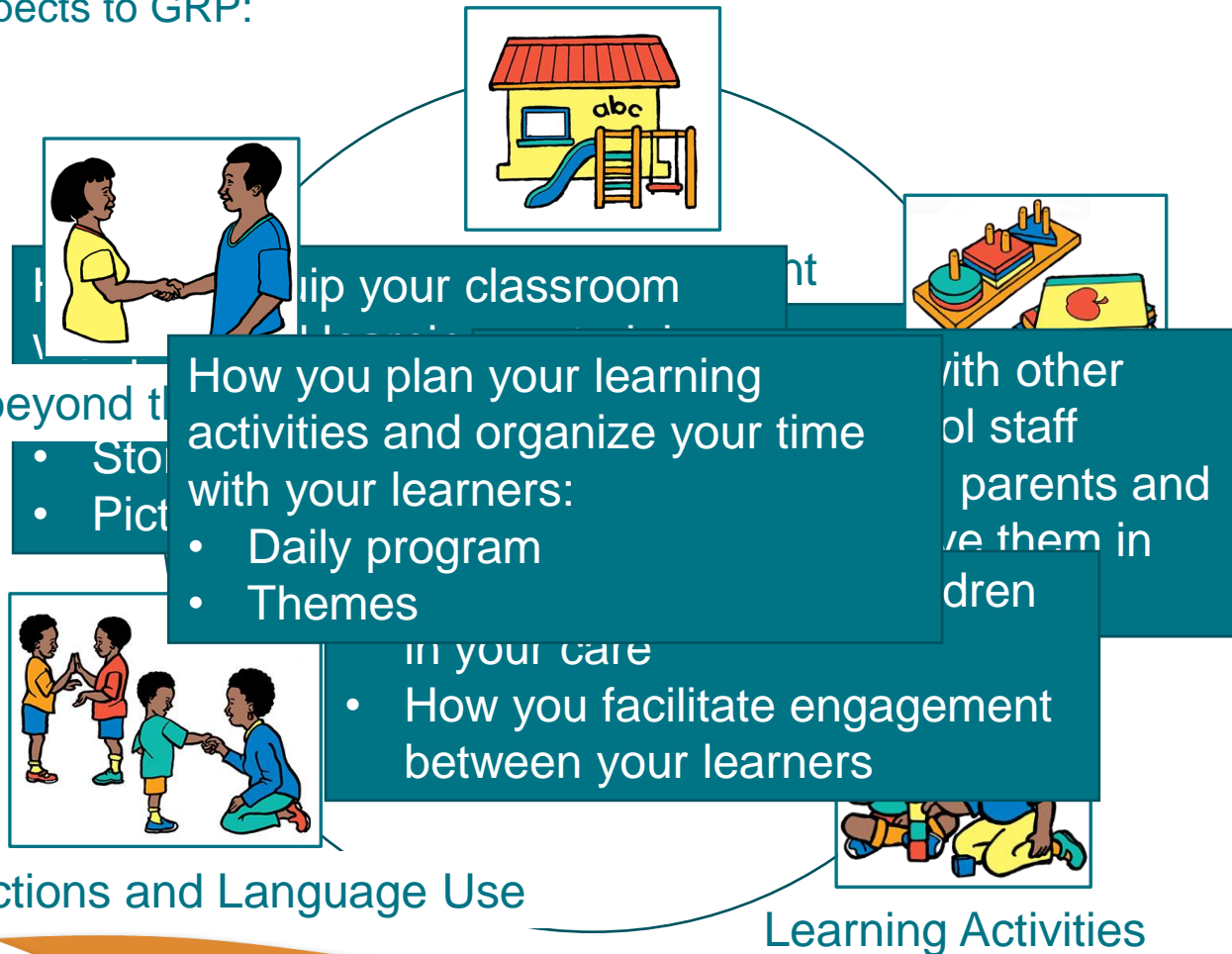
Children will benefit



Gender Responsive Pedagogy

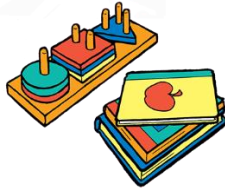
Teachers and practitioners give attention to gender issues in **teaching and interacting** with all children → this promotes gender equality in ECD.

There are 5 aspects to GRP:





learning environment



learning materials



learning activities



classroom interactions & language use



interactions beyond the classroom

Structure of the guide

Key Messages



- 1 Different ways to put this message into action
- 2
- 3



Practical tips and examples



Aspect 1: The Learning Environment



How you organise your classroom and outdoor area:

- Learning areas
- Seating arrangement





The learning environment: indoor



The learning environment: outdoor



Siyalingana video 4 Learning environment: English

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yft3L1ErdR0&list=PLV_52AavLpDLzN7mtx0yYQV9a7Wb2VNh-&index=4

or

Siyalingana video 4: isiZulu

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdVp7Nurg8o&list=PLV_52AavLpDIZ0Pf6t2FlvF-sSbk9AzGf&index=4



The learning environment

How you organize your classroom, learning areas and outdoor play space can influence children's involvement and learning.

How you organize can change children's play behaviours.

Create a learning environment that encourages participation of all learners

HOW?

1

Set up learning areas to attract diverse children to play or work together

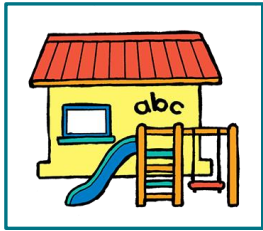
2

Arrange seating to encourage all learners to participate fully


3

Prevent learners from taking up all the space or excluding others



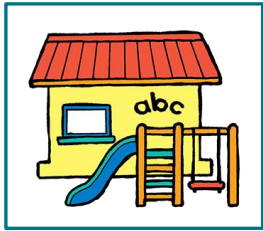


1. Set up learning areas to attract diverse children to play or work together

 Reorganise your learning areas to inspire new games and encourage children to mingle

Example:
Bringing the fantasy and construction areas closer together





1. Set up learning areas to attract diverse children to play or work together



Change placement and combination of materials in learning areas

Example:
Moving blocks into the fantasy area



Encourage children to try out all learning areas

Gently; role-model
No force but creating opportunities



2 Arrange seating to encourage all learners to participate fully



Sit in circle with the children



Small groups

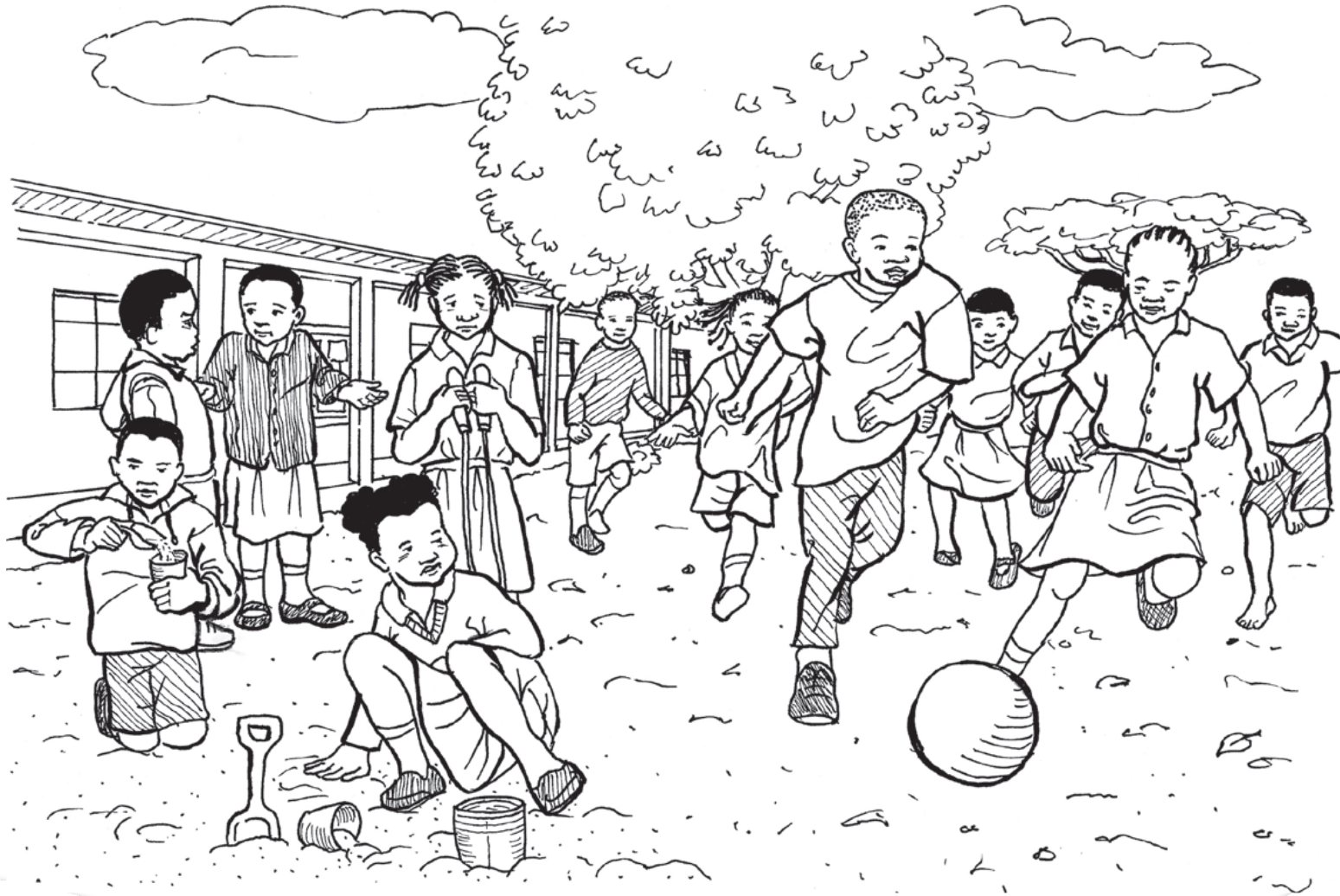


As the teacher, move around the room and sit in different places

Everyone involved and encouraged to participate



3 Prevent children from taking up all the space or excluding others



3

Prevent children from taking up all the space or excluding others



Physically divide the playground / learning areas into different spaces

Examples:

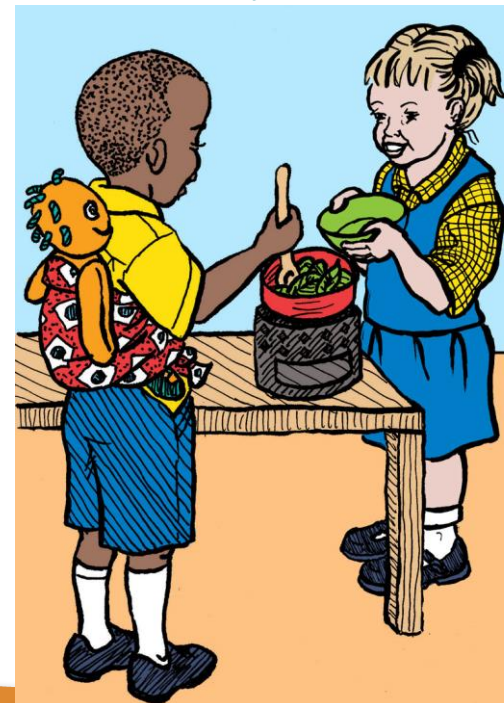
- Inside: Use furniture such as carpet, shelving storage boxes
- Outside: is plants, low hedges or other items



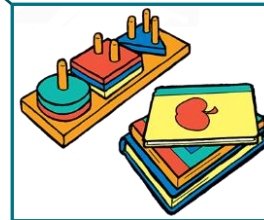
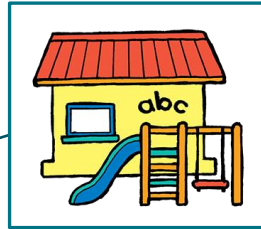
Intervene when a group takes up all the space or chases others away

Examples:

- Boys playing football, girls playing kitchen
- “We can all learn and play together”



Aspect 2: Learning Materials



How you equip your classroom with play and learning materials:

- Toys
- Storybooks
- Pictures



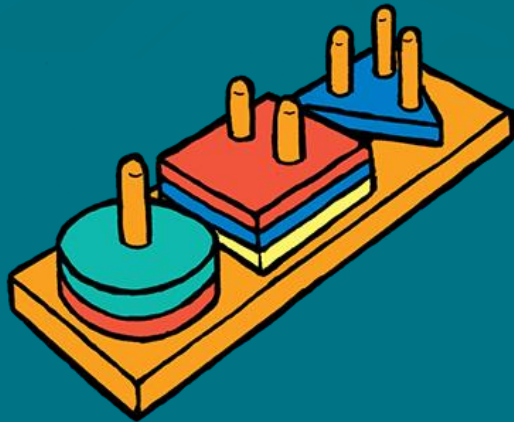
Planned Parenthood video 5:

How do I talk to my child about gender:

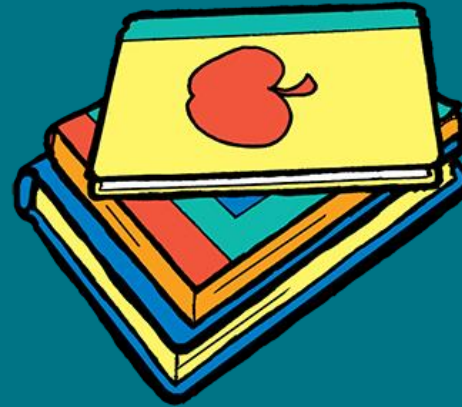
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgRFVSC9BmU>

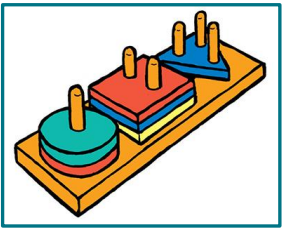
Gender and Learning Materials

Play materials



Pictures and stories




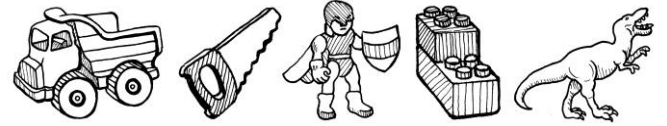


Play materials

A variety of experiences with different play materials will help children learn a wide range of skills.

However, toys often have a strong gender binary.

When play materials only appeal to one sex, all children miss out on important learning experiences.

<i>"Toys for girls"</i>	<i>"Toys for boys"</i>
	

If dolls are only for girls, children may think that caring for babies is only for women

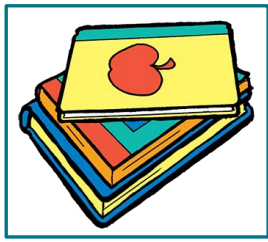
Siyalingana video 6 Play materials: English

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUUKQW7oJnA&list=PLV_52AavLpDLzN7mtx0yYQV9a7Wb2VNH-&index=2

or

Siyalingana video 6: isiZulu

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baltP_PxcQc&list=PLV_52AavLpDIZ0Pf6t2FlvF-sSbk9AzGf&index=2



Pictures and stories

Every book, even one with stereotypes, can offer an opportunity to talk about gender.

Words, pictures and illustrations can reinforce gender stereotypes and gender roles.

Use pictures and stories to break down stereotypical idea about gender

HOW?

1

Be aware of the gender sensitivity of books and pictures that you use

2

Draw children's attention to stereotypes and role models and help them reflect on gender



Siyalingana video 7 Pictures and Stories: English

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WE6moPrEpwg&list=PLV_52AavLpDLzN7mtx0yYQV9a7Wb2VNH-&index=3

or

Siyalingana video 7: isiZulu

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wy5Q8e0b08w&list=PLV_52AavLpDIZ0Pf6t2FlvF-sSbk9AzGf&index=3

1

Be aware of gender sensitivity of books and pictures that you use



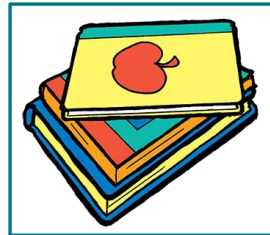
Check a book or poster for stereotypes



Based on your check, decide whether, and how, to use the book or poster



Be careful with pictures from magazines → often highly stereotyped



2

Draw children's attention to stereotypes and role models and help them reflect on gender



Help children become aware of stereotypes in books and pictures

Ask questions:

- What are the children in the book doing?
- Would you like to do this?
- Is it always this way?



Draw attention to characters or pictures of people doing things not traditionally seen for their sex

Ask questions:

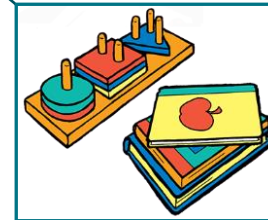
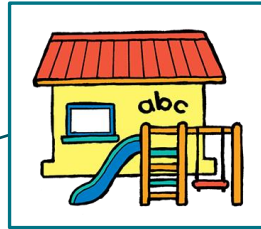
- Can anyone do this?
- Why can they do this?
- Why can't they do this?



Display examples of gender non-conforming individuals or cultures



Aspect 3: Learning Activities



How you plan your learning activities and organize your time with your learners:

- Daily program
- Themes





Learning activities

A variety of learning activities will help children interact with different children and develop many skills

Whole group activities, small group activities, free play and routines can address gender stereotypes and promote gender equality

Use your learning activities to break down stereotypical ideas on gender

HOW?

1

Avoid making activities sex-specific

2

Create opportunities for children to engage in a variety of play and learning activities

3

Use activities to question gender roles and stereotypes to promote gender equality



1

Avoid making activities sex-specific



Divide children into groups in random ways:

- Avoid dividing boys and girls in separate groups
- Avoid pairing boy/girl
- Use other ways to group (month of birth, favourite animal...)



Change groups according to children's needs



Make sure expectations, rules and routines are the same for all children



Avoid assigning tasks by sex



2 Create opportunities for all children to engage in a variety of learning and play activities

Lightbulb icon: Avoid assumption that children won't be interested in an activity typically associated with one sex.

Don't assume:

- Girls like dolls, singing, quiet games
- Boys like cars, football and blocks

Lightbulb icon: Encourage children to try out all learning activities or play areas

Example:

Mention a famous female football player to encourage girls to join in a football game

Lightbulb icon: When a child explores a different gender role, encourage this child to continue and discourage peers from making negative comments



3

Use activities to question gender roles and stereotypes

 Organise whole-group activities that break traditional gender roles.

Example:
When learning about transport, all children pretend to drive tractors



3

Use activities to question gender roles and stereotypes



Model non-stereotypical play behaviour

Example:
Play a mother building a house, or a father cooking.



Adapt the words of traditional songs or rhymes to include characters of all genders.

- Examples:
- The wheels on the bus
 - Old MacDonald

3

Use activities to question gender roles and stereotypes - continued



During activities, ask thought-provoking questions that challenge gender roles

Example

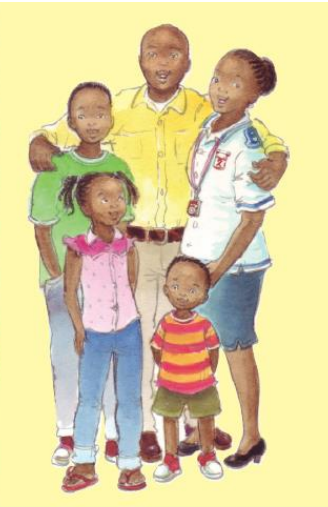
Discussion about professions or family members:

‘Whose father cooks?’

‘Who helps their parents in the kitchen?’

‘Can girls drive lorries?’

Learning themes that create opportunities to discuss gender – example: My family



- What questions can you ask children:**
- What activities do you like to do with your father? Why?
 - With your mother? Why?
 - With your sister? Why?
 - With your brother? Why?



ISBN 978-1-4315-2015-2
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A riddle

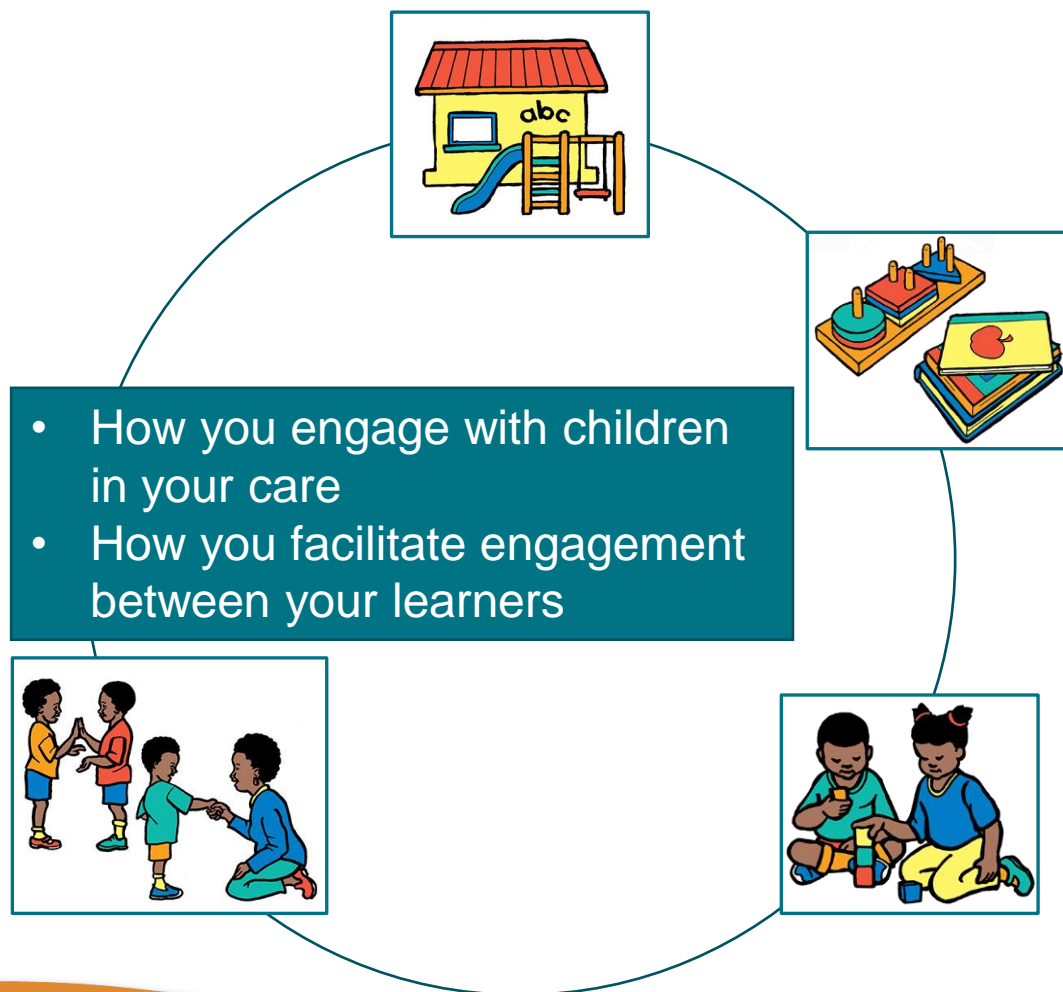
A father and son are in a car crash. They are rushed to the hospital. The father dies.

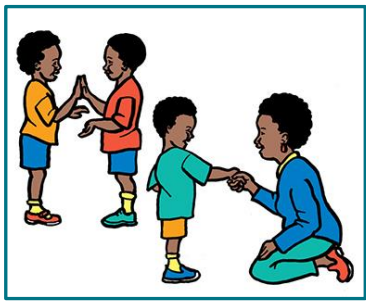
The boy is taken to the operating room and the surgeon says: “I can’t operate on this boy, he is my son.”

How is this possible?



Aspect 4: Classroom Interaction and Language Use





Classroom interactions and language use

Interactions with adults and other children are important for learning and development

As their teacher, you are an important presence in the lives of every single child

You play a crucial role in developing their **sense of identity and belonging**

Helping children to:

- See themselves as capable and confident
- Develop a sense of self-care
- Build strong relationships
- Celebrate diversity and differences

Classroom interactions and language use

Teacher- learner interaction



Learner- learner interaction





Observing the role plays

- Do the children in the play get equal attention?
- What words does the 'teacher' use to refer to boys and girls?
- What words does the 'teacher' use to praise or encourage different children?
- Does the 'teacher' use the same tone of voice with all learners?
- What non-verbal communication does the 'teacher' use with different children?
- What does the 'teacher' do to discuss gender stereotypes or diversity with the children?

eNCA news 8:

Ending GBV, educating young boys:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=df9I13hUSfc>



“

Children who experience violence are more likely to experience violence or become perpetrators of violence in adulthood.

When we improve the way we raise our children we can go a long way to preventing violence against girls and boys.

We must raise boys and girls with the knowledge and understanding that no person has the right to treat them as inferior or to harm them in any way and that **boys and girls are equal in all respects.**

This points to the need to target our education programmes at **young children** in order to make a difference in **attitudes** from the start.

We need to invest more in research that develops **evidence-based interventions to end gender-based violence.**”

- President Cyril Ramaphosa, GBV Summit, November 2018

Learner-learner interaction

Interactions with other children are important to develop social skills. These skills will also benefit them later in life as they interact with people of different sexes.

Helping all children express themselves and their emotions, regardless of gender is important to develop self-care skills. Handling feelings is an important part of positive relationships, also later in life.

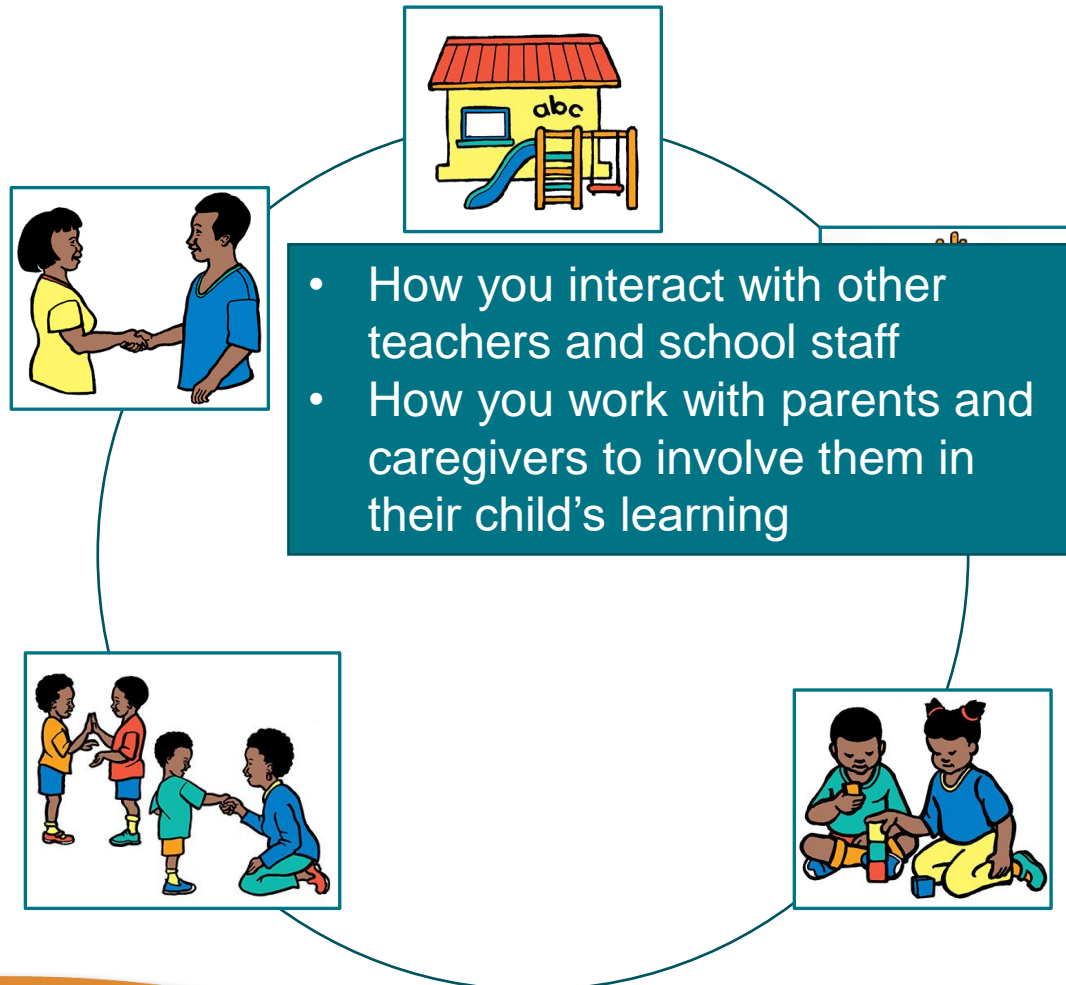
AS ECD PRACTITIONERS YOU PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE PREVENTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE!

Support children to express themselves freely and accept one another

HOW?

- 1 Help children to treat one another with respect**
- 2 Encourage children equally to express their emotions**
- 3 Help children to develop empathy and appreciate diversity**

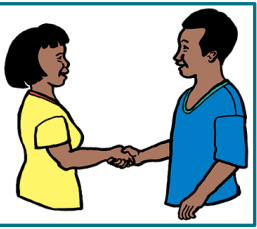
Aspect 5: Interactions beyond the classroom



Agree or disagree?

1. It is important that I am gender-responsive in my interactions with **adults**.
2. I can inform families and communities about the effects of gender stereotypes on young children.
3. Parents and teachers should not bother about educating young children on gender as this topic is too difficult for the children.
4. I should explain to parents that encouraging their children to engage in all sorts of play is helping their children to learn.
5. When a boy plays with dolls or a girl plays football, I can advise parents that this is normal play behaviour and this play helps them learn various skills.
6. Norms and beliefs, culture and religion are irrelevant when I talk to parents or caregivers about gender equality.
7. Male caregivers don't play an important role in the development of their children, so it is not important for me to try and involve them.





Interactions beyond the classroom

Interactions with the wider school community and the home environment of the children influence what children believe about the world and themselves.

- You can model gender-responsive behaviours beyond your classroom
- You can provide parents and caregivers with information about the effects of gender bias

Use your interactions with school staff, parents and wider community to promote gender equality

HOW? 1

Promote gender equality and model an anti-bias approach in your interaction with other adults

2

Help parents to support their child's holistic development

1 Model anti-bias in interactions with other adults



- Respectfully address norms and beliefs that reinforce gender stereotypes
- Raise awareness on how gender stereotypes affect learners and learning
- This might be an uncomfortable topic for some: be ready to respond to concerns
- Identify common goals most people want to see for children. Eg safety, kindness, respect, a positive learning environment



2

Help parents to support their child's holistic development



Help parents understand how gender stereotypes negatively affect children's learning and what they are able to achieve.

Key messages:

Children learn and develop optimally when:

- they participate in a variety of learning and play activities
- their teachers make them feel safe and supported
- they receive encouragement to try different things and interact with others

Traditional ideas about gender roles sometimes prevent this and limit children's learning



Make your gender responsive pedagogy clear to parents; explain how it will benefit learners

Example:

“I want to ensure children believe in their potential. I don't want gender to get in the way of achieving their dreams.”





Your feedback is
important to us!



THANK YOU!



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Read to Lead
A Reading Nation is a Leading Nation