What is a gender stereotype?

In general, gender stereotyping involves how men and women are expected to act, speak, dress, and conduct themselves, based on their sex. These preconceived gender roles can limit men's and women's capacity to pursue professional careers and prevent them from making individual choices about their lives.

For example, if a girl is expected to become a housewife and care for her family, then society might lose a natural talent for physics. If a boy is valued only for his potential to make a great firefighter, some school might lose a highly talented kindergarten teacher.

The most common gender stereotypes for women include:

- **Girls** like wearing pink clothes.
- Women should be polite, accommodating, and nurturing.
- Women should not be too aggressive, outspoken, or smart.
- Housekeeping and childcare are women's responsibility.
- Women should educate their children and care for them in every way.
- Women shouldn't be part of the **workplace**. Career and professional advancement shouldn't be important for women.
- Women don't make great scientists.

Men are also commonly expected to adhere to specific gender roles:

- Boys like racing cars.
- Men should be strong, aggressive, and bold.
- Men are providers and protectors.
- Advanced professional qualifications should be important only for men.
- Men don't have to participate in childcare or housekeeping.
- Men always have the final say in choosing the place to live and the school for his children.