

Girls and Boys

A structured group activity for children and adolescents

Topic:

This activity will help children focus primarily on the broad issues of gender and culture and how those issues relate to each other. Issues of vocation (and gender) and ethnic/racial identity may also surface through this activity. As a secondary gain, this activity will also encourage cooperation among boys and girls.

Synopsis of Activity:

Children are divided into two mixed gender groups. Each group is assigned to construct a picture of either a prototypical girl or a prototypical boy using pictures from magazines. This collage will address the question, "What is a boy/girl like?" Magazine pictures should offer a diverse range of male and female features, including people of different ages, shapes, colors, sizes, etc. After each group is finished with its picture, they will present it to the group and discuss its meaning.

Discussion:

This dynamic activity will help uncover the children's attitudes and concepts of gender roles and how their culture affects those attitudes. This discussion may lead to intense discussion when the children reveal their stereotypes and attitudes that may be in conflict with other cultures' attitudes; hence, the children may need assistance resolving their conflicts. The content and process of the discussion may depend on the children's level of acculturation, state of ethnic/racial identity, and general developmental level.

Note: This activity can be modified to fit people of different ages and cultural backgrounds.