

# Gender Equity in Early Childhood



**Promoting Equality, Preventing Violence**

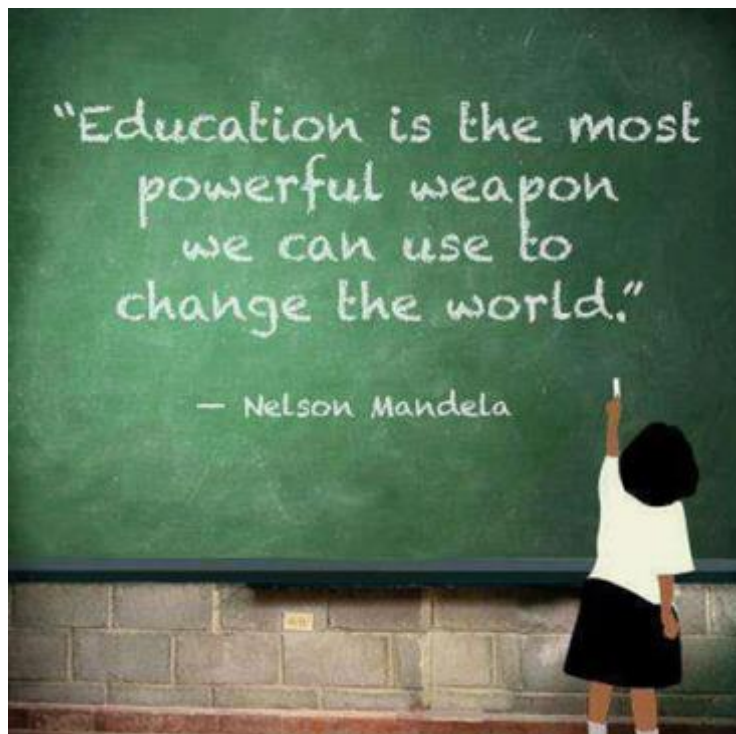
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# The Early Years... Imagine!



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#Re-draw the balance...

inspiring  
the  
future.org

#REDRAWTHEBALANCE



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# Violence against Women In Australia

To end men's violence against women we need to challenge the foundations of violence.



**Make the Link**

Gender equality  
prevents men's violence  
against women

Source: Our Watch [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia.](#)

657  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
MATTERS  
ARE DEALT WITH  
EVERY DAY BY  
AUSTRALIAN POLICE



WOMAN IS  
MURDERED  
by her current  
or former partner



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# Why is Gender Equity important in Early Childhood?

- 1. Effective promotion of children's learning and development**
  - How we contribute to their world: language, toys, materials, books, displays, music...
- 2. Intrinsically linked to NQF, EYLF practice principles and learning outcomes**
  - 'Equity and Diversity', 'High Expectations for Every Child', 'Respectful Relationships and Responsive Engagement'



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### 3. Positive Impact on Workplace Culture

- Role-modelling Equal and Respectful Relationships
- Policy Framework
  - Workplace Response to Family Violence Policy
  - Interactions with Children Policy
  - Workplace Flexibility Norms

### 4. Create generational change!



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# YMCA and VicHealth Project

Objective: *To ensure that all programs and services reflect the principles of gender equality and equal and respectful relationships.*

- ✓ Three Year Project with a primary prevention
- ✓ Focus on Healthy Workplaces and Respectful Relationships
- ✓ Increasing women's representation and leadership in the workplace
- ✓ Pilot approach across YMCA



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# Pilot: Gender Equity in Early Childhood

## How?

- Challenging unconscious bias from Educators
- Encouraged us to think about...

*What does equality look like in Early Childhood?*



***At the most micro level, discrimination impedes girls and women from achieving their individual hopes and dreams.***



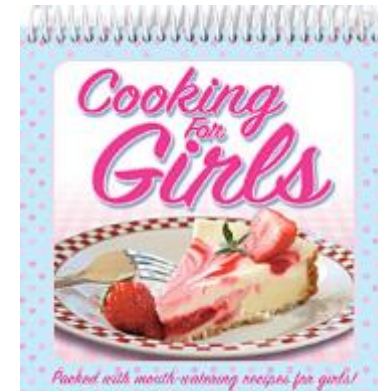
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# Our Actions

- Training on understanding gender, gender stereotyping, and gender equality
- Information on expectations for staff, including at induction
- Statement in all Position Descriptions regarding gender equity
- Audit of books, resources, play spaces
- Evaluated our philosophy, policies



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# Intentionality and Self- Reflection...

- Play spaces
- Educator **Language** (including jokes!)
- **Representation** of toys, books, drawings
- Conscious use of language in written
- Marketing and communications materials
- Understand gender inequity hot spots

Dress up days, 'When I grow up' activities, outdoor play, arts and crafts, cooking, colours, greeting new siblings...

**Self-  
reflection is  
a humbling  
process.  
It's essential  
to find out  
why you think,  
say, and do  
certain things...  
then better  
yourself.**



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# Embedding a Gender Lens

*Educators have an understanding about gender equity, unconscious bias, the importance of positive role models, and avoiding or eliminating negative stereotypes.*



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# Understanding Why...

*'Not only are they playing with only half the toys, they do not spend much time playing with children who are interested in other toys and begin to see each other as opposites.'*



*'This perception of differences and segregation continue throughout development. That means that early toy play has an impact on social relationships across the genders.'*

**Source: Play Unlimited Website**



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# But I LOVE pink!

*There is nothing wrong with pink and princesses for girls as long as they are also free to play with toys that promote the development of other important skills. Conversely, there's nothing wrong with boys playing with trucks and building model aeroplanes if they are also encouraged to nurture other aspects of themselves.*

**Source: Play Unlimited Website**



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# Why is gender equity important in Early Childhood?



Create generational change!



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# Some Helpful Resources...

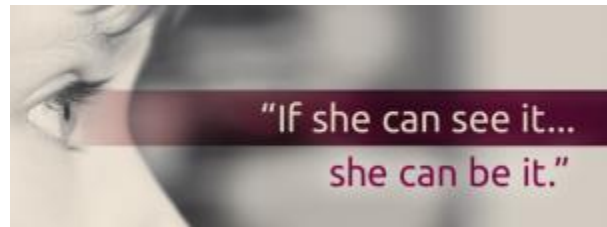
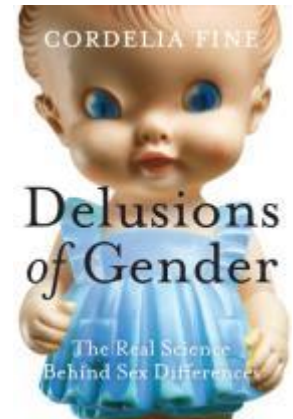


LEAN IN

WOMEN, WORK, AND  
THE WILL TO LEAD

SHERYL SANDBERG

**Play Unlimited.**<sup>TM</sup>  
every toy for every body.



Geena Davis Institute  on Gender in Media



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KEEP SOME  
ROOM IN  
YOUR HEART  
FOR THE  
UNIMAGINABLE

MARY OLIVER



*Goodluck and enjoy the Conference!*



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