

A decorative graphic consisting of concentric circles with a red-to-yellow gradient, located to the left of the section header.

Responding to Gender Roles and Gender Norms

You can respond to harmful gender norms by adjusting your attitudes and behaviours and inspiring others to do the same.

- **Speak about your own experiences.** If you have experienced the impacts of harmful gender norms, talk about it with your friends, family, and the public.
- **Call out harmful gender norms in media and advertising.** You can find many such examples in South Asian TV and movies. Use these as an opportunity to start a discussion on gender norms and roles.
- **Challenge discrimination when you see it.** If you notice someone perpetuating harmful gender norms, talk about it. Depending on the situation, you may choose to have a private conversation with the person.
- **Emphasize accomplishments over physical attributes.** Do not judge people based on how they look.
- **Choose colours based on personal preferences.** Do not dress or choose colours for yourself or your children based on gender. Boys can wear pink. Girls can like blue.
- **Learn skills based on interests rather than expectations.** Just because you are a man, does not mean you need to be interested in technical subjects. Just because you are a woman does not mean your interests lie in the humanities, arts, or social sciences.

- **Participate equally in household chores.** Girls can help with repair work and financial matters. Boys can cook meals. Both men and women can support each other with household work.
- **Acknowledge all genders' contributions to history.** Talk about the contributions made by people of all genders. This can help celebrate the victories of society as a whole.
- **Be friends with people of all genders.** Getting to know people of other genders can help you reduce bias and learn more about their experiences.
- **Don't accept violence regardless of the person's gender.** Neither men nor women should engage in abusive behaviours towards their partners or others.
- **Acknowledge all genders who are survivors of gender-based violence.** The experiences of any individual who has faced gender-based violence are important. They need to be heard and supported.
- **Recognize men's need to be parents.** When men are assumed to take on roles outside of the house, their need to participate in the family is often forgotten. Men can also love and care for their families.
- **Care for others regardless of their gender.** Be kind and welcoming to others regardless of their gender.

