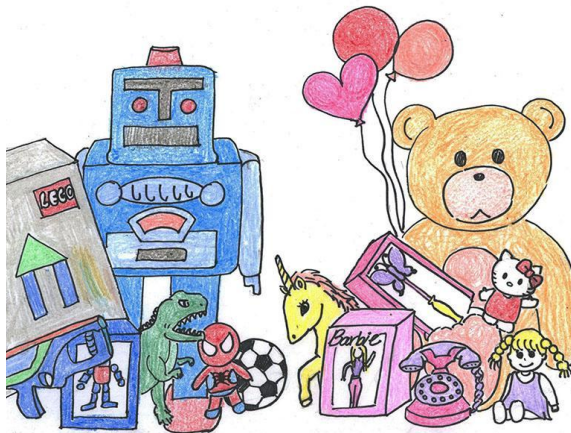


All About Gender Norms

By Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMMM)



From an early age we learn how we're "supposed" to act based on gender. These "rules" are called gender norms and stereotypes, and they affect everyone.

Stereotypes:

Assumptions, judgments, and beliefs about someone based only on their identity, or a group they belong to.

"She's a girl, so she must be good at cooking."

Norms:

Pressure or expectations placed on people to look and act certain ways, based on their identity or a group they belong to.

"Boys should be tough and never cry."

What's the downside of gender norms and stereotypes?

They can make people feel stuck in a box. They also make it harder to understand your own boundaries, and to respect other people's boundaries.

All people deserve:

*respect
equal opportunities
healthy relationships
freedom to be themselves*

MASCULINE

Feminine



No matter what their gender is.



What does it mean to go "outside the box"?

When someone dresses, acts in a certain way, or does an activity that isn't expected of them based on gender.

There are many different ways to go outside the box, and it depends on the individual. Going outside the box can make someone feel happy and free, but it can also feel scary, since sometimes other people are not accepting.



What is gender policing?

Gender norms are like unofficial laws.

Sometimes, people act like gender police officers, pressuring others to stay inside the box.

Gender policing is very common, but it still crosses boundaries and makes people feel hurt and insecure. Both kids and adults sometimes act like gender police officers.



Questions? Need help?

Help is free and private when you text, chat, or call us.

sassmm.org

To text:

Send a text to
1-800-871-7741
Mon-Fri 8 am-5 pm.

To chat:

Visit sassmm.org Mon-Fri
8 am - 5 pm. Click "chat."

To call:

Call 1-800-871-7741,
24/7.

