

GENDER ROLES DEBATE

SESSION 4 – Activity 1

MATERIALS
None.

20 MINUTES

PURPOSE
The purpose of this activity is to enable participants to explore gender roles and their impact.

OBJECTIVES
Participants will be able to explain their understanding of gender roles and the impact gender roles have on them and their relationships.

Method

- Assign one side of the room as agree, the other side as disagree and the centre of the room as unsure.
- Read out the following statements and ask the participants to go to whichever side of the room they feel is right for them.

- Rugby is a men's sport

- Men think about sex while women think about relationships

- Men who have sex are 'cool', women who have sex are 'easy'

- Make-up is only for women

- It is more acceptable for men to masturbate than women

- Women are more emotional than men

- Men should not wear dresses or skirts

- There are men's jobs and there are women's jobs

- Men should make the first move when it comes to sex

- All genders are equal

- Facilitators should use the additional follow up questions found on the Gender Roles Debate Facilitator Notes to direct participants at random or generally for anyone to respond to.

Processing Questions

In the large group, discuss:

- Do gender roles define how people behave? How?
- Do you think there's pressure on people to fit into these roles? How?
- Does society play a part in how we view gender roles? How? e.g. shops, occupations, media, sport.
- If someone doesn't fit into their gender roles how are they viewed or spoken about in society?
- Does how someone dresses define their gender?
- Does the way people view gender roles affect their relationships? How?
- Are there expectations on people in relationships based on stereotypical gender roles?
- What is the main message you will take away from this debate?

Facilitator's Note

This activity is kept very much in the gender binary of men-women to explore how people have been socialised into their view of gender roles. The last debate statement is an opportunity for other gender identities to be introduced and discussed in relation to gender roles.



Rugby is a men's sport.

Follow up questions:

- Who dominates the sport – men or women?
- Do women get taken seriously in the sport?
- Are there any sports that are dominated by women?

Facilitator Note

Traditionally many sports are seen as "men's sport", this comes from the fact that there can often be more money invested in men's sports, which is reflected in the amount men are paid compared to how women are paid in professional sports. This also impacts advertising around these sports and portrayal of these sports through the media are dominated by men. This does not mean that it is a men's sport. Many women play rugby.

Men think about sex while women think about relationships.

Follow up questions:

- Is this true for all men and women?
- Do men want to be in relationships?
- Do women think about sex?
- Does this belief put pressure on people who do not think like this?

Facilitator Note

This view is reinforced in the media repeatedly. This view is damaging as it tells men that they should only and always want sex while it tells women that they should always be looking for a relationship and they should not want sex. This view feeds into stereotypical gender roles and puts pressure on people to conform to these "ideals".

Men who have sex are 'cool'; women who have sex are 'easy'.

Follow up questions:

- Where does this stereotype come from?
- Do you think this affects women? How?
- Do you think this affects men? How?

Facilitator Note

This is again a common thing seen in popular culture. This is popularly referred to as "slut shaming". "Slut-shaming" is the practice of disparaging women, and occasionally men, for acting in a manner that violates "norms" regarding sexually appropriate behavior. These denigrations, which are often double standards, range from criticizing women for wearing sexy clothing or having multiple sexual partners to blaming sexual assault and rape survivors for their attacks." (Dictionary.com, 2021)

Make-up is only for women.

Follow up questions:

- Why?
- Can you think of anyone who isn't a woman that wears make-up?
- Why do you think it is more acceptable for women to wear make-up?
- Does wearing make-up mean you are a woman?
- Does not wearing make-up make you a man?

Facilitator Note

Make-up is for everyone. Make-up is just one way that people choose to express themselves.

It is more acceptable for men to masturbate than women.

Follow up questions:

- Why do people masturbate?
- Do women and men talk about masturbation in the same way?

Facilitator Note

Masturbation is a healthy way for all people to express their sexuality. See note above about "slut shaming".

Women are more emotional than men.

Follow up questions:

- Why?
- Do men and women express their feelings differently?
- What do we mean by expressing their feelings? Are we talking about crying, hugging, joy, etc?
- Do you think men are seen as weak if they show sadness, hurt, pain, etc.? Where does this stereotype come from?

Facilitator Note

We express our feelings based on the way we have been taught. For many young men they have learned to hide their negative feelings such as sadness or hurt to appear more "manly". Everyone has the right to express their feelings and should be encouraged to do so.

Men should not wear dresses or skirts.

Follow up questions:

- Why?
- Are there "men's" clothes and "women's" clothes? What makes them this way?
- What influences the way we dress?

Facilitator Note

Clothes can be used as a way of expressing someone's gender but everyone experiences their gender differently. Therefore, no piece of clothing is specifically for men or women. If someone feels comfortable, confident and affirmed in the clothes they put on their body then those clothes belong on their body.

There are men's jobs and there are women's jobs.

Follow up questions:

- Should all occupations be open to men and women?
- Should men and women earn the same?

Facilitator Note

Some occupations are dominated by women, and some by men. This does not mean that there are jobs that only women or men should do. If someone is passionate about an area of work their gender should not influence if they participate in that work.

Men should make the first move when it comes to sexual activity.

Follow up questions:

- Agree: Why should it be left up to men to initiate sexual activity? What could be a possible consequence if it was always left up to men?
- Disagree: Is it acceptable for a woman to 'want' sexual activity? Do you think women have any problems initiating sexual activity or do they still wait for the man to do it?
- Is it ok for women to carry condoms? Do you think women get judged for carrying condoms? What could be done to make this more acceptable?
- Do people always want to engage in sexual activity? Who should make the first move in a same-sex relationship?

Facilitator Note

Women can have as high a libido (sex drive) as men and therefore 'want' sexual activity as much, if not more than a man. This idea can also be linked back to "slut shaming" (see notes above) as it is going against traditional societal norms.

Some people are asexual and therefore may not want to engage in sexual activity.

All genders are equal.

Follow up questions:

- What genders do you know of?
- How are these genders viewed in society?

Facilitator Note

See Gender and Sexuality Session for notes on different genders. Women, transgender and gender non-conforming people are more likely to experience discrimination in many aspects of their lives: in the workplace, when seeking medical attention, and in society in general.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to enable participants to explore who and what influences their beliefs, values and actions.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- State who and what their influences are.
- Describe how these influences affect their beliefs and thoughts.
- Explain how their influences affect their actions.

MATERIALS

Worksheet,
flip chart,
markers, pens.



Method

- Split participants into groups of 3 or 4 and give each group a flipchart. Ask the group to mind map all of the influences in their life. Some examples could be family, friends, people on social media, TV, celebrities, school etc.
- After 5 minutes bring the group back together and take feedback.
- Distribute the Who Influences Me? worksheet.
- Ask participants to pick the top 5 influences they feel they have in their lives and write them into the top of the worksheet and work through each statement writing what they think the role each influence has played.
- After 10 minutes bring the group back together and move to processing.

Processing Questions

In the large group, discuss:

- Have you ever thought of what the influences are in your life before? Did you realise there were so many?
- Are influences always positive or negative?
- Do you think your influences affect how you think and act?

WHO INFLUENCES ME? WORKSHEET

In the boxes provided, describe how each person/group has influenced the areas of your life listed below.

	Family Member	Friend	Celebrity	School/ Educational Institution	Another influence in your life
Write the name or identifier for this person here					
What you wear					
What TV shows you watch					
What/who you follow online					
How you think about yourself					
How you view other people					
How you view romantic relationships					
Your perceptions of sexual activity					

PURPOSE The purpose of this activity is for young people to explore the privileges that they and others may or may not have and how this affects their world view.

OBJECTIVES Participants will be able to:

- State what privileges they have.
- Explain how certain privileges affect their worldview.
- Challenge their own and others' thinking in a respectful manner.

MATERIALS

Privileges handout, amounts of money, flipchart, markers, pens.



Method

- Ask the group what they understand by the term "privilege". Document these answers on a flipchart.
- Read out the definition of privilege:

A privilege is:

"a special right or advantage that a particular person or group of people has"

(Collins Dictionary, 2021)

- Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4.
- Hand out the "The Price Is Right" worksheet and a monetary amount. Explain to the group that for the purpose of this activity, no one has any of the privileges on the worksheet. In order to get these privileges the group must buy them. Each privilege costs €100 and each group only has the amount of money allocated to them.
- Give the group 10 minutes to decide which privileges from the sheet they want to buy.
- Bring the group back together and move to processing.

(Activity Adapted from The Safe Zone Project)

Processing Questions

- How did you find doing that activity? How did it make you feel?
- Did everyone in your group agree? How did you decide which privileges to buy?
- Were there any of the privileges that surprised you?
- Have you ever thought about what privileges you have before? Have you thought of the ones others have?
- Why do you think you were given an amount of money to buy privileges?
- Why do you think different groups had different amounts of money?
- What have you learned from this activity?
- Do you think the privileges we do or don't have affect our relationships with others?

Facilitator's Note

- Be mindful that some of the young people in your groups may have more privileges than others or may be directly affected by the lack of one or more of the privileges.
- This activity highlights a range of privileges within society which people have to different degrees. If there are one or more privileges on the list that you feel may be distressing for your participants to discuss they can be removed. Adjust the money given out if doing this - no group should have the ability to buy all privileges.
- At the end of the activity, ensure that through processing or by stating directly, participants understand that, in an ideal world, privilege should not exist. Every person in society should be equal and therefore should have the same opportunities and treatment from others as anyone else.

Privilege

"Privilege refers to certain social advantages, benefits, or degrees of prestige and respect that an individual has by virtue of belonging to certain social identity groups. Within American and other Western societies, these privileged social identities—of people who have historically occupied positions of dominance over others—include whites, males, heterosexuals, Christians, and the wealthy, among others."

(García, 2018)

Understanding privilege requires an ongoing, active effort to see things from the perspective of underprivileged people. While you cannot get rid of your privilege, you can acknowledge it. When we acknowledge our own privilege and discuss it openly, we engage in solidarity with those who do not share in certain privileges with us. A good start to acknowledging privilege is to self-reflect on your privileges. Give some consideration to the following questions;

- When was the last time you had to think about your ethnicity, race, gender identity, ability level, religion, and/or sexual orientation? What provoked you to think about it or acknowledge it?
- When watching TV or a movie, how likely are you to watch shows whose characters reflect your ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation?
- When using social media, how diverse is your feed? How diverse are your friends and followers? How diverse are those that you follow?
- How do you respond when others make negative statements towards individuals of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity than yourself?
- How often do you go to social settings where the majority of individuals are of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity than yourself?
- How diverse is the community in which you live?
- How do you feel when you are in a community that is different from your neighbourhood?
- How would you make your neighborhood more inclusive and sensitive?
- If you recognised your privilege, what did you do with this realisation?

(NASP, 2016)

THE PRICE IS RIGHT WORKSHEET (15-18 YEARS)

1. You are able to see people who identify similar to you in leadership positions.
2. You are never misgendered or have the wrong pronouns used to identify you.
3. You are confident that you will be paid fairly regardless of your gender.
4. You are able to choose almost any career path that you would like and not have many or any limitations placed upon you.
5. You are able to go to a doctor and get treatment that doesn't conflict with your identity.
6. Your identity is recognised and taught in the education system.
7. You can leave your home knowing that you will have accessibility to transport, shops and buildings.
8. You feel safe in the presence of authority figures (e.g. principal, garda, doctor, etc).
9. Your intelligence is not questioned due to your accent or the way you speak.
10. You can walk down the street without fear of being sexually assaulted.
11. You are able to easily find affordable clothing that is flattering on your body.
12. You are able to kiss/hug/be affectionate in public without threat or punishment.
13. You are free to have a bad day or be in a bad mood without it being blamed on your identity.
14. You are able to go shopping alone knowing that you won't be followed or harassed by security.
15. You are given access to the tools/systems/equipment necessary for you to succeed in and out of the workplace.
16. You are able to read books, watch movies and other media where you share identities with the characters.
17. You are able to use public restrooms or changing facilities without stares or fears of physical/verbal abuse.
18. You automatically have time off around the religious or cultural holidays you celebrate.
19. You are expected and encouraged to attend university.
20. You feel safe and secure in your home.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT WORKSHEET (12-14 YEARS)

1. You see people in charge that are similar to you around you.

2. You are always called the name you want to be called.

3. You are confident that you will be respected everywhere regardless of your gender.

4. You are able to choose to do anything you want when you get older.

5. You are able to go to a doctor and not worry about being believed.

6. You see people like you in books used in school.

7. You can leave your home knowing that you will have accessibility to transport, shops and buildings.

8. You feel safe in the presence of authority figures (e.g. principal, garda, doctor, etc).

9. You are not questioned about how smart you are due to your accent or the way you speak.

10. You can walk down the street and feel safe.

11. You are able to easily find clothes you like to wear.

12. You are able to kiss/hug/be affectionate in public without feeling unsafe.

13. You regularly see families that look like yours.

14. You are able to go shopping alone knowing that you won't be followed or harassed by security.

15. You have everything you need to succeed in and out of school or the workplace.

16. You regularly see people similar to you in books, movies and other media.

17. You are able to use public restrooms or changing facilities without stares or feeling unsafe.

18. You automatically have time off around the religious or cultural holidays you celebrate.

19. You are expected and encouraged to attend university.

20. You feel safe and secure in your home.

€400

€1,000

€600

€1,200

€700

€1,500

€900

€1,300

