



## Points of Consideration for Educators Requested by Pigtail Pals Parent Community

Dear Teachers:

Pigtail Pals and Achilles Effect love teachers. We know how important you are to our children. We ask that you provide a vibrant and colourful learning space that is free of commercialization and gender stereotypes, and balanced between male and female influences.

Most people assume that boys are immune to the impact of gender stereotypes, but that is not the case. From the time they are born, boys are taught to equate masculinity with dominance, physical strength, stoicism, and an absence of vulnerability. The idea of dominance also affects boys' views of femininity. By regularly characterizing males as the dominant sex, children's media and books place females in a position of relative inferiority and teach boys to devalue girls, women, and femininity in general.

At such a crucial time of development, parents want to make sure that these ideas are not reinforced in the classroom.

- Media literacy initiatives need to begin at the preschool level for teachers, parents, and children. It will take all of us working together to create change.
- Our kids receive so many advertising messages during a normal day, we ask that their classrooms stay commercial-free.
- Boys looking to see themselves reflected in books and images are often introduced instead to many unhealthy ideas about males: boys don't cry; boys don't wear pink; boys don't play with dolls; boys are undisciplined, aggressive, noisy, and like to fight. Please ensure your classroom materials show boys and men: acting with kindness; sharing; being creative, scared or vulnerable; and doing "non-traditional" things like taking care of children, cooking, and cleaning.
- In order to show boys the important role that girls and women play in the world, please incorporate books and songs with female protagonists in your lesson plans.
- Fictional boys are often shown using violence to solve problems. Violent toys and stories should be limited or eliminated from the classroom. These types of toys and books have no place in a learning environment for young minds.
- Boys are especially susceptible to the fear of looking "girly." Encourage children to try new colours or crafts that may not conform to gender stereotypes, and try to avoid extremely gendered themes like "princesses."
- We know as teachers that you value childhood as much as we do. Please ensure your classroom remains a tribute to childhood and the natural curiosity that resides there.

Thank you for making your classroom an amazing place for our kiddos to learn!

You can find Pigtail Pals – Redefine Girly at [www.pigtailpals.com](http://www.pigtailpals.com).

You can find Achilles Effect at [www.achilleseffect.com](http://www.achilleseffect.com)