Education Department Resource

Gender Talk

What messages do we receive every day about what it means to be male/masculine and female/feminine? Collect a bunch of common magazines and thumb through them. Mark or cut out all headlines, images, etc. that tell you something about how men and women are "supposed to" look, behave, love and form families. Post these images and make notes below based on your observations:

Act Like a Man	Gender-Neutral	Be Ladylike

Discuss the following with a partner or in small groups:

- What patterns or themes did you observe about the messages men and women receive regarding their gender and sexuality?
- In what ways do these messages limit us?
- What happens to people who don't conform to society's expectations with regard to gender and sexuality? (What are they called? How are they treated?)
- How does all this connect to society's ideas about the "rightness" or "normalcy" of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people?
- How do sexism and ideas about gender relate to homophobia and heterosexism?
- What can we all do to break down stereotypes about what it means to be a man or woman?

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