

THE SPECIFICS OF RAISING GIRLS

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Abstract

This text explores the psychological and educational aspects related to the gender-specific characteristics of children. It describes early differences in the behavior and development of boys and girls, the dynamics of gender identity manifestation during preschool and adolescence, and the influence of the family environment on the formation of personality traits. The key role of the mother as the primary source of behavioral models and the importance of the father in expanding cognitive horizons and laying the foundations of rational thought are highlighted. Effective parenting techniques—such as explanation, habituation, encouragement, and gentle discipline—are examined, while the practice of corporal punishment is categorically rejected. The text emphasizes that a child's individual characteristics have a more significant impact on their abilities and social success than their biological sex.

Keywords

gender identity, psychological characteristics of children, maternal role model, father's role, parenting methods, emotional development, adaptation and socialization, ban on corporal punishment.

In the process of raising children, parents should take into account their gender-specific characteristics. Boys and girls differ not only in their appearance: masculine and feminine qualities emerge well before puberty and have a lasting impact on the child's emotional sphere, cognitive processes, and behavior. At the same time, it is important to remember that men and women are united, first and foremost, by universal human virtues inherent in both sexes.

Gender differences usually manifest only as specific traits within the overall characteristics of a person. Knowledge of gender-related psychological characteristics allows one to build upon positive aspects, account for and prevent

potential negative manifestations, and ultimately, increase the effectiveness of family upbringing.

Even in the first year of life, several significant differences are identified between boys and girls. For example, boys often demand constant attention from their mothers, are more active in games, and are more prone to aggression and displays of physical force; whereas girls tend to establish more verbal communication with their mothers, feel a greater need for affection, and their physical and mental development is, on average, several months ahead of boys: their speech typically develops 2-4 months earlier.

By the age of three, with the help of their parents and surroundings, children begin to recognize their gender identity and distinguish the sex of other children and adults. As they get older, gender-related psychological characteristics become more pronounced: this is evident in the intensity of emotional reactions, the uniqueness of interests and abilities, the peculiarities of thought processes, and attitudes toward concrete facts.

In girls, a tendency toward maternal behavior is apparent from an early age. This is reflected in their interest in younger children, their actions during play, and the care they show for their dolls. Girls' attention is primarily directed toward people and their interpersonal relationships; as they grow older, their interest in a person's inner world and the feelings and actions of other people increases. Furthermore, they are characterized by a particular focus on their immediate surroundings – living conditions, household items, clothing, and so on.

Girls talk more with their mothers and show a greater attachment to the home environment. They are typically distinguished from boys by their perseverance and responsibility in completing tasks, diligence, thriftiness, and reliability. They have a tendency to care for and nurture others, as well as to mentor and critically evaluate. Their high emotional sensitivity often diminishes their objectivity; in general, the female psyche is more sensitive, and girls are more easily offended and shy, and they react strongly to both praise and criticism.

In girls, involuntary attention is more noticeable from a young age; they are more drawn to concrete, visual demonstrations. They are easily persuaded, adapt more quickly to new environments, and feel confident in non-standard situations.

Their range of cognitive interests is usually narrower than that of boys. In school, girls are more inclined toward literature, history, and foreign languages; they read more, are interested in poetry, and engage in music. Since it is generally easier for teachers to work with girls, they often occupy active roles in the school community and perform duties such as class monitor.

During adolescence, boys' and girls' interest in each other intensifies due to the processes of puberty. As a result, girls' focus on their appearance increases, and their active efforts to make a good impression on others become noticeable; communication and friendship with boys often take the form of overt flirtation. In such situations, parents and educators play a crucial role, their task being to preemptively and delicately instill in adolescents an understanding of the permissible and appropriate forms of relationships between the male and female sexes.

A brief overview of the psychological characteristics of girls allows for drawing conclusions and developing practical recommendations for their upbringing within the family, taking these characteristics into account, while also helping to define the functional roles of both the father and mother in this process.

The arrival of a child in a family requires, first and foremost, creating suitable living conditions for their life and development, as well as ensuring a favorable environment. From the very first weeks, parents, while being mindful of the infant's health, should also encourage their emotional and intellectual formation. Consistent affectionate interaction with a young child, conversation, parental affection, singing lullabies, and using appropriate developmental toys – all of these contribute to the child's holistic development.

In family upbringing, the primary role is typically fulfilled by the mother. She ensures the child's birth and nurturing; her maternal instincts determine her attitude toward the infant. Naturally, children respond to their mothers with the same affection, and especially at an early age, a very close emotional bond is established between them and their mother, more so than with their father. This fact is of great importance and must be considered when organizing the upbringing process for both girls and boys.

The arrival of a child in a family requires, first of all, creating suitable living conditions and a favorable environment for their physical and psychological development. From the first weeks of life, it is necessary to systematically stimulate the infant's emotional and intellectual sphere through benevolent interaction, verbal communication, tactile care from parents, lullabies, and developmental toys. These elements of interaction lay the foundation for the future formation of the personality and provide the most favorable conditions for acquiring social skills.

In the family system, the mother traditionally serves as the primary educator and carrier of initial behavioral models. She ensures the child's birth and nourishment, and her emotional attitude and behavioral reactions determine the nature of the initial attachment. For this reason, a much closer emotional bond is

formed between mother and child, especially during infancy and early childhood, than between the child and the father. This fact has special educational significance and must be considered when planning educational influences aimed at both girls and boys.

Girls are prone to a high degree of sensitivity and involuntary attention, which leads to the automatic assimilation of observed behavioral models. The expressiveness, clarity, and emotional richness of a mother's actions enhance their influence on the external manifestations of the child's behavior and the formation of their inner qualities. Continuous observation of a mother's manner of speech, emotional reactions, and life habits helps daughters to adopt not only external behavioral models but also a significant portion of internal attitudes.

A mother's example encompasses a wide range of aspects, including attitudes toward people, objects, and work, ways of expressing feelings, speech culture, and life habits. A mother's gentleness, her communication style, and daily routines serve as a source for the formation of corresponding qualities in her daughter. The more consistently and consciously the mother demonstrates the desired models, the higher the probability that the child will consistently internalize them.

The effectiveness of a mother's educational influence is especially great in the early stages of development, when the child's emotional attachment and involuntary attention are at their peak. From the first weeks of a child's life, a mother's systematic and consistent behavior significantly increases the likelihood of forming stable social and personal qualities in her daughter. Early and consistent demonstration of the model ensures a deeper integration of external behavioral manifestations with internal attitudes.

A mother should strive to consciously model desired qualities through consistent actions, emotional stability, and a respectful attitude toward others. Fathers, in turn, should support the mother's educational efforts, maintain daily interaction with their child, and demonstrate coordinated behavioral models. Parents are advised to coordinate their upbringing methods, paying attention to both the external manifestations of a child's behavior and their inner perspectives, and to create an environment where the observed models align with the values and skills they aim to instill.

Parents, building on the positive aspects of their daughter's character, should strive for her all-around development, to perfect her core personal qualities, and at the same time, to identify and correct any undesirable traits. For this, methods of explanation and habituation are employed: the child is sequentially shown and explained the desired behavioral patterns, which are periodically reinforced as

needed. The particular receptiveness of girls further increases the effectiveness of such methods.

Of course, any physical punishment that demeans the dignity of either the one being punished or the one administering it is completely unacceptable.

Corporal punishment does not solve educational problems and harms the normal process of personality formation: it instills fear in a child, a tendency to hide mistakes, and withdrawal from adults; in some cases, such measures can lead to serious physical injuries or psychological trauma.

Certainly, there are specific differences in the neuro-psychological makeup of boys and girls; this is confirmed by data from neurophysiological research and reflected in popular science literature. At the same time, a child's general intellectual abilities, level of creative potential, and social adaptation depend more on their individual characteristics than on their biological sex.

Conclusion: Child-rearing should be based on a combination of accounting for gender-specific psychological characteristics and prioritizing the individual's universal human and personal qualities. Gender differences become apparent early and affect a child's emotional state, interests, and behavior. However, their intellectual abilities, creative potential, and success in society are determined more by their individual characteristics than by their biological sex.

While the mother's role remains fundamental in forming behavioral patterns and life skills, the father's influence is essential for laying rational foundations and broadening cognitive horizons. Effective upbringing requires coordinated parental actions, the systematic presentation of desired models, as well as the purposeful encouragement of the child's emotional, intellectual, and social development.

Upbringing methods should include explanation, habituation, and encouragement, while disciplinary measures must be applied with caution; physical punishment is not permissible. Early and consistent influence on a child, respect for their individuality, and attention to their emotional sensitivity provide the best conditions for the formation of stable personal qualities and their successful adaptation into society.

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