

## ROWING UP AS BOYS AND GIRLS

Q1 Does our society treat both boys and girls in the same way?

No, societies make clear distinctions between boys and girls. This begins from a very young age. We are for example, given different toys to play with.

Q2 Why are boys and girls given different toys to play with?

Toys become a way of telling children that they will have different futures and roles to play when they become men and women.

Q3 What are the main responsibilities of a woman in a family?

Across the world, the main responsibility for housework and care-giving tasks, like looking after the family, especially children, the elderly and sick members, lies with women.

Q4 Why don't we pay to the women for the work they do in their homes?

The work that women do within the home is not recognised as work. It is also assumed that this is something that comes naturally to women. It, therefore, does not have to be paid for.

Q5 Write a short note on the lives of the domestic workers.

Most domestic workers are women. Sometimes, even young boys or girls are employed to do this work.

Wages are low, as domestic work does not have much value.

A domestic worker's day can begin as early as five in the morning and ends as late as twelve at night!

Despite the hard work they do, their employers often do not show them much respect.

Q6 Household chores are physically demanding. Elaborate.

Housework actually involves many different tasks. A number of these tasks require heavy physical work. In both rural and urban areas women and girls have to fetch water. In rural areas women and girls carry heavy headloads of firewood. Tasks like washing clothes, cleaning, sweeping and picking up loads require bending, lifting and carrying. Many chores, like cooking, involve standing for long hours in front of hot stoves. The work women do is strenuous and physically demanding.

Q7 What are the characteristics of the work that women do at homes?

- It is not seen as work.
- It is not valued.
- It is physically demanding.
- It is time consuming.

Q8 What steps have been taken up by the government to promote equality between boys and girls?

Equality is an important principle of our Constitution. The Constitution says that being male or female should not become a reason for discrimination. Therefore, the government is taking various steps to promote equality between the boys and girls like:



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wadis or child-care centres in several villages

by the government has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than 30 women employees to provide crèche facilities. The provision of crèches helps many women to take up employment outside the home. It also makes it possible for more girls to attend schools.