

# Raising Gender-Healthy Children

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[www.probe.org](http://www.probe.org)

# Cherishing Our Children's Gender

- Supporting our kids' gender results in a healthy self-concept
- Important part of preventing homosexuality (gender identity confusion)
- It's easier to raise a healthy child than repair an adult!

# Follow God's Rules for Marriage and Family

## 1. Both husband and wife have clearly defined roles

- Mothers and fathers are not interchangeable.
- Distinct roles
- Masculinity: protect and provide
- Femininity: show beauty in nurture, creativity, intuition

# Follow God's Rules for Marriage and Family

2. The father is an involved leader and is warm and affectionate toward his children.

- Dad's acceptance, praise and physical affection
- Prevents the emotional void of a sense of intimate connection with a man
- A boy can grow up not comfortable with being male.
- Girls who miss their fathers' affection often become promiscuous later.

# Follow God's Rules for Marriage and Family

3. The mother loves and nurtures her family without being controlling.
  - Girls need their mothers to show them that being a female is a good and loved gift from God.
  - Boys need their mothers to love and respect them without smothering or overprotecting.
  - The other extreme from controlling is doormat.

# Follow God's Rules for Marriage and Family

## 4. The father loves the mother.

- A little girl can believe it is safe and good to be a woman.
- Men can be trusted
- When a boy sees his father cherishing and protecting his mother, he sees a man going beyond himself, the glory masculine strength.
- Being a man is a good and wonderful gift from God.

# Follow God's Rules for Marriage and Family

5. The mother shows respect for the father.

- She shows that women can enjoy and celebrate men.
- It shapes a girl's view of men in general.
- Her son learns that men deserve respect, that masculinity is a good thing.
  - A weak father who accepts contempt
  - A mean father who fights back

# Mothers and Sons

- Reinforce the father's role
- Being a boy is wonderful!
- Build the similarity to daddy
- Refuse to diminish the glory of the father/son relationship
- Affirm what is valuable in your husband so your son can model it
- Don't get in the middle of the father/son relationship
- Nurture and comfort

# Mothers and Daughters

- Be confident so she can admire you
- Stand up for what is right in godly femininity, in the family and in the world
- Demonstrate creativity, nurturing
- Pursue contentment; enjoy life where you are right now.
- Model Christlike submission

# Fathers and Sons

- Don't feel rejected by the mother/child relationship
- Draw out your son (“Hey, let’s be guys together!”)
- Show him what maleness is
- Do things together
- Thumbs-up attitude of affirmation (don't dismiss to Mom)
- Encourage and affirm “be-like-Dad” behavior
- Be physical

# Fathers and Daughters

- Build up your wife
- Love and serve her
- Girls are tactile. Touch is the key to your daughter's heart. Appropriate touch is SO powerful and necessary.
- Girls are verbal, so words are very powerful. They need to hear words of affirmation more often than boys.
- Tell her she's beautiful!

# Affirm Children's Gender

- Affirm boys in their masculinity and girls in their femininity
- Existence: “I love you.” “I’m so glad God made you a boy/girl!”
- Appearance: biceps, beautiful
- Performance: “I’m so proud of you!”
- Cast a vision: “You’re going to make a fine man/woman of God when you grow up.”

# Affirm Children's Gender

- You can be a good strong male without playing sports.
- Sensitive, creative types make the best husbands and pastors.
- You can be a soft, feminine lady and be an athlete or strong leader.
- Support the social distinctions of masculinity and femininity: “You look just like Daddy/Mommy!”
- Specify what men/women and boys/girls do that is different.

# How Are We Different?

- Mommies have babies, daddies take care of mommies and babies.
- Girls cover up their chests, boys don't have to.
- Girls use the girls' restroom, boys use the boys' restroom.
- Girls can wear a dress or skirt; boys wear pants.
- Men can have beards and shave; ladies don't.

# How Are We Different?

- Girls wear make-up; boys don't.
- Girls wear high heels; boys don't.
- Girls sit down to use the toilet; boys can stand up or sit down.
- Girls can carry a purse; boys put things in their pockets.
- Boys open doors for other people; girls say "thank you."
- In relationships, boys are the initiators; girls are the

# 3 Final Suggestions

1. Cultivate warm, affectionate, respectful relationships:  
between husband and wife,  
between parents and children
  - #1 contributor to homosexuality:  
hurtful relationship with same-sex  
parent
  - Attention, approval, affection
  - Girls need to be protected

# 3 Final Suggestions

## 2. Cherish and support your child's gender.

- Understand the God-designed differences
- Tell them how special it is to be a boy or girl.
- “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

# 3 Final Suggestions

3. When you see patterns of inappropriate gender behavior, lovingly correct it.
  - Boys don't wear girls' clothes or makeup or jewelry.
  - Boys don't play with Barbies the way girls do.
  - If a pattern develops, the best solution is marital counseling for the parents.

