

talking points

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Should we use gender-neutral toys to prevent stereotypes from forming at an early age?

Compiled by Jamie Lam

Zenna Sultan, 15
HKTA The Yuen Yuen
Institute No 3 Secondary
School

In my opinion, babies should not be given gender-neutral toys, but it's all up to their parents. For example, if a parent buys a toy car for their daughter, and she likes it, it's their choice. Cars have no gender! Then babies can play with whatever they want, and the parents would get a better understanding of their children's likes and dislikes.



Bobo Cheung Hok-yu, 15
Ma On Shan Tsung Tsin
Secondary School

Scientific research shows that humans cannot remember anything before the age of three. Therefore, I believe giving gender-neutral toys to babies won't help.

In my opinion, education is key to preventing gender stereotypes. Parents should teach their children about discrimination and why it is bad. This is the best way to ensure fairness in society.



Queenie Cheng Kwan-lai, 16
Leung Shek Chee College

It's a "no" from me. First of all, stereotyping is ingrained in our society. It can even be called a tradition. It cannot be prevented by simply giving gender-neutral toys to babies. What's more, kids like to copy their friends. So when toddlers see their peers playing with totally different types of toys, they might feel confused and lose their confidence.

In conclusion, giving gender-neutral toys to babies would have a negative effect on their personal growth and development. And it won't help prevent gender stereotypes.



Enoch Yeung, 14
King Ling College

Nowadays, many people believe boys like the colour blue while girls prefer pink or purple. For the most part, it is actually true, thanks to gender stereotypes being formed at a young age. Everyone shouts "gender equality", when one sex is allowed to do things the other cannot. Things need to change and giving gender-neutral toys to kids aged below three is a good start. Then, for instance, girls who don't like dolls don't have to worry about fitting in with girls who do.

But what if the baby rejects gender-neutral toys? Parents who only give such toys to their kids will face many limitations. Children should be allowed to make their own choices. If a baby likes a toy, whether it is gender-neutral or not, it won't cause discrimination as long as the parents don't talk about it.



Saba Iftkhar, 16,
St Margaret's Girls' College,
Hong Kong

Definitely! In this age, people embrace individuality and have an open mind. Babies who are given gender-neutral toys will grow up to become responsible adults and learn to accept people from different walks of life and with different opinions.

This way, our future generations would be able to establish their own set of values from a very young age without any influence from society.



Our topics always get a lot of responses. Check out what other students had to say and join the conversation at yp.scmp.com. In our next Talking Points, we'll discuss: Should we raise the tax rate to 50 per cent for people who make more than HK\$10 million a year? We are now accepting your answers for this topic. To take part, email your answer with your name, age, and school, along with a nice, clear selfie (make sure it's not blurry), to yp@scmp.com by lunchtime on Monday. Don't forget to include "Talking Points" in the subject line.