

Notes from the Catalyst 2015 Adult Conference

Challenges:

- Unintentional gender bias
- External/commercial influences
- Pretty, smart, both?
- Peers
- Role models/mentors
- Literature
- Self-confidence in relation to stereotypical jobs and roles
- Adventurousness/curiosity/risk taking/ok to fail
- Family/society support
- Socioeconomic status
- (Extended family influences
- Extracurricular opportunities
- Parent' education/background
- Societal pressure to be married
- How well you do relates to how "smart you are"
- Pressure to be perfect
- Child rearing expectations/opportunity cost
- Teaching persistence vs. perfectionism
- Equity in work, male/female professions
- Expectations of pay disparity
- Expectations of profs/teachers devalue the education of girls/women
- Want job/career to be relevant to their lives/help others
- Selected fields recommended to girls/women
- Context of presentation of teachers/profs
- (Un)Intentional bias
- Delayed gratification
- Cost to attain degrees
- Assertiveness
- Availability of course/career options
- Overwhelming to address/task of woman
- Glamour of the field
- Collaborative vs competitive

Things you can do to combat these challenges:

- Find everyday opportunities
- Prepare to be resilient and confident
- Professional training for faculty to formally address bias
- Teach girls to be both collaborative and competitive
- Teach resilience when they are right AND wrong
- Respect for hard work
- Role of parents in exposing child to gender-influenced toys and experiences
- Resources for parents to learn about unintended bias
- Respect for intermediate "wrong" answers/solutions
- Help develop self-expression, leadership
- Choose supportive friends/spouse to help deal with peer pressure
- Concrete reinforcement of good work
- Change: role models, mentors
- Fathers more involved
- Create opportunities
- Don't avoid difficult conversations
- Improve understanding and education of workplace and society