



**Date:** 24 March, 2018

**Timings:** 10 am to 3:00 pm

**Venue:** Tibetan Homes Foundation (THF)

**Place:** Mussoorie, Uttarakhand

**Participants:** Students of grade 12 (17-19 years of Age.)

**No. of Participants:** 55 (both boys and girls)

## **Introduction**

**Tibetan Homes Foundation (THF),** Tibetan Homes Foundation (THF) is a charitable institute dedicated to working for the care of orphans, semi orphan, and destitute Tibetan refugee children. The Foundation initially set up accordingly to the vision and guidance of His Holiness by Mrs. Rinchen Dolma Taring, the first General Secretary of THF, with three Homes and seventy five orphaned and destitute Tibetan refugee children has grown into an institution with over 2000 orphan, semi-orphan, destitute children living in 58 Homes and three hostels and receiving education in the main residential school at Mussoorie and two other branches located at Rajpur and near Rishikesh.

CTA organized one day in THF Mussoorie to sensitize students on gender and also to increase their awareness on gender in general. The

main topics of discussions in the workshop were:

- Gender and sex
- Gender stereotypes
- Gender and socialization

## **Knowing each other**

The training started with a small introductory session where the trainer and students were formally introduced to each other by the CTA coordinator and school management.

## **Understanding Sex and Gender**

Before starting the session, the students were asked what they understand by the term 'gender'. Few students responded by saying that it means 'male and female'; 'signifies the sexual difference' and signifies the differences between the two.

After this short discussion, a movie was shown 'A boy and A girl'. This is a one minute movie which talks about the gendered practices that take place since birth.

The students were able to identify some of the issues they face in their everyday lives such as girls are given more chores at home than boys, girls are asked to stay pretty and neat all the time, etc.

Once this discussion was over, the students were then divided into small groups of 7 and they were asked what the symbols of being a boy are and what the symbols of being a girl are.

For about 20 mins, students were sharing their experiences of being a boy or a girl and they did they identify themselves to be different from the other sex. One by one the students came and shared their discussion points with the group.

Each response was discussed at length to analyse the relation of each word written on the board, with/in the life of a boy or a girl. Certain questions were raised by the trainer to the students to help them reflect better on the words they had used to describe their assigned group name in order to facilitate a better understanding of gender biases that exist within themselves and in their communities. Each of the questions raised was followed by a discussion.

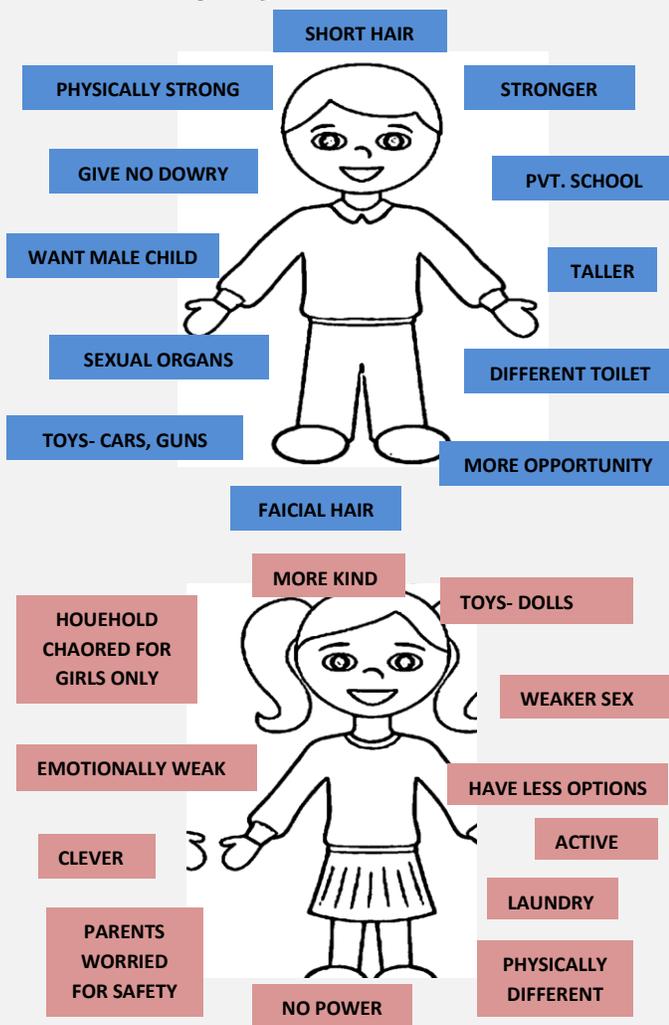


Fig 1: these are the responses received from the youth.

### 1. Label: Stronger

**Q:** How did boys become stronger? Why girls can't be stronger?

*Responses: boys are stronger because they are given opportunities to play sports and they are allowed to do many things. That makes them stronger mentally and physically. Girls only stay at home and do light work, such as cooking, cleaning, etc. if girls speak up confidently, boys laugh and stare. But if a boy speaks up, other boys support him.*

### 2. Label: toys- dolls/guns

**Q:** what is the difference between the two toys and how the toys are gendered?

*Responses: Since everyone expects boys to be strong, they are given toys that will help them in behaving strongly and maturely. Such as*



Successful	Reason	Unsuccessful	Reason
Beautiful	Will get jobs easily; get married to a rich person.	Long hair	Messy and creates problems while working.
Soft Voice	Everyone will like him/her.	Short height	Won't get jobs like army, police, modelling.
Kind Hearted	Everyone will like him/her.	Average in studies	Can't succeed in life. Will get no jobs.
Late Marriage	Have more time to study and explore opportunities.	Born subordinate	Is not capable of taking decisions
Cut sleeve clothes	Have the power to decide what to wear.	Jewelry	Wearing lot of jewelry can be is distraction from work.
Reward	For good work, polite nature.	Disobedient	Doesn't listens to anyone, cannot work positively.
Clean House (hygienic)	Will like to stay in a clean and hygienic home.	Pigmented skin, ugly	Will have difficulty in getting jobs, no one will want to converse or meet.
Born Leader	Has the ability to be a good leader.	Leather wrist band	Distraction and give negative image, like stud.
Obedient	Because s/he listens to elders.	Decision maker	If decisions are not taken correctly, will not go forward in life.
Punishment	Has the power to punish others.	Short tempered	Has no patience at all
Cooking at home	Is an all-rounder.	Early marriage	Doesn't want to do productive in life
Looking after children	Is an all-rounder.	Full body covering clothes	Hiding the 'self'
Extrovert	Confident speaker	Introvert	Cannot speak confidently
Home caretaker	Is an all-rounder	Tall	Height will not

			give knowledge, maybe useful but not important.
<b>Breadwinner</b>	Responsible and taking care of the family.	<b>Short hair</b>	These days the short hair cut is not appropriate.



Identified Attributes for girls



Identified attributes for boys

As the discussion took place while reasoning with all the words, it was becoming clear to the students there are attributes of both boys and girls in Successful and Unsuccessful faces. Based on the discussion that took place at the beginning of the session, where more positive works were associated with boys (such as strong, pvt. schooling, tall, more opportunities, etc.) and negative attributes for girls (such as emotionally weak, weaker sex, do laundry, can't go out, etc.) here all those words were seen in both successful and unsuccessful child,

The group was then asked to look at the words and identify which attributes are given to girls and which attributes are given to boy by the society. These have been highlighted with pink and blue

**The trainer then asked, does the successful boy resemble the characteristics of a boy and the unsuccessful resemble a girl? Can we also say that only boys have more chances of success than girls or vice-versa?**

*The response that was received from the students was that “anyone can be successful and it really doesn’t matter on the sex of the child/person but on their capabilities. It’s all in the attitudes that we have a preconceived notion of the term ‘successes’. In our society boys are preferred over girls in a family and they is given all the opportunities and resources to become successful, he can turn out to be quite unsuccessful”.*

*“We have been made to believe that if girls are given household chores they can’t work outside or the man who is working can’t look after the children. All these words that we discussed had no gendered label on it. Our socialization has gendered our thoughts and attitudes”.*

The gender session was concluded with two games, Sab ke sath (groupings) and Circle dodge ball, to see if the students have been able to bring a shift in their behavior. All the male and female students participated and had a good team work.