



Equity Tips for Counseling and Advocacy

Expanding Options

- Encourage all students to make academic and career decisions on the basis of their individual abilities, interests and values rather than on the basis of their gender.
- Encourage students to pursue a career of interest to them even though the people in the field are primarily of the other sex.
- Use nontraditional role models-- both women and men for career days, mentoring, shadowing, or group guidance classes.
- Discuss job salaries with both female and male students.
- Point out that typically female jobs usually mean lower salaries than typically male jobs.
- Meet regularly with students who are nontraditional in a career and technical education program to support them and to discuss problems that may arise.
- Provide students who are about to enter the workforce with information about their employment rights and discrimination laws.
- Discuss the ways stereotypes affect perceptions of careers.
- Point out that academic and career and technical education skills can be applied and modified to many career fields.

Special Help for Girls, Young Women and Returning Women

- Encourage a wide range of job options, including traditionally male occupations, which are consistent with their special academic or performance skills.
- Provide realistic information about the probable future of girls and women as workers in the paid workforce (Most girls can expect to hold paying jobs even if they marry and have families.)

- Recognize barriers that young women face in response to socialization processes and pressures when they work in nontraditional jobs.
- Encourage girls to take three to four years of high school math and science in order to be better prepared for the technological and skilled trade careers.
- Schedule discussion groups for girls about future career alternatives.
- Encourage returning women to obtain skills training in technological and skilled trade careers where opportunities for advancement, self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency wages often can be found.
- Point out that many women in the skilled trades find pride and satisfaction in producing tangible, finished products.

Special Help for Boys, Young Men and Returning Men

- Encourage a wide range of job options, including traditionally female occupations, which are consistent with their special academic or performance skills.
- Help them understand the changing roles of women and men and the effect this may have on their work and family lives.
- Arrange discussion groups and speakers on the socialization processes and pressures on males choosing nontraditional careers.
- Point out that men find greater self-satisfaction in their work when their abilities and interests match the occupations.

Use of Materials

- Review all counseling and testing materials for sources of sex bias and modify as appropriate.
- Find and make available in your office area materials on nontraditional career fields.
- Find, summarize and forward to faculty information on the changing roles of women and men in our society and the changing nature of the workforce.
- Purge your files of occupational information that reinforces sex bias and stereotyping.
- Coordinate bulletin boards and displays portraying pictures of women and men working at a variety of jobs, including nontraditional occupations.

Equity Advocacy

- Encourage school administration to provide new and earlier opportunities for students to explore nontraditional options at elementary and junior high levels using Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Career Education and Work. For more information on the standards and ideas for implementing, click on <http://www.pacareerstandards.com>.
- Meet with faculty of nontraditional students to discuss the importance of their role in recruitment and retention.
- Remind key administrators and curriculum planners that changes in today's workforce make it necessary to expand nontraditional options.
- Review economic, social and/or demographic trends that may affect students' career choices and options.
- Attempt to educate parents on an on-going basis about the need for expanded career options and preparation for both home and work realities for both girls and boys.
- Act as an equity advocate in the community, supporting academic and career decisions based on interests, and values rather than gender.

Inspired by, and in some cases directly adapted from, TEXAS VOICE (Vocational Options in Creating Equity), January, 1987, by Florida Vocational Education, 1988.

Further adapted by Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, Sex Equity Statewide Technical Assistance, 717-783-6619. October 2006.

Reviewed / updated August 2013