

RILEY'S RAINFOREST



“Send down...from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing...”

—Bahá'u'lláh

EXPLORE & SOAR: ENCOURAGE EQUALITY

Here are some ways to challenge unfair ideas about girls and boys.

- Look for role models who stand up to stereotypes.
- Avoid thinking that some things are for girls and some for boys—we're all individuals.



- Don't judge others based on their clothing or appearance.
- Watch for stereotypes in TV shows, video games, books, or songs. Are boys or girls only shown in certain roles? How would you rewrite them?
- If you hear someone make an unkind joke about boys or girls, let them know it's disrespectful.
- It's okay to cry if you're hurt, sad, or even happy. It's not weakness; it's a healthy way to express feelings.
- Think about your own beliefs. Do you keep an open mind about girls and boys?

STOP STEREOTYPES

I've wanted to try ballet dancing ever since I was a fledgling. It looks awesome, and it really strengthens your wings, too! But when I told some of my friends, they laughed and said ballet is for girls. It really hurt my feelings. I even started tearing up—but I didn't want to cry in front of them.

I talked about it with Piper, my parakeet friend. She's the only girl on the wingball team. She knows how I feel, because some birds tell her wingball is only for boys! She said there are lots of strange ideas about how some things are *only* for girls or *only* for boys. An unfair idea about everyone in a certain group is a **stereotype**.



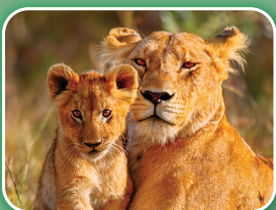
Stereotypes can harm our health and happiness. For example, boys hear we should be “tough” and never cry. Girls are told to be gentle and meek. When any of us hide our true feelings, it can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression.

We can also miss out on fun opportunities to develop our amazing skills.

Sometimes we aren't even aware of how gender stereotypes affect us. When I thought about it, I realized part of *me* believed boys shouldn't cry. That's *not* true! And it's

not true that boys can't dance ballet, either. Piper said I should go for it, and I'm going to. Every action we take can stop stereotypes and help each of us soar with justice and respect.

CURIOSITY CANOPY



Have you heard a lion called “king of the jungle”? Well, lionesses are amazing “queens,” too! In lion groups, called **prides**, the females work as a team, cooperating to hunt for food and protect their young. Males often guard the pride's territory.