

CBSE Notes Class 7 Social Science Civics

Chapter 4 - Growing up as Boys and Girls

Being a boy or a girl is an important part of one's identity. The society we grow up in teaches us what kind of behaviour is acceptable for girls and boys, what boys and girls can or cannot do. We often grow up thinking that these things are exactly the same everywhere. But do all societies look at boys and girls in the same way? You will get an answer to this question in CBSE Notes Class 7 Social Science Civics Chapter 4 - Growing up as Boys and Girls. You also know how the different roles assigned to boys and girls prepare them for their future roles as men and women. We will also learn how inequalities between men and women emerge in the area of work.

Chapter 4 of Class 7 Civics starts with two case studies to show how girls and boys are brought up or socialised differently. This enables you to understand that the process of socialisation is not uniform; instead, it is socially determined and changes continuously over time. The chapter also addresses the fact that societies assign different values to the roles men and women play and the work they do.

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Growing up in Samoa in the 1920s

In the 1920s, according to research reports on Samoan society, children did not go to school. At a smaller age, they learnt things such as how to take care of children or do household work from older children and from adults. Both boys and girls used to do household work.

Growing up male in Madhya Pradesh in the 1960s

From class 6 onwards, boys and girls went to separate schools. Girls school had a central courtyard where they played in total seclusion and safety from the outside world. The boys' school had no such courtyard and their playground was just a big space attached to the school. The girls always went in groups because they also carried fears of being teased or attacked.

After reading the above two stories you will realise that there are many different ways of raising children. You would have also analysed that societies make clear distinctions between boys and girls.

Valuing housework

The main responsibility for housework and care-giving tasks such as looking after the family lies with women. Yet the work that women do within the home is not recognised as work. It is also assumed that this work comes naturally to women. Therefore, women do not get paid for housework and society devalues this work.

Lives of domestic workers

Housework involves many different tasks. A number of these tasks require heavy physical work. In both rural and urban areas:

- Women and girls fetch water.
- Carry heavy head loads of firewood.
- Perform task like washing clothes, cleaning, sweeping and picking up loads require bending, lifting and carrying.

The work women do is hard and physically demanding. It's very time consuming also. If you add up the housework and the work, women do outside the home, you find that women spend much more time working than men and have much less time for themselves.

Women's work and equality

Equality is an important principle of the Indian Constitution which says that there should not be any discrimination based on sex. But in reality, inequality between the sexes exists. Therefore, it has to be dealt not just at the individual level or the family but also by the government. Some of the actions taken by the government are as below:

- It has promoted Girl education.
- The government has set up anganwadis or child-care centres in several villages in the country.
- The government has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than 30 women employees to provide crèche facilities.

A crèche is a facility which enables parents to leave their children while they are at work and where children are provided with a stimulating environment for their holistic development.