



How are We Empowering Girls in the Classroom?

By Educator Barnes – March 15, 2019

March is Women's History Month. Women's History Month is an opportunity to highlight the trailblazing women who broke through barriers and glass ceilings. Even though we say that women can do anything, are we creating classroom environments that send that message to our young girls?

Growing up as a girl, I believed I could do it all. My mom and dad made sure of it. They exposed my two sisters and me to various opportunities and activities. I helped my dad work on a shed he was building. I also had a microscope and science kit. Anything I wanted to try, my parents made it happen.

Every child might not have the same experience I had, so it is important that schools provide equitable opportunities to boys and girls. For example, what is the messaging and advertising for clubs? Recently, I was looking at a sign with a few people passionate about STEM education. On the sign, the picture was of a male. This may not seem like a big deal, but it is. If I'm a girl and a flyer comes home for a club with boys only featured, it sends the message this club might not be for me even if the flyer is distributed to everyone regardless of gender.

Career days are another area to consider. Career days are a great opportunity for children to interact with professionals to learn about their jobs. If women are not brought in to speak about certain jobs, girls may not see that job as a viable career path.

Exposure is key. I've been intentional about the messaging I'm sending when I create lessons. I think about the images I show which is something I did not think much about in the past. I personally know how empowered I felt as a child by having the opportunity to explore and try different opportunities, and I want the same for young girls who are sitting in our schools.