

# Injustice against Girls

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The physical differences between males and females give them different roles and responsibilities in all societies. Unfortunately, the female's role is often valued less than the male's role. Around the world, young females are often exploited and discriminated against. Their families, their communities, and their societies may reject them.

## Injustices against Girls

- Due to religious and cultural traditions, a higher percentage of female fetuses are aborted than male fetuses.
- Many baby girls are killed at birth or soon after.
- Young women and girls are often considered property to be trafficked, sold, or given away.
- Females receive less education than males.
- Many females have a lower living standard, poorer nutrition, and less access to health care than males.
- Many young women and girls are exploited as family labourers, childcare providers, and domestic servants.
- Young women and girls are at risk of becoming child brides and child mothers.
- Girls and young women are vulnerable to rape and may be forced into child prostitution, which may cause them to acquire sexually transmitted diseases.

These injustices can be overwhelming. However, you can play an important role in changing your community's attitudes and treatment of females. You can help to improve the lives of the girls in your care.

## Strategies

- Teach your students Bible stories that show God's love for both males and females.
- Review care practices with the girls' families to ensure that both boys and girls receive the same care, affection, dignity, and respect.
- Encourage mentoring of female and male children by adults of the same gender who demonstrate positive values and attitudes toward females.
- Introduce your female students to successful older women, such as teachers, Sunday school teachers, social workers, and other community leaders. Encourage mentoring relationships.
- Educate and encourage families to value and protect girls and young women. Work with your church to share these attitudes with your community.
- Know the laws. Governments have an obligation to protect girls and young women. Look up the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). As governments accept these rights, discriminatory attitudes and behaviours will be changed.
- Support government and community programs that focus on the importance of girls and young women. For example, encourage organizations that fund female-only schools.

Girls deserve the same human rights as boys. They have the right to dignity, respect, and acceptance. They have the right to life and a happy childhood. As they become teens and adults, their rights include the opportunity for an education and meaningful employment.

You and other caregivers can influence these rights directly by working with the children in your care. Also, by helping to shape community and cultural practices, you can be an advocate for long-term attitude and behavioural change.