**What Are the Advantages of Single Sex Education?**

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**The Question**

What are the advantages of single sex education? Is [single sex education](http://childparenting.about.com/od/schoollearning/a/advantages-of-single-sex-ed-for-girls.htm) better than co-education? What does available research have to say about the subject?

**Background**

We have spent several generations advancing the equality of the sexes. Beginning with the [women's **suffrage movement**](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/feminismsuffragerights/Feminism_Womens_Suffrage_and_Womens_Rights.htm)[right to vote] and continuing through to the present day many legal and social barriers to women's equality with men have been removed. Much progress has been made.

With that in mind [co-education](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/education/Women_in_Education.htm) which is based on [the] theme of equality seems like the right way to go. That's why most private and [public schools](http://privateschool.about.com/cs/employment/a/teachingcond.htm) use the co-education model. Most of the time that works well.

On the other hand some research seems to suggest that [boys and girls learn in different ways](http://www.whygendermatters.com/). [Research](http://www.singlesexschools.org/research-brain.htm) shows that a girl's brain is different from a boy's brain. If you accept that **premise** [claim], co-education probably will not work satisfactorily for every child. Co-education does have the advantage of being politically acceptable. Recently public schools have begun [to experiment](http://www.singlesexschools.org/home.php) with single sex classes, and, in some cases, single sex schools.

**The Research**

Perhaps the most revealing research on single sex versus co-education is [Single-Sex Versus Coeducational Schooling: A Systematic Review.](http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/other/single-sex/single-sex.pdf) This study was **commissioned** [paid for] by the federal Department of Education and was released in 2005. What were its conclusions? Basically it seems to conclude that there is not enough evidence to suggest single sex education is better than co-education or vice-versa.

Another [national study](http://www.ncgs.org/researchshowsgirlsschoolgraduateshaveanedge/Sax_SingleSex_1ddFINAL.pdf) from UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies claims to show that girls from single sex schools have an **edge** [advantage] over their co-ed peers.

**The Right Setting for Your Child**

Some children [**thrive**](http://www.ncgs.org/aboutgirlsschools/thereasearch/) in a single sex school. Why? For one thing, the social pressures can be gentler. Your child can grow at his own pace. This often is a good thing for boys as they mature later than girls.

The faculty at single sex schools understand how their students learn. They adapt their teaching styles to those specific needs. There are other advantages as well. For example, since a single sex school is basically **homogeneous** [made up of one similar group], that simplifies planning events and activities as you only have to consider boys or girls as the case may be.

The **conventional** [traditional] thinking thirty years ago was that co-education would somehow break down gender stereotypes. But that didn't always happen. The [proponents of single sex education](http://privateschool.about.com/od/choosingaschool/qt/singlesexeducation.htm) argue that boys in co-educational settings are less likely to take courses in the arts or tackle advanced academic subjects simply to avoid being **typecast** [stereotyped] as a nerd. Similarly [girls avoid the sciences and technology subjects](http://privateschool.about.com/od/computinggirls/i/barbie.htm) because they don't want to appear to be tomboys. Single sex schools are **flourishing** [thriving] once again as parents realize that allowing their son or daughter to learn in his or her own individual way is a very important consideration in choosing a school.

**Three Reasons for Choosing a Single Sex School**

Your child's happiness is [one of the most important factors](http://privateschool.about.com/od/choosingaschool/ss/choosingaschool.htm) in selecting a school. Equally important is [finding a school](http://privateschool.about.com/od/choosingaschoolfaqs/f/thebestfit.htm) with inspiring, gifted teachers. But ... parents also need to consider three other factors: letting your child be herself, the teaching style and what's being taught and, finally, the socialization of our children.

**Let Them Be Themselves**

Boys tend to soften their competitive edge and become more collaborative in a single sex setting. They can just be boys and not worry about what the girls might think. Boys enjoying poetry and playing in an orchestra as opposed to a marching band are the kind of thing you will see in a boys' school.

[Girls](http://www.ncgs.org/aboutgirlsschools/) drop their shyness and begin to take risks in a single sex setting. They become more competitive. They embrace sports like field hockey and soccer … without worrying about appearing like tomboys.

**Academics**

If the teacher understands how to teach girls, they will quickly feel comfortable exploring non-traditional subjects such as mathematics, advanced sciences, computers and technology, wood-working and so on. [Boys](http://www.singlesexschools.org/evidence.html) participate in choirs and orchestras and learn Latin in single sex settings.

Children will break out of their stereotypical roles and behavior when they are left to their own devices. Single sex education has a delightful way of encouraging children to be fearless, to be curious, to be enthusiastic - in short, to just be themselves.

**Socialization**

Children are **subjected to** [forced to experience] an avalanche of pressures from every [part of their lives] to become adults before they are ready to do so. They grow up too quickly. Why not let them be children for a few more years? Single sex education, with its gentler, more controlled social outlets is **just the ticket** [the perfect solution] for many children.

**Blended or Co-Institutional Schools**

Many Roman Catholic schools offer their own unique approaches to single sex schooling by offering co-institutional or blended schooling. Regis Jesuit High School in Aurora, Colorado, has two distinct high schools operating under the same roof: one for boys, the other for girls. This is the co-institutional approach. St. Agnes and St. Dominic School in Memphis, Tennessee, blends its single sex education with co-educational depending on the grade level involved.

Compare the separate campus, the co-institutional and the blended schools. Any one approach might be right for your son or daughter. [Boys' schools](http://privateschool.about.com/od/secondaryschools/qt/boysschools.htm) and [girls' schools](http://privateschool.about.com/od/secondaryschools/qt/girlsschools.htm) have [many advantages](http://privateschool.about.com/od/secondaryschools/a/4-Advantages-Of-Single-Sex-Schools.htm) to consider.