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N e w S t u d y : T H I S I s t

By [Deborah Skolnik](#) 

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You probably think you treat your kids equally. You're probably wrong.

Imagine you're out shopping, and you're in a rush. You have a son and a daughter back home, but only enough time to pick out a gift for one of them. Which child is going to get the present?

According to a new study available online in the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, moms would likely buy swag for their daughter, while dads would get the gift for their son. That's right: Even though most parents say they treat all their kids equally, the researchers found that simply isn't true.

So Long, Stereotypes

Despite the stereotypes of the momma's boy and "daddy's little girl," parents unknowingly favor the child of the same sex when it comes to money. The reason? The study's authors say it's because women see themselves in their daughters, while men identify with sons.

To reach their conclusions, the researchers conducted a variety of experiments. In one, parents with a child of each gender had to pick which kid would receive a \$25 treasury bond. The majority of moms chose their daughters, while dads 'bonded' with their sons. The study's subjects also favored same-sex children when deciding who would receive more money in their will.

In still another experiment, participants were given a single raffle ticket, which they could use to enter a drawing for either a girl's or boy's backpack. Dad's picked the boy's backpack 87 percent of the time, while mom went for the girl's backpack 75 percent of the time. (By

the way, more than 90% of the people in the study had insisted they treat children of different genders exactly the same.)

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Long-Lasting Consequences

The findings may have far-reaching effects, the researchers say. Daughters may benefit if Mom makes most of the family's financial decisions, while sons may get more resources if Dad holds the purse strings.

This unwitting bias may also have implications that go beyond the family, the study's authors theorize. If a woman is the decision-maker in the workplace, female employees may be more likely to benefit, while the reverse may be true if a male is in charge of who gets promotions.

The upshot? Be self-aware of your biases and make a little extra effort if you really want to be fair to your sons and daughters.

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