Today’s piece was prepared by Kendra Francis, MD, based on an L.A. Times story [By age 6, girls are less likely than boys to think that they can be brilliant, study shows](http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-girls-boys-brilliant-20170126-story.html)

The article’s focal point is a [recent *Science* study](http://science.sciencemag.org/content/355/6323/389) seeking to address gender biases in perception of brilliance in early ages, asking the often-posed question of why fields like physics and mathematics continue to be dominated by men. The journalist delves into the study’s basic framework, focusing on why young children were the study focus, because identifying when these stereotypes develop is the only way to target change. The journalist addresses larger implications of how stereotypes affect young women’s choices in college and careers. The study involved children asked to identify the gender of a “really, really smart” person in various ways (hearing stories about them and seeing visual examples of people). At age 5, children preferentially identified people of their own gender; however at 6 and 7, girls switched to identifying males. The journalist seeks to understand social influences at play. She includes insightful quotes from Yarrow Durham, a Yale developmental psychologist, to further augment the discussion.

Overall, the journalist chose a very interesting study and does a good job describing the study and why this issue is important. At the end, she gets into her own opinions, but frames them wisely with the discussion centering around Dr. Durham’s thoughts. It is only with the last sentence that she really takes a strong stance, stating that by allowing us to identify the variables that contribute to gender stereotypes regarding perception of brilliance will help us “[figure] out how to weed out these stereotypes as they take root.” A very strong statement, but one carefully placed at the end of a well-researched and balanced article.

**RESOURCES ON GENDER DEVELOPMENT:**

[Healthy Gender Developmental in Young Children](https://depts.washington.edu/dbpeds/healthy-gender-development.pdf) *National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Management*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!