Raise a scientist

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Wondering why girls are less likely than boys to become scientists or engineers? Forget genetics, and look in the mirror. Dads are far more likely to do math and science activities with their sons than with their daughters, according to a long-term University of Michigan study. "A father's attitude is very important in supporting—or undermining—daughters' choices to pursue math and science," says study coauthor Pamela Davis-Kean, Ph.D.

So instead of just getting your daughter a dollhouse for the holidays put a microscope under the tree too—and show her how to use it.

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