

Why tweens are following multi-step skincare routines



Raquel de Brito | The West Australian
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 Petite Skin Co is just one Australian skincare range targeting the tween market. Credit: Supplied



Remember when it was hard work getting your nine-year-old to get dressed in the morning before school, let alone brush their teeth and wash their face? Not anymore.

A growing number of tween-aged kids (those between nine and 12) are now carrying out multi-step skin routines morning and night that would rival their mother's anti-ageing rituals.

Dr Deb Cohen-Jones, co-founder of cult Perth skincare brand The Secret, says we can thank social media for the tween skincare market taking off.

Her own daughter Layla, 13, has been following a routine since her tweens.

"Tweens are over-saturated with skin routines on social media, so I've had to pare it back significantly," Dr Cohen-Jones says.

Each morning Layla is protecting her largest organ with The Secret serum and Ultra Violette SPF. At night, when many parents are hounding their kids of the same age to simply brush their teeth, Layla takes it upon herself to use a gentle Medik8 cream cleanser, a stress repair night cream on breakouts and then an eye cream to calm the keratosis pilaris on her cheeks. The perks of having a skincare expert as a mother means she also has access to a luxe moisture mask created by The Secret, which she uses once a week.


Why tweens should start investing in their skin

It's a widely used phrase in the lucrative skincare industry: prevention is better than cure. And what better time to start preserving skin than when it is literally as smooth as a baby's bottom?

"In this way, starting a skincare routine at a young age will prove extremely beneficial. However, it is important to be mindful they keep an age-appropriate skincare routine that is best suited to their specific skin type." Dr Cohen-Jones says.

For tweens, she says laying down the foundations of a good skincare routine such as cleansing, moisturising and SPF application will not only help to protect their youthful complexion for immediate and long-term benefits, but also set them up with ideal habits in the future.



 Petite Skin Co is just one Australian skincare range targeting the tween market. Credit: Supplied

Belinda Kurtz and Jacqui Millbank, founders of Queensland-based tween skincare brand Petite Skin Co, were already advocates for their children applying sunscreen daily before launching the range.

“The more we researched, the more we began to wonder why we were encouraging our children to wash their bodies, but not to wash their faces,” Ms Kurtz says.

“It seemed like a progression that just made sense and such a wonderful opportunity to introduce our pre-teens to the concept of skin care so they can experiment and understand what self-care is.”

Kurtz says the beauty of their products is that they are gentle, tear-free and easy to use for this young demographic, so that they build good skin habits early on and develop a love of self-care they can carry into adulthood.

Millbank agrees, adding that the best part about starting their pre-teens on a skincare routine was that applying sunscreen every day became as automatic as brushing their teeth.

“We really couldn’t think of a better skin habit for our young people to get into,” she says.

“I think we have all said that we wished we took better care of our skin when we were younger. We have definitely thought about how amazing our children’s skin is going to look when they are our age as they wear sunscreen every day.”

What should tweens be using?

While an SPF 50+ is a no-brainer, Dr Cohen-Jones says what tweens should be using on their skin depends on their specific skin type and issue.

“At this age some kids are moving through hormonal changes which are impacting their skin with breakouts, others experience inflammatory issues such as eczema and dermatitis and some manage to get away unscathed, maintaining a clear complexion throughout,” she explains.

For this reason, she says it’s hard to advise a generic pool of products appropriate for this age and why, if you don’t have the knowledge yourself, it is so important to seek the advice of a professional.

“Products I recommend to tweens they can’t go wrong with would include a nourishing milk or oil-based cleanser, a gentle moisturiser and an SPF 50+.”

What should they not be using?

The most important thing to avoid, according to Dr Cohen-Jones, is anything too harsh or stripping.

“Often tweens are faced with the prospect of breakouts and the immediate response for most is to flood the skin with harsh, acne-reducing products,” she explains.

“This can ultimately damage the skins lipid barrier and invite even more acne-causing bacteria to the skin causing, you guessed it, more breakouts.”

Her advice is to seek the guidance of a professional before introducing anything overly active to your child’s skincare routine, particularly if they experience skin conditions such as acne, dermatitis, eczema or rosacea.



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