

Press release



Youth undisguised – Good looks against a loss of control

Frankfurt am Main, 17 February 2016. The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association (IKW) presents results of youth study “Youth undisguised” – The self-perception and self-esteem of adolescents and young adults, conducted by rheingold salon.

The first in-depth psychological-representative study on the transition to adulthood shows: young people today not only struggle with uncertainties due to mood swings and burgeoning sexuality during puberty. They also experience a loss of control on the social and familial level. They have been born into difficult times that offer them hardly any support. Their personal situation is often characterised by extremes: 28% of the young people come from very fragile circumstances. Double or triple patchwork families, moving house and changing schools leave them with a feeling of permanent instability. By contrast, 71% of the study participants described their personal circumstances as being characterised by over-protection. They are told that they can achieve anything and as a result have great confidence in their own abilities. However, their “delusions of grandeur” likewise lead to a feeling of instability. How young people deal with these uncertainties was another focal point of the study.

It is hardly surprising that young people are generally longing for security; 77% say they do. 83% wish for a stable family and for 52% friendships are more important than “dates” and love affairs –being in love is experienced as yet another loss of control.

The feeling of regaining control, by contrast, strengthens self-esteem. 85% of the young people therefore put a lot of effort into their appearance in order to feel safer again. “No generation has ever worked so hard on their appearance as today’s”, says Ines Imdahl, responsible for the study and Managing Director of rheingold salon. “Creating an attractive, neat appearance is one of the few possibilities for young people to develop a feeling of support and control in their life.”

Greasy hair, a sweaty smell and breakouts are extremely embarrassing for young people, as they are the physical manifestation of a perceived loss of control. Feeling hot or aroused symbolises first signs of sexual feelings which are likewise perceived as embarrassing. Here,

young people want to regain control. And they feel that they can succeed in doing so with the help of cosmetic products.

Cosmetic products are therefore an integral part of daily beauty and care routines. The daily use of shampoo (61%) and deodorant (83%) is almost mandatory and for many girls mascara is an indispensable companion. 59% use mascara on a daily basis or even several times a day.

Young people also judge their peers according to their appearance: 60% believe that you can tell by the appearance of a person what kind of a person he or she is. For them, taking care of one's appearance is so important that it is not only an expression of their own values and their personal self-esteem, but serves to indicate whether others share these values.

Birgit Huber, Head of Beauty Care at IKW: "We commissioned this study in order to take a look behind the scenes of puberty. For us it was important to learn what affects young people and how taking care of their appearance influences their self-perception. We found it particularly interesting that an overwhelming part of young people uses beauty care to feel more at ease and generally safer."

For the qualitative part of the study, group discussions and individual in-depth interviews were conducted with 56 adolescents and young adults aged between 14 and 21 years. 1,012 adolescents and young adults aged between 14 and 21 years then took part in a quantitative survey.

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The study results will be presented in Frankfurt on 17 February. The Webcast of this presentation and other interesting facts such as interviews with Birgit Huber, Head of Beauty Care at IKW, Ines Imdahl, Managing Director of rheingold salon, and young adults are available on the website www.ikw-youthstudy.

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About IKW

The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association, with headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, was founded in 1968. It represents the interests of more than 400 companies from the fields of beauty and home care on a national and European level. With sales revenues of almost EUR 18 billion, the member companies cover approximately 95% of the market and employ a workforce of approximately 500,000 people.

IKW is the contact partner for its member companies, ministries, public authorities, consumers, institutions and associations as well as for the media as far as scientific, regulatory or business topics are concerned. Experts from the beauty care and home care departments within IKW provide competent answers to questions concerning skin and hair care, beauty and self-esteem as well as hygiene and cleaning. More information on www.ikw.org

About rheingold salon

rheingold salon combines longstanding depth psychological expert knowledge from moderation, project and process support, research and marketing. rheingold salon positions itself "between" classical management consulting and market research.

Apart from our classical, depth psychological and morphological market research we offer above all strategies and strategic consulting in the fields of marketing, brand management and development, public relations, business alignment and internal corporate processes, communication and concept development, innovation processes as well as team building.

All our consulting is research insight – based on market research and findings which we have been able to collect over two decades. The basis of our work is morphological market and media research which was developed at the University of Cologne. The customers of Rheingold salon include the most well-known players in the German and international business community.

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