

COMPELLING COMMENTS

Skincare For All... or Not?

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The skincare industry has seen a significant shift in recent years, with an increasing number of tweens and teens turning to adult skincare products. The emergence of trends, such as “Sephora kids,” is fueled by social media influencers and raises significant concerns about the long-term impacts on young, developing skin.¹

Social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok are filled with beauty influencers showcasing skincare routines. Many of these routines involve sophisticated, multi-step processes using potent adult products, often containing active ingredients such as retinoids, alpha-hydroxy acids (AHAs), and beta-hydroxy acids (BHAs).¹ These active ingredients can be too harsh for the developing and sensitive skin of tweens and teens, making them susceptible to adverse reactions (e.g., irritation, dryness, chemical burns) from products not designed for their age group. Additionally, preservatives, fragrances, and dyes that are common in adult skincare formulations can trigger allergic and irritant contact dermatitis.²

Dermatologists are observing an increase in cases of contact dermatitis and other skin issues linked to inappropriate use of adult skincare products by younger individuals.³ The pressure to achieve “perfect” skin, amplified by social media, inadvertently normalizes the use of advanced skincare

routines at an early age. It is essential to address the growing dangers posed by the misuse of products, over-exfoliation, the disruption of the skin barrier, and the potential for long-term damage.

Dermatologists play a crucial role in promoting awareness regarding age-appropriate skincare regimens to parents and their children. Introducing simple routines including gentle cleansers, moisturizers, and sunscreen, as well as educating the youth about the basics of skin health can help to mitigate the risk of long-term damage.³ Fostering informed and mindful skincare practices, can help safeguard the dermatological health of the younger generation.

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