

Creative Cosmetics For Children

by Deborah Bilezikian

I remember as a child, squandering my weekly allowance on beauty products: fake nails, black eyeliner, hair curlers, mud masks, and the like. The more complicated and messy the product was, the more I liked it. The greatest attraction of these products to my young mind was the creative aspect of them. There was always some kind of powder, that when mixed with some sort of liquid, created the magic of beauty: smoother skin, shinier hair, whiter teeth.

Nowadays, with two sons, I try to provide the same opportunities for them to experience the fun and pleasure of making real products that they can use. They enjoy watching the transformation of basic ingredients like olive oil, and beeswax, as they become a lip balm. The purely creative aspect of an activity like this is in and of itself valuable, but there are many, much deeper messages that I am trying to instill. I believe that simple is better when it comes to caring for our bodies. So, showing them that a basic liquid soap, scented with a few drops of lavender is a multi-purpose product for the skin, the hair, even the bathtub itself,

communicates that to them. Instilling in them that bath and body products should come from nature is brought about by simply making the logical connections: The coconut soap is made from real coconut oil! They are always fascinated by this concept, and I know they will carry it around with them throughout their lives.

For young girls, and teenagers, the possibilities are endless. Creating products themselves provides a bonding experience between child and parent that they will carry around in their hearts. Think back upon your own childhood: Most likely, some of your best memories with your mom or dad are doing things like baking cakes, drawing greeting cards, learning how to tie a fly. This is the stuff childhood is made of. For parents who have never attempted crafting body care or cosmetics products themselves, here are some guidelines for getting started.

There are many “make-it-yourself” cosmetics kits, found at craft and beauty stores, but I think the fun is in creating products from natural ingredients that don’t have hazardous substances in the formulas. Nail kits can be assembled ahead of time by Mom or Dad, with carefully purchased, natural ingredients. The internet is a wonderful source of information, recipes, and products. There are several mature companies that sell “make-it-yourself kits” for bath bombs, lotions, lip balms and many more items. To avoid purchasing ingredients that may irritate sensitive skin, here is a list

of product to avoid when shopping for natural “make-it-yourself” kits.

Fragrance. This word signifies that the scent to be added to the product is synthetic. Synthetic fragrances can often trigger allergic reactions, especially in children. Look for gentle essential oils and extracts such as lavender, and vanilla. Some scents in nature can't be extracted naturally, such as coconut, and apple, so beware of these, they are generally synthetic.

Sodium Laureth/Lauryl Sulfate. This is a liquid soap that is irritating. It is in the majority of **shampoos and facial cleansers** on the market, but has also been attributed to causing urinary tract infections in girls who take frequent bubble baths. Instead, look for kits that contain natural liquid soap, such as coconut, or olive oil soap. These will generally say, “no SLS” on the label.

Nail Polish: For nail kits, look for polish that says that it is **Toluene**, and **Formaldehyde free**. These substances have been cited as being toxic. Honey Bee has a natural nail polish that is water-based.

Artificial Colours: These are listed as **FD&C dyes**. These can stain nails, lips, and clothing. Instead, look for mineral pigments, or “earth-derived” pigments, listed as mica, or iron oxides. Be sure if you are buying mica pigments off of the internet to ask the vendor if

the micas are coated with dyes, and which ones, so that you can avoid them.

Okay! Now for the fun part!

What follows are two fun activities that you can enjoy with your children, both boys and girls. I once gave a class in making mineral makeup to a school, and by the end of each class, the girls were lined up waiting for me to apply their creations on their lips and eyes. The boys, on the other hand, were smearing black, green, and red pigments all over themselves as war paint. The point is, this type of activity is not gender-specific!

Mineral Colour Blend for Girls

What you will need:

¼ inch measuring spoons

small, clean Tupperware with firm lid

Micas: white diamond, Bordeaux

Small 10-gram cosmetic container for finished product.

Recipe:

3 scoops (1/4 tsp) white diamond mica

1 scoop Bordeaux mica

Place a paper towel on a clean surface where you will be working. Carefully scoop the two micas into the Tupperware. Snap the lid on tightly, and shake, shake

shake! Let the powder settle for about a minute, and then open the top. The resulting powder should be a soft, shimmery pink. Scoop the powder into the cosmetic container, and close tightly.

How to apply:

Eyes -

For eyeshadow, use a Q-tip (this is easier than using a brush for the younger girls) and spread a few crumbs of the powder over the eyelids.

Cheeks -

For cheeks, use a cotton ball. Dip the cotton ball into the powder, and then tap off the excess onto the inside of the top of the cosmetic jar. Then brush lightly across the cheek bones for a soft shimmer.

Nails -

For nails, tap a bit of powder into a separate container. Then dip a natural clear top coat, such as Honey Bee, into the powder. Brush the loaded wand over the nail, and the powder will start “melting” into the clear polish. Brush a few times to spread the color evenly. It will dry very quickly.

War Paint Colour Blend for Boys (and girls!)

Supplies:

¼ tsp measuring spoons

coffee or herbal grinder, or mortar and pestle

10-gram cosmetic container for finished product.

Black Mica, and Yellow iron oxide

Recipe:

2 scoops black mica

1 scoop yellow iron oxide

To make:

Cover area where you'll be working with a paper towel. Carefully scoop the black mica and yellow iron oxide into the grinder. Turn it on for about 60 seconds, and then check the colour. If the two pigments are well-blended, then it's done. If not, jiggle the blender a bit to allow the unblended pigments to escape from under the blade, and then blend again until it's a muddy green colour.

For a mortar and pestle: Carefully scoop the pigments into the mortar, and beginning steadily pounding at them. This will take a while. Another trick is to put the pigments into a zip lock bag, and roll them around (with the bag firmly locked!!) with a small round wooden block or rolling pin.

Finally, scoop the blend into the cosmetic container and

close tightly.

To use: These pigments are the same pigments used in paint. So they will literally “melt” into almost any base. Water is a simple medium. To “paint” the face, simply tap some of the powder into the top of the cosmetic container. Then wet a small paint or cosmetic brush, preferable one made of taklon...(firm, synthetic yellow or white brush head). Dip the wet brush into the top and mix the water and powder together. You may have to add more water or more powder until it’s a nice creamy consistency. Then spread on cheeks in interesting designs!

Natural Lip Balm

Supplies:

2-5 Small clean cosmetics pots, or chapstick tubes

Popsicle sticks or spatulas for stirring

Measuring spoons,

Small measuring cup

Small saucepan

3 Tbs organic cold-pressed Olive Oil (other oils such as apricot kernel, avocado or almond oil can be used)

2 tsps Beeswax (unbleached)(A portion of the wax can be replaced with

organic cocoa butter for a wonderful chocolatey aroma))

1 drop of Vitamin E

Natural flavouring such as organic orange essential oil, peppermint oil etc.

To make:

Place the oil and beeswax into the measuring cup.

Place the measuring cup into a pan with about 2 inches of water.

Heat the water to boiling, and allow all ingredients to melt, but no boil.

At this point, the melted mixture can be removed.

Allow to cool for about a minute, then add 1 drop vitamin e, and 2 drops of flavouring.

To add colour, use mineral colour blend, adding 1/2 tsp. for a sheer colour, and 1 tsp. or more for more colour. The more pigment used, the 'drier' the base will become. Stir pigment blend into the melted mixture until well-blended.

If the mixture has cooled too much, heat it again, and then pour it carefully into the jars, or tubes. Let cool thoroughly.

This activity is fun, but also use it as a way to help

your children learn skills, such as organization, follow-through, and responsibility. Make sure that you are not the clean -up machine at the end of the activity! Your children will reap the rewards of this project for many years to come.