

{daydream} believers



Legally Green

NYC's Teens for Safe Cosmetics, are turning their dream of chemical-free cosmetics into a reality.

Inspiration comes from the most unusual places. A childhood memory, a chance encounter, or the desire to live on a sustainable planet. As a self-proclaimed beauty addict, I am constantly inspired by anything beauty related. I love it all—moisturizer, bronzer, perfume, nail polish, everything about products excites me. My latest experiment involved a high-end vitamin C cleanser that promised to leave my skin luminous and refreshed. As I held the pristine glass bottle in my hand, I was prompted to look at the ingredient label on the back. I was thoroughly confused: sodium laureth sulfate, methylparaben, cocamidopropyl betaine? I couldn't articulately pronounce any of the words on the endless list, and thought, "Maybe I shouldn't be putting this on my face!" I never wanted to acknowledge that my favorite night cream or volumizing shampoo could potentially harm me. But this "ahah!" moment provoked me to get educated about the products I apply to my body. And I found new inspiration from a group of teens with some serious girl power. green cosmetics

Established in January 2005 as part of the Search for the Cause Cancer Research Project, Teens for Safe Cosmetics is a coalition dedicated to raising awareness about potentially harmful ingredients in beauty and daily-use products. The dynamic young women of this campaign collaborate with scientists, researchers, and business owners to investigate ingredients and inform consumers of unsafe chemicals and safer substitutes through "Face Facts," "Dirty Thirty,"

and "Greener Alternatives" lists. Mattie Kahn, a high school junior and President of the New York City chapter, claims that working with Teens for Safe Cosmetics has totally changed her point of view. "It has made me realize that I'm in charge of everything that I put on my face and body. I don't have to buy products that I know are bad for me, and gaining that perspective alone is incredibly liberating."

In addition, these teen heroines strive to advocate for legislation that protects our right to healthy living by playing an instrumental role in the passage of bills like the California Safe Cosmetics Act of 2005 (Senate Bill 484). It requires cosmetics manufacturers to label harmful ingredients in their products. Most importantly, these girls represent the possibilities of change, providing inspiration to teens across the nation and encouraging them to work together to create that change. "It's not only about safe cosmetics, I'm inspired by anyone that is doing their best to make a difference in their community," declares Mattie. Beyond their mission statement, these young ladies continue to expand and contribute in meaningful and eco-conscious ways. Teens for Safe Cosmetics epitomizes green entrepreneurship—taking health matters into their own hands and creating a one-of-a-kind line of safe and holistic beauty products. With the cultural standard of beauty now including perfectly coifed hair, glowing skin, and a flawless face faked by foundation, mascara, and lip gloss, most women on average use a dozen personal care products a day. This adds up to about 168 chemical ingredients in their beauty regimen alone. Combine these numbers with other environmental toxins in our water, air, and food, and the negative effects of these pollutants are compounded endlessly.

