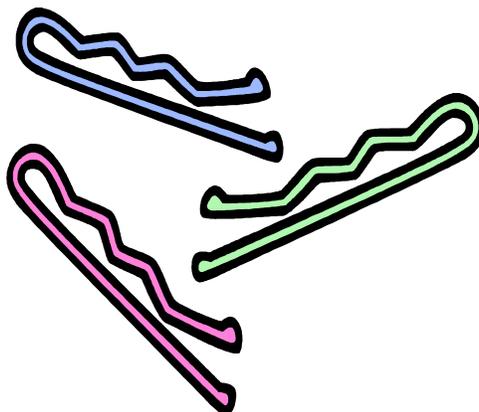
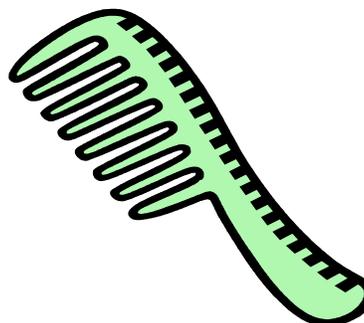
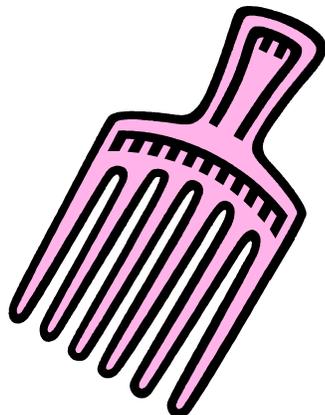




# Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children

## A Training Workbook



# **Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children**

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**For the PA Child Welfare Training Program**

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# Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children



## Section I: Skin Care



### Resources Used to Create these Materials:

Costa, J. (2003). *Making Cultural Connections: Hair and Skin Care for Children of African Descent*. Washington, DC: CWLA.

Downie, J. & Cook-Bolden, F. 2004. *Beautiful Skin of Color: A Comprehensive Guide to Asian, Olive and Dark Skin*. Harpers Collins Publishers Inc.: New York, NY.

Smith, W. & Burns, C. "Managing the Hair and Skin of African American Pediatric Patients." *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*. (Vol. 13, No. 2), March/April 1999.

Taylor, Susan. 2003. *Brown Skin*. Harpers Collins Publishers: New York, NY.

# Recommended Daily Skin Care Routine:

## For Children One Year and Older:

1. Cleanse the face and body at least once a day with a nonirritating cleanser. Use showers or a bath every 2-3 days, unless more is warranted. Wash gently with the fingertips or soft cloth, avoiding abrasive agents such as puffs and pads.
2. Particularly on pre-teen and teenagers, or children who have a high level of physical activity, if daily bathing is problematic due to excessive dry skin, apply focused washing only in key areas on a daily basis (hands, face, under arms, groin area).
3. Moisturize the entire body with an appropriate moisturizer based on the child's skin, giving special attention to such areas as elbows, knees and hands.
4. Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 15 to 30.

## Babies (Under 1 year):

1. Gently wipe the body with a soft cloth once a day with a mild cleanser. Wipe the face with water. Bathe every 2-3 days.
2. Moisturize the entire body with an appropriate moisturizer based on the child's skin, giving special attention to such areas as elbows, knees and hands. For babies under 6 months, moisturizing is typically not recommended, as the pores are still developing. If the skin appears dry, or has dry patches, light application of a fragrance-free moisturizer can be applied.
3. Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher (infants under 6 months should not be exposed to heavy amounts of sun without protective clothing on the extremities and the head).

# Moisturizing the Skin

## About Moisturizers:

- Moisturizing lotions are “water-in-oil” combinations, verses creams which are “oil-in-water” combinations.
- Creams are heavier and greasier, but they are often more effective for ashy and very dry skin.
- Products that contain “humectrants”, or substances that attract water to the skin, are excellent. When reading the labels of moisturizers, look for products that include: glycerin, urea, hyaluronic acid, or dimethicone. Also, look for unscented and alcohol-free moisturizers, as alcohol and perfume are drying and can be irritating. Also, avoid products containing Vitamin A or retinol, which can further dry the skin.
- Don’t forget about the lips and face. Moisturizers that are appropriate for the body may not be appropriate for the more delicate skin of the face.
- Eating a balanced diet and drinking water are also beneficial for healthy, glowing skin.

## Products to Consider:

<i>All-Purpose Moisturizing Lotions</i>	<i>More Concentrated Moisturizers</i>	<i>Creams</i>	<i>Natural Products</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cetaphil</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jergens Ash Relief Moisturizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eucerin Original Moisturizing Cream</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products containing corn oil, soy oil and or beeswax</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lubriderm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lacti-Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carmol 20</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burts Bees Buttermilk Lotion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eucerin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LAC-HYDRIN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vanicream</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AmLactin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBR Lipcream</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aveeno</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eucerin Renewal Alpha Hydroxy Moisturizer</li> </ul>		

## **Keys to Applying a Moisturizer:**

- Apply moisturizer to damp skin within three minutes of showering or bathing to lock in moisture.
- Moisturize the entire body with an appropriate moisturizer based on the child's skin, giving special attention to such areas as elbows, knees, heels and hands.

# Sunscreens and Sunblocks

## About Sunscreens & Sunblocks:

- Sunscreens work by absorbing the harmful ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays before they can affect the skin.
- Sunblocks create a protective barrier that reflects UV rays, causing them to bounce off the skin.

## Finding a Product:

- Like other products, sunscreens are formulated for different skin types:
  - Oily skin: choose a light sunscreen gel or spray.
  - Normal/combination skin: apply a sunscreen gel or a sunscreen-containing moisturizer.
  - Dry Skin: you can use just about any lotion or cream sunscreen (they stay on longer than gels).
  - Sensitive Skin: Look for a PABA-free, chemical-free sunscreen.

## Application Steps:

- Always apply sunscreen twenty to thirty minutes before a child is going to be exposed to the sun to allow their skin to absorb the product and create a protective shield.
- Use sunscreen generously on all exposed skin.
- Store sunscreen products away from the sun and heat to prevent spoiling.
- Reapply sunscreen after vigorous exercise or swimming, even if the product is labeled “waterproof”.

# Eczema

## What Is It?

- Common condition of the skin characterized by scaly, red, itchy and sometimes oozing skin lesions.
- On skin of color, eczema may appear ashen, brown or gray, and is more likely to be accompanied by dark brown skin discolorations once the eczema redness fades.
- It is a condition that runs in families, so if a relative has eczema or the related conditions, hay fever or asthma, a child is more likely going to have it as well.
- Many infants and children with eczema will outgrow the problem; however many will not.
- Eczema is treatable but not curable.

## Where Does it Appear?

- Most often it appears on the neck, inside the elbows, and inside the knees, wrists, and ankles.

## Roots of the Rash:

- Eczema occurs when the body's immune system overreacts to certain stimuli including foods, animal dander or wool clothing.
- The body's defense mechanism responds by releasing chemicals that cause inflammation, redness and itching on the skin.

## Environmental "Triggers" that tend to Exacerbate Eczema:

- Excessive heat
- Sweating
- Irritating soaps or detergents
- Dust mites
- Animal dander
- Scratchy clothing such as wool
- Foods such as dairy products or nuts
- Stress
- Dry, cool weather

## Daily Eczema Skin Care:

- Cleansing:
  - Wash only once a day to avoid excessive drying of the skin.
  - Cleanse with mild, nonirritating cleaners.
  - Cleanse with lukewarm water.
  - Do not use rough cloths or loofash, which may irritate the skin.
  - Limit baths or showers to five minutes.
  - Gently pat skin dry.

- Moisturizing:
  - Apply rich cream or lotion every day immediately (within three minutes is best) after cleansing to seal in moisture.
  - Reapply moisturizer to affected areas as needed (usually several times a day).
  - In winter, an especially protective formula may be needed such as Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream, Aquaphor, Eucerin, Vaseline etc.

### **General Body-Care Tips:**

- Take a short, warm (not hot) shower or bath only once a day, for not more than five minutes.
- Use mild soaps that do not contain fragrance or other irritants. Avoid bubble baths and highly foaming cleansers!
- Apply moisturizer to damp skin within three minutes of showering or bathing to lock in moisture.
- During the winter, dress children in layers and choose soft fabrics like cotton, and avoid rough fabrics directly on the skin (e.g. wool).
- Use a humidifier to counter dry indoor heat.

### **Treating Eczema:**

- When eczema flares, treating it promptly is the key to eliminating the itch.
- There are over-the-counter and prescription medications.

### **Over-the Counter Products:**

- Corticosteroid creams or ointments (e.g. Cortaid or Cortizone 10).
- If a nonprescription steroid cream or ointment does not relieve symptoms in a two-to three week period, it is time to see a physician regarding stronger medications available through prescription.

### **Quick Itch Reducer:**

- When a mild flare-up of eczema occurs, you can reduce inflammation and itching by applying a cool compress (a washcloth saturated with cold mild or ice water) to the skin. Then apply a dab of an emollient or moisturizer. This is a quick and effective solution if a child develops itchy eczema when you're on the go and don't have medicine on hand.

# Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children



## Section II: Hair Care



### Resources Used to Create these Materials:

Costa, Jeanne. 2003. *Making Cultural Connections: Hair and Skin Care for Children of African Descent*. CWLA Press: Washington, DC.

Ferrell, Pamela. 1999. *Kids Talk Hair: An Instruction Book for Grown-Ups and Kids*. Cornrows & Co. Publishing, Washington, D.C.

N-K Collison, Michelle. 2002. *It's All Good Hair: The Guide to Styling and Grooming Black Children's Hair*. Harpers-Collins Publishers: New York, NY.

Williams, J. 2004. *Kinki Creations: A Parent's Guide to Natural Black Hair Care for Kids*. Harlem Moon Publishers, New York: NY.

## **TIPS FOR SHAMPOOING HAIR:**

### **How Often Should I Shampoo A Child's Hair?**

- √ It is generally recommended that the hair be washed no more than every 7 to 10 days. Shampooing more often than that tends to dry it out.

### **The Process of Shampooing:**

- √ Shampoo a child's hair by having them kneel in a chair and bend over the kitchen sink or under the bathroom tub faucet. If possible, attaching a removable spray nozzle to the sink or showerhead greatly aids the process.
- √ Squeeze some shampoo (approximately 1 tbsp.) into the palm of your hand and gently massage the shampoo all over the child's hair.
- √ Using the ball of your fingertips (don't use your nails- scratching can irritate the scalp), gently massage the scalp with in and out motions, moving your fingers through the hair starting around the hairline and the nape of the neck and working your way to the center of the scalp.
- √ Especially when a child has tightly curled tresses, be sure NOT to gather the hair in a bunch on top of the head, as this may cause unnecessary tangling.
- √ For thicker hair, it may be necessary to apply and rinse out shampoo two or three times, with one-two minute rinses in between.
- √ Also, for thicker hair, caregivers may choose to wash the hair within the sections they divided it into when combing it out before washing. This can make the washing process easier.

### **Considerations for What Type of Shampoo to Use:**

- √ Assess the characteristics/ needs of the type of hair for which you are selecting a shampoo. You may have to try several before finding one that "fits". Generally you want to look for a mild, moisturizing shampoo with a balanced pH value. The pH balance refers to the alkalinity or acidity of a particular product. A pH of 5 is supposedly the closest to that of normal hair and scalp. A balanced pH value will help maintain the hair's natural acidity level giving hair its shine and manageability. Look for shampoos that primarily include the following in their ingredients: water, lauroamphoglycinate, cocoamphacarboxyglycinate or a sulfosuccinate.
- √ The one ingredient to be careful to avoid in a shampoo is lauryl (or laureth) sulfate. Shampoos with this ingredient are designed to strip the hair's natural oils, and were not created for very curly hair.
- √ Use of a "clarifying shampoo" every 4-6 weeks removes residue build-up from all of the various products being used on the hair (e.g. shampoos with protein, oils, gels etc.).

# ADDING MOISTURE TO THE HAIR: USE OF CONDITIONERS

## Why Do I Need to Use a Conditioner and How often?

- Conditioner is a lotion / cream for the hair and is intended to improve the surface qualities of the hair by smoothing the cuticle, keeping hair soft and giving it sheen. A conditioner should ALWAYS be applied after a shampoo.

## What Type of Conditioner is Appropriate to Use?

- An “instant conditioner” is one that coats the hair and gives it body and shine. Instant conditioners flatten the raised cuticle, make the hair soft and manageable, and help protect the inner structure of the hair shaft from damage by acting as a barrier. This type of conditioner should be used whenever the hair is washed. When choosing an instant conditioner, look for ones that contain some combination of such ingredients as lanolin, cholesterol, sulfonated oil, vegetable oil, proteins and polymers.
- Instant conditioners come in “rinse out” forms as well as “leave in” forms. Either is acceptable, and can be tried based on the needs you see in your child’s hair. Using a leave-in conditioner after washing helps when combing through hair and blow-drying with an attachment. It can also help protect hair from heat of blow-drying.
- The only caution with a “leave-in” conditioner is that curly hair that is silkier or finer in texture may be left with a film or residue if the leave-in conditioner is too heavy for the texture type. In this case, rinsing it out is advised. A light leave-in conditioner that is in the form of a spray can be used afterwards before brushing/styling the hair.
- A “penetrating conditioner” is a deeper conditioner that is absorbed into the hair and improves the appearance of the hair. They are made from animal proteins and keratin. This type of conditioner should be used at each wash if a child’s hair is damaged (e.g. ends are split, growth is uneven, hair is exposed to chlorine, colored...) or if the scalp looks very dry. If a child’s hair is not damaged, this type of conditioner is good to use once a month. Allowing a penetrating conditioner to stay in the hair for at least 15 minutes before rinsing it out is often beneficial. Another technique to get the most value out of such a conditioner is to apply the conditioner and then wrap a moist warm towel or plastic shower cap around the hair for at least 15 minutes. Afterwards, rinse thoroughly until the water runs clear.

## **What's the Best Way to Apply Conditioner:**

- After shampooing the hair and rinsing it thoroughly, gently squeeze all of the excess water from the hair. Section the hair, and add about a handful of conditioner to the palm of your hand and massage the conditioner through. A wide-tooth comb is an excellent tool to use to work conditioner through the hair. You can also use the fingertips to do this.
- Give special attention to working conditioner through to the ends of the hair, as the ends tend to be the driest part of the hair and the most prone to tangling and knotting.
- Rinse (or leave on if you've used a "leave-in" conditioner) and then comb out and twist the hair into 6 to 15 sections depending on how thick and long the hair is.

# Hair Product Ingredients to Watch Out for:

Many of the commercially available hair care products use potentially harmful ingredients. In the interest of good health, the list below contains ten commonly found product ingredients to avoid.

Check the list of ingredients on your hair products. The closer it is to the top of the list of ingredients on the bottle, the more that particular ingredient is found in that product.

<u>INGREDIENT NAME</u>	<u>PRODUCT USAGE</u>	<u>OTHER USES</u>	<u>POTENTIAL DANGERS</u>
Isopropyl Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Color rinses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-freeze</li> <li>• Solvent in shellac</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dries hair</li> <li>• Breaks hair off</li> </ul>
Mineral Oil/ Petrolatum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moisturizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Derivative of crude oil</li> <li>• Industrial grease component</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coats skin/ hair like “plastic wrap”</li> <li>• Prevent the release of toxins and wastes</li> <li>• Hinders normal skin respiration by keeping oxygen out</li> <li>• Can lead to sensitive skin/ skin disorders</li> </ul>
Polyethylene Glycol (PEG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Product thickeners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used in cleansers that dissolves oils and grease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to stripping the natural moisture</li> </ul>
Propylene Glycol (PG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make-up</li> <li>• Hair products</li> <li>• Lotions</li> <li>• After-shave</li> <li>• Deodorants</li> <li>• Mouthwashes</li> <li>• Toothpaste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active component of anti-freeze</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaks down protein and cellular structure (There is no difference between the PG used in industry and the PG used in personal care products.)</li> </ul> <p><small>*Because of its ability to quickly penetrate the skin, the EPA requires workers to wear protective gloves, clothing and goggles when working with this toxic substance.</small></p>

<p>Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS)/ Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES)</p>	<p>Widely used major ingredients in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cosmetics</li> <li>• Toothpaste</li> <li>• Hair conditioner</li> <li>• About 90% of all shampoos and products that foam</li> </ul> <p>* They are used in personal-care products because they are cheap. A small amount generates a large amount of foam, and when salt is added it thickens to give the illusion of being thick and concentrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used in testing labs as the standard ingredient to irritate skin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shampooing the hair with a product contaminated with these substances can lead to its absorption into the body at levels much higher than eating nitrite-contaminated foods.</li> <li>• SLES is slightly less irritating than SLS, but may be more drying.</li> </ul>
<p>Chlorine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not found in hair products, but it is important to be aware of potential exposures to protect yourself</li> </ul>	<p>Exposure to chlorine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tap water</li> <li>• Showers</li> <li>• Pool</li> <li>• Laundry products</li> <li>• Cleaning agents</li> <li>• Food processing</li> <li>• Sewage systems, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allergies to more severe health risks are a potential harm when exposed to this element.</li> </ul>
<p>Diethanolamine (DEA) Momoethanolamine (MEA) Triethanolamine (TEA)</p>	<p>These are commonly found in most personal care products that foam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including bubble baths</li> <li>• Body washes,</li> <li>• Shampoos</li> <li>• Soaps</li> <li>• Facial cleansers</li> </ul> <p>*Usually listed on the ingredients label in conjunction with the compound being neutralized (Cocamide DEA or MES, Lauramide DEA, etc)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated skin applications of DEA-based detergents are known to form cancer causing nitrates and nitrosamines.</li> </ul>
<p>FD&amp;C Color Pigments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hair dyes</li> <li>• Color rinses</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many color pigments cause skin sensitivity and irritation.</li> </ul>

Fragrance	<p>Present in most:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deodorants</li> <li>• Shampoos</li> <li>• Sunscreens</li> <li>• Skin care</li> <li>• Body care</li> <li>• Baby products</li> </ul> <p>* Fragrance on a label can indicate the presence of up to 4,000 separate ingredients.</p>		<p>Symptoms reported to the FDA have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Rashes</li> <li>• Skin discoloration</li> <li>• Violent coughing and vomiting</li> <li>• Allergic skin irritation</li> </ul>
Imidazolidinyl Urea DMDM Hydantoin	<p>Nearly all brands of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skin</li> <li>• Body and hair care</li> <li>• Antiperspirants</li> <li>• Nail polish</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are just two of the many preservatives that release formaldehyde (formaldehyde-donors).</li> <li>• According to the Mayo clinic, formaldehyde can irritate the respiratory system, cause skin reactions and trigger heart palpitations.</li> </ul>

# The Comb-Out Process for Hair:

## Why It's Done:

- It is recommended that hair be sectioned in order to comb it out because it divides the hair into manageable parts and aids the overall process. The focus is removing tangles in order to be able to work with the hair more easily & not hurt the child in the process!

## When to Do It:

- Always comb out the hair after it has been washed and conditioned.
- Comb out the hair when you're getting ready to change styles.

## What to Use:

- The following tools are used in the comb-out process: rattail comb, wide-tooth comb, clips or cloth-covered bands, light oil, and boar-bristle brush.

## What to Do:

- Use a rattail comb to divide the hair into 4 – 8 sections, depending on the thickness of the hair. The tighter the curl pattern of the hair, the more sections you'll need. The looser the curl pattern, the fewer sections are needed.
- When using the rattail comb to divide the hair into workable sections, be careful not to dig the comb into the scalp. If the hair appears to be tangled, gently pull the strands apart with the fingers.
- After each section is separated, hold that section of hair together with a cloth-covered elastic band or twist the section and hold it securely with a clip.
- Once all of the hair is sectioned, untwist or unclip one section of hair.
- Hold the hair firmly at the root, and using a wide-tooth comb, start combing the hair at the ends and work your way up to the roots. The movement should be quick, but not painful to the child. Do not comb wet, coarse hair with the rattail comb as hair loss may result.
- After all of the hair is combed through, apply a small amount of oil to the scalp (don't over saturate) and massage a little oil all over the hair. Use an oil that contains sage, olive, rosemary, and almond or lavender, which are the best oils for the hair and scalp. Avoid using heavy substances such as lanolin, petroleum and mineral oils, as they attract dust and dirt and may clog the pores. If pores are not able to breathe, the natural hair-growth process may be slowed.
- Based on the texture / coarseness of the hair, take the boar-bristle brush and brush the oil into the hair, then twist and clip each section so that it doesn't become tangled as you work on the next section.

# Blowing the Hair Dry:

## Why It's Done:

- Blow-drying the hair makes the hair straighter and easier to comb and style. It is a good alternative to achieving a straighter look without using harsh chemicals that can affect the scalp.
- Many persons find it easier to undertake the styling process (e.g. braiding) when the hair is straighter and dry; however if you choose not to blow-dry the hair, you can move right into creating a style (e.g. braiding or twisting).

## What to Do:

- Blow-drying is most easily done section-by-section through the hair. After you've combed out the hair, oiled the scalp and twisted each section, remove one clip at a time and blow dry each section individually.

## What to Use:

- Use a blow-dryer with a comb nozzle attachment. Blow-dry each section, drying the ends first, and then drying the hair down to the scalp.

# Hair Care Tips for Infants:

- √ Infants require special, but simple, hair care. Whether a baby has lots of hair or very little, a baby's scalp is fragile and the hair follicles are still developing, so the baby's hair and scalp need gentle care.
- √ A baby's hair and scalp can be cleaned with a washcloth and a natural, mild baby shampoo. It should then be rinsed with luke-warm water.
- √ A baby's hair should typically not be washed more than once a week.
- √ A small amount of oil should then be applied to the hair, brushing it with a soft-bristle baby brush in the direction that it naturally grows.
- √ When choosing an oil, you want something that is very light and natural. Choose a product that contains herbs, olive oil and other natural ingredients (e.g. aloe, sage oil, olive oil, almond, lavender, rosemary and castor oils). These products can be found at a natural hair salon or at a health food store.
- √ You want to avoid products that could potentially clog the pores, such as Vaseline.
- √ Leaving a baby's hair natural is very acceptable in terms of styling. However, if you choose to put your child's hair into ponytails etc., keep the following in mind:
  - Avoid pulling the hair too tightly.
  - Don't try to force styles that can't be accomplished because the baby's hair is too short or soft.
  - Avoid use of rubber bands or hair ornaments that can easily come out of a baby's hair and find their way into his or her mouth.
- √ A baby's hair should be covered with hats made with a soft crochet or cotton that is appropriate for the weather conditions. Babies' heads need to be protected from all types of weather, as they are particularly sensitive to the sun, heat, and cold.
- √ Cradle cap is a common scalp problem that some babies have. It appears as crusty white or yellow patches on the scalp. It is not dangerous, and usually goes away after the first year.
- √ To treat cradle cap, caregivers should use some olive oil or baby oil to loosen the flakes and then use a gentle baby shampoo on the child's hair. It is important not to scratch the surface or attempt to remove flakes by combing or brushing excessively, as this causes further irritation.

# “Top 11” Critical Tools Needed to Style a Child’s Hair

## 1. Combs:

- Rattail comb (great for making straight parts and removing debris from the hair).
- Pick (wide teeth allow for combing through thick hair).
- Wide-tooth comb (helps detangle thick hair during a comb out).

## 2. Brush

- You need a soft or medium boar bristle brush. Avoid brushes with plastic or nylon bristles on them, as they contribute to breakage in the hair.
- A brush helps to smooth the hair.

## 3. Oil

- Good for shine and provides some nutrients. Use oils that contain sage, olive, rosemary, and almond or lavender, which are great for the hair and scalp.
- Light oils in liquid form (not gel) are best.

## 4. Spray Bottle or Detangler Spray

- If using spray bottle, fill it with one part oil and six parts water.

## 5. Blow Dryer (preferably with a comb attachment)

- Aids in quick drying and detangling

## 6. Hair Ornaments

- Bows, ribbon, barrettes, cloth-covered rubber bands (these won’t break the child’s hair), beads, knockers (or ponytail holders).

## 7. Hair Pins

- To assist in holding some styles securely.

## 8. Hair Clips

- To keep hair divided into sections when attempting to style.

## 9. Gel

- Helps in styling and luster.

## 10. Child’s favorite videotape or DVD

- Can be an aid in getting children to sit still during a styling process.

## 11. Patience

- Do not become frustrated with the process. Have fun!

# Hair Care Basics and Tips: A Quick Review

Hair should be treated as gently as you would a fine washable silk blouse. The better you treat your hair, the easier it will be to grow and the better it will look. With some exceptions, African-American hair is usually coarser in texture, tighter in curl pattern and more delicate and vulnerable to damage from environmental and chemical treatments. The hair tends to be dryer and more prone to breakage because the curl pattern makes it more difficult for the oils to work their way from the scalp to the ends of the hair. The points where the hair curls and twists are also points where the hair tends to break. The more of these points the more the hair is prone to breakage. Because the hair can be kinky, it tends to tangle more and pulling these tangles out can cause breakage.

## Washing & Conditioning

- Wash your hair no more often than every week to week and a half or 7-10 days; more than that can dry it out.
- Use the pads of the finger in a “scratching” motion to cleanse the scalp/roots, rather than using hands to lather entire head. Using the more gentle and direct “scratching” motions will reduce tangling that are created.
- Comb your hair out while you're conditioning it to remove the tangles while it's wet and relatively slick.
- Using a leave-in conditioner after washing helps when combing through hair and blow-drying with an attachment. It can also help protect hair from heat of blow-drying.
- Do a deep conditioner or hot oil treatment once a month.
- If you exercise and sweat, rinse the salt out of your hair even if you don't wash it. Condition it afterwards with a daily leave-in conditioner.

## Moisturizing

- Oil your scalp on a regular basis with a good natural oil like jojoba. Daily moisturizing or “greasing” the scalp with a light oil or light grease can be helpful in maintaining a desired level of moisture.
- Massage your scalp on a regular basis to promote circulation and oil production. Brushing the hair can help promote oil production from the sebaceous glands as well.
- Avoid overuse of products with mineral oil or petroleum. They tend to block the pores and are not readily absorbed. If your mother used vaseline on your hair, stop.
- Remember that water (moisture) is your friend and get plenty- inside and out. If you used to press your hair or blow it out and learned to fear water on your hair because it would dry up, you need to get over this. Spritzing a little water on your hair every day is a good idea. Get a spray bottle and just spray it just a little.
- If you relax your hair, you've weakened the hair and reduced the ability for the scalp to naturally oil it. Following the tips listed above will help improve the hair's moisture content.

## Styling Tips

- Put as little heat as possible on your hair. Heat, especially combined with perms is very damaging to hair.
- Avoid alcohol based products unless you have a need for a water-free shampoo to cleanse your scalp (for example while you're waiting for your locks to lock).
- Eat a proper diet. Vitamins and protein are essential for proper hair growth.
- Find a style that works with your natural hair type and growth pattern. The less you work against your hair, the less stressed it will be.
- Do not relax your hair until it is bone straight. This is just asking for trouble. Why relax your hair until it has absolutely no body or curl and then put heat on it to try to get that curl back?
- Be gentle with your hair, especially if it has been chemically treated, which by nature stresses hair.

## Maintenance/Styling tools

- A good shampoo: They will be more expensive. But, they'll use more gentle cleansers and be more concentrated. Your hair will definitely show the difference.
- An acidifier (a conditioner with a low pH): Acidifying the hair adds shine and detangles.
- Hot oil treatment or deep conditioner. For example, *Saniyyah...Naturally Lemongrass Hot Oil Treatment*. It is an all-natural based shea butter treatment. Apply the conditioner or hot oil treatment to the hair and scalp, cover with a plastic cap and sit under a dryer for 15-20 minutes. Alternatively, you can wrap your head in a towel. Then wash the hair thoroughly. This is very important for dry brittle hair.
- Leave in conditioner or daily moisturizer: This is what you'll put on your hair after you've thoroughly cleaned it to continue to provide oil and moisture.
- A comb for your hair type. Use a plastic comb with large teeth to comb through natural kinky or curly hair. Combs with smaller teeth can pull hair out and breaking it off. Use a small rattail comb for parting hair into sections.
- A natural bristle brush.
- A spray bottle to mist your hair.
- A scarf, cap, or wrap to wear on your head at night- or a satin pillow case.
- Frequently clean styling tools with shampoo and very warm water. The utensils can also be soaked overnight. Over time, brushes, combs and picks hold the odor, dirt, oils, and residue from your hair.
- Ensure combs have smooth edges / teeth. Replace combs that are missing teeth to avoid pulling out the hair.
- Frequent trimming of the hair ends is vital to promoting hair growth. The ends must be removed for the hair to grow and look healthy. Ask your stylist for recommended trimming frequency; often between 6-8 weeks.

## **Sleeping**

- Either section the hair and plait / braid it, tie it back or wrap it up using a scarf before going to bed, this will reduce the number of tangles you have to comb out the next morning, in turn, reducing the chances of breaking your hair.
- Sleep with a satin scarf or sleep cap on your head or with a satin pillow case. This helps avoid split ends caused by the rubbing of your hair against a "rough" cotton pillow case.

# Boys, Hair & the Barber Shop

## Suggestions for Finding A Barber:

- Ask other parents for recommendations for barbers who enjoy cutting boys' hair. Many barbers are just not patient enough to cut little boys' hair. Ask your friends, a pastor, a neighbor, a co-worker: "Who cuts your son's hair?"
- When you find a barber, watch him cut some boys' hair. Is he or she patient? Does he talk to the child? Is he or she in a hurry or trying to make sure that a good job is done? Is the haircut even, or does the barber leave uneven patches of hair? Does he explain his tools and what he uses them for?
- Make sure the shop is clean and is a place where you and your son are comfortable. Make sure that the barber cleans his/her tools.
- Listen in on their conversations. If you don't want your son listening to a lot of swearing and adult conversations, find another barber shop.
- Make sure the barber understands how you or your son wants his hair cut. A good barber will take the time to understand exactly how you want your son's hair cut. A good barber will cut it a little longer than you want and then ask you if you would like the hair to be cut shorter.

## Some Popular Boys Hair Styles:

- The Fade (hair cut short on the top and close on the sides)
  - Care: Wash once a week and use a light oil and brush
    - Maintaining this style will require frequent trimming (possibly every other week) based on the rate of hair growth.
- The "All Even" (hair is cut even all around the head)
  - Care: Wash once a week and use a light oil and brush
    - Maintaining this style will require frequent trimming (possibly every other week) based on the rate of hair growth.
- The Afro (hair is grown out several inches)
  - Care:
    - Buy your son a pick to comb his hair. Make sure he combs the hair from the root to the ends. If it isn't combed everyday, it will become matted and very difficult to comb.
    - Consider braiding his hair in cornrows at night so his hair will stay neater and will be easier to comb (note: a boys hair needs to be at least 5 inches in length in order to cornrow).
    - Wash the hair once a week.
    - Take your son to a barber for shape-up every three weeks.
    - Keep the hair moisturized with hair oil.

- Cornrows and twists
  - On a regular basis, apply oil to the scalp around cornrows or twists.
  - It's difficult to completely remove the conditioner from the braids.
- Locks / Dreads (hair is twisted and never combed out)
  - Care:
    - Shampoo hair every week.
    - Separate the new hair growth and then hand roll or twist the locks to keep them smooth and neat at the scalp.
    - It takes months for the hair to start locking, but once it locks, it will lock neat and strong.
    - The only way to remove locks is to cut the hair off.

# Choosing a Hair Salon

## Choosing a Salon:

- One of the best ways to find a salon that is right for you and your child is word of mouth. In your travels throughout the day, while at the grocery store or any place children may be accompanying their parents, pay close attention to other children's hairstyles.
- You want to find a salon that has a great reputation for working with children. Find out how long they've been in business. A year is long enough for a reputation to be established and for you to feel secure. Before going, find out if they take children and about the starting age.

## Ask for a Consultation:

- Many salons will offer consultations. This is a good idea if you've never been to a salon before or if you're trying a salon for the first time.
- A consultation will give the stylist a chance to check the texture and condition of your child's hair and discuss style options with you.
- The consultation should include information about the price of the style, an explanation of the technique, and an estimated length of time it will take for the style to be completed, including any waiting time.
- This is also a good time to ask about how long the style will last and its maintenance requirements.
- During a consultation you shouldn't feel rushed. A stylist can answer questions even while working on someone else's hair. Don't feel intimidated. Ask all of the questions you came with and continue the dialogue until you feel satisfied.

## Preparing Your Child for a Salon Experience:

- Taking a child to a hair salon for the first time can be a fun experience as well as exciting. Sometimes though, the excitement turns to fear once the child is separated from the parent and is experiencing a stranger touching them.
- In order to prepare your child, here are some tips:
  - Talk with your child a few weeks before and start continuously preparing her for the salon experience the closer it gets. Make sure you let the child know she will need to sit still and the importance of her cooperating with the stylist.
  - If your child starts to cry at the salon, ask the stylist if you can hold your child's hand or let the child sit on your lap.
  - Bring books, dolls or other portable activities to entertain your child at the salon. Based on the day of the week and time of day, your child may have to wait while the stylist rotates clients.

# The Signs of Improper Hair Care:

## Lint in the Hair:

- Lint balls are most often caused by using the wrong kind of hair oil. Using hair grease products made with petroleum jelly or mineral oil should be avoided. The best hair oils are: shea butter, jojoba oil, coconut oil and royal jelly. Natural oils keep the hair soft, shiny and lint free.

## Knotted Hair Ends:

- Knotted hair ends is a common sign that the hair ends need to be trimmed. Once the ends are clipped, the hair will be easier to comb.

## Dry Scalp and Dandruff:

- Kids should typically not have a dry scalp. If you notice dandruff or a flaky scalp, try one of the following:
  - Shampoo the hair more often (every five days)
  - Put castor oil on the dry areas before shampooing
  - Do not use petroleum or mineral oil on the scalp, but rather natural oils (see above)

## Dry Hair and Shedding:

- Dry or dulling hair that sheds a lot is most often caused by:
  - Too infrequent shampooing and conditioning
  - Using the wrong products
  - Poor diet – lack of fresh fruits and vegetables and too little protein (and too many carbohydrates)
  - Anemia (iron deficiency)

## Traction Alopecia (hair loss):

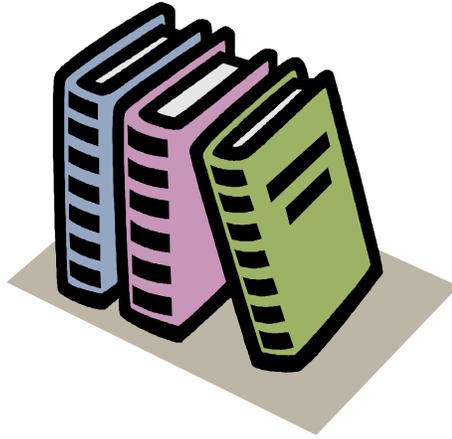
- This type of hair loss shows up along the hairline and looks like a smooth bald area. It's often caused by too much pulling and hairstyles that are too tight. Elastic bands, tight braids, tight barrettes, hot combing, tight rollers and hard gels cause thin hairlines.

## Chemical Hair Breakage:

- Breakage from a perm relaxer starts where the curly new hair growth meets the chemically straightened hair. The best way to grow natural hair back is to have it professionally braided until the permed hair can be cut off.
- Shampoo the braids regularly to keep the hair soft.
- Do not get a chemical touch-up to stop breakage. This caused the breakage, so it won't stop it.

# Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children

## Section III: Annotated Resource List



# **Annotated Resource Bibliography**

## **Books:**

Costa, Jeanne. 2003. *Making Cultural Connections: Hair and Skin Care for Children of African Descent*. CWLA Press: Washington, DC.

This is a down-to-earth, practical guide to the unique hair and skin care needs of children of African heritage, specifically written for adoptive or foster families who may not be of African or Caribbean descent but who are caring for children who are. This book approaches hair and skin care from the perspective of promoting the child's cultural identity and stresses open communication between caregiver and child. Concrete suggestions for normal hair maintenance; how to avoid hair damage and how to care for damaged hair; hairstyles of children and teens; normal skin care; and skin conditions both benign and potentially harmful, that are common in people with darker skin.

Downie, J. and Cook-Bolden, F. 2004. *Beautiful Skin of Color: A Comprehensive Guide to Asian, Olive and Dark Skin*. Harpers-Collins Publishers: New York, NY.

Written by two dermatologists of color, this book seeks to provide clear, specific advice on skin maintenance and health. It takes a broad approach to the varying skin tones and colors that persons of color have, explaining why certain issues or problems occur, and then prescribing reliable remedies.

Ferrell, Pamela. 1999. *Kids Talk Hair: An Instruction Book for Grown-Ups and Kids*. Cornrows & Co. Publishing, Washington, D.C.

This is an instruction book designed for both grown-ups and kids. Most of the left-hand pages are for young readers, and right-hand pages for grown-ups and adults. It explains how to care for kids' hair, ranging from newborns to teenagers, including shampooing, styling, choosing the right barber, and creating natural styles. The pictures within this book are outstanding!

N-K Collison, Michelle. 2002. *It's All Good Hair: The Guide to Styling and Grooming Black Children's Hair*. Harpers-Collins Publishers: New York, NY.

This book provides the tricks and techniques for today's most popular styles (braids, twists, extensions, locks, giving step-by-step instructions for achieving styling goals. It also provides good foundational information on general hair and scalp care.

Taylor, Susan. 2003. *Brown Skin: Dr. Susan Taylor's Prescription for Flawless Skin, Hair and Nails*. Harpers-Collins Publishers: New York, NY.

This is a comprehensive book on skin care that is written by a Harvard-trained dermatologist. She provides quizzes, product recommendations and patient-tested solutions to many skin care needs and dilemmas. While primarily focusing upon adults, there is one chapter solely devoted to skin care for children.

Williams, J. 2004. *Kinki Creations: A Parent's Guide to Natural Black Hair Care for Kids*. Harlem Moon Publishers, New York: NY.

This book offers step-by-step, easy-to-follow instructions for styles that can be created in less than 15 minutes. It reveals expert techniques for afros, braids, cornrows, twists and a variety of other all-natural styles. Tips for proper shampooing, caring for newborns' hair and finding the right salon are included too. The photographic pictures within the book are excellent.

## **Internet Websites:**

### **Adoptn.org**

This website is wholly dedicated towards supporting adoptive families who have adopted children outside of their own cultural or ethnic heritage. It attempts to solicit and present dilemmas that parents are facing, along with suggestions for resolving them by other adoptive parents. There is a heavy focus on hair and skin care for African American children.

### **Itsallgoodhair.com**

This website is a “take off” on the book “It’s All Good Hair” (listed above) and provides excerpts from the book, a photo gallery of children’s hair styles, stories about hair, and much more.

### **Motionshair.com**

This website is a wealth of information on African American Hair, with a special focus on youth and kids. It includes a “problems and solutions” link; a categorical presentation of products by brand as well as problems you’re attempting to address with a product; salon tips, as well as much more.

### **Napptural.com**

This website is dedicated to providing information, discussion and products for people of African descent who are committed to natural hair styles. It provides a variety of testimonials, product suggestions, tools and tips.

### **Sallybeauty.com**

This website is sponsored by the retail store “Sally’s Beauty Supply”. The website is set up in a “question and answer” format, offering advice on hundreds of hair care needs and problems, as well as product recommendations.

### **Societyhilldermatology.com**

This website is sponsored by Dr. Susan Taylor, a renowned dermatologist who specializes in the care of darker skin. It includes articles on various skin issues, product recommendations, and clinical research information.

## **DVD:**

*African-American and Biracial Hair Care: A Parent's Practical Guide to Managing Hair Care.* 2004. Produced by Adoption Accents, Jenison, MI.

This DVD was produced in order to assist adoptive or foster parents in caring for the hair of African American or biracial children. Featuring hair care specialists, it has various segments that demonstrate techniques, including: hair care basics; combing out; processing; styling; braids twists & knots; and styling for toddlers.

To Order: Call (1-877-242-0826) or visit their website at [www.adoptionaccents.com](http://www.adoptionaccents.com)