

Growing up beautiful: How Gen Alpha is redefining beauty & personal care

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Generation Alpha is rapidly shaping the beauty and personal care industries through their early exposure to social media, rising interest in gender-neutral grooming, and demand for safe, ethical, and age-appropriate products, creating significant opportunities for brands to engage this savvy, value-driven generation, according to Eleonora Mazzilli of BEAUTYSTREAMS.



Generation Alpha, the cohort born between 2010 and 2024, continues to grow, and their influence on the beauty and personal care industries is undeniable as they "will be the largest generation the world has ever seen, numbering more than 2 billion by 2029", said Mazzilli, Trend Localization & Business Development Director for North America at BEAUTYSTREAMS.

"These digital natives are savvy and influential and have more autonomy and decision-making power within the family than ever before," she added, and as a result, their economic impact is projected to be significant, with an estimated US \$5.46 trillion economic footprint by the time they reach adulthood.

To learn more about Generation Alpha's burgeoning relationship with cosmetics and personal care, CosmeticsDesign spoke to Mazzilli for her insights into the impact of social media influencers, the importance of demystifying beauty for young consumers, and more.

Early beauty awareness and social media influence

Beauty awareness for Generation Alpha starts early, with tweens and teens gaining knowledge from social media platforms like TikTok and YouTube. "Tweens and teens are becoming increasingly savvy and knowledgeable, thanks in part to their exposure to social media," said Mazzilli.

The endless flow of beauty tutorials and product recommendations on these platforms helps shape their understanding of personal care at a young age. This shift is not limited to girls; Mazzilli noted, "It isn't only Gen Alpha girls who are looking to express themselves using beauty and personal care products; boys too are showing a strong interest in male grooming."

According to a Razorfish study cited by Mazzilli, "YouTube is Alpha's primary path to brand discovery, with 51% of Alphas first hearing about brands through YouTube videos." With platforms like TikTok gaining popularity, Mazzilli highlighted that "TikTok has emerged as the favorite platform among 13-to-15-year-olds."

This digital influence extends to how brands communicate with Generation Alpha, as influencers—many of whom are Alphas themselves—are increasingly pivotal. "Alpha influencers pack a powerful marketing punch," she said, "and have the power to reach, engage, and connect with other kids, tweens, and teens."

Tailored products and simplified routines

Brands are already responding to this emerging market by offering products tailored to the specific needs of Generation Alpha's young skin. "Beauty companies are aware of this emerging generation, with Alphas becoming marketing's latest target," Mazzilli noted.

Established brands are increasingly launching teen-specific lines, while new brands are emerging to cater specifically to tweens and teens. "New brands create simplified but effective skin care routines for and approved by teenagers," she explained, "with products spanning cleansers, moisturizers, serums, and sunscreens, all designed to kickstart good skin care habits."

The focus on sensory experiences in product design also reflects the playful yet functional needs of this demographic. For example, "shower, deodorant, and body formulas designed with teens in mind offer a playful and sensory experience via new textures, scents, and formats," she illustrated.

Brands are also paying close attention to aesthetics, she added. "A growing number of period care startups have emerged to cater to tweens and teens," she shared, "with size-adapted pads that come in stylish packaging worthy of a 'bathroom shelfie.'"

Safety and ethical standards

As Generation Alpha develops their beauty habits, safety and ethical considerations are becoming paramount. Mazzilli underscored the importance of dermatologist-approved and hypoallergenic formulations for young consumers, noting that "dermatologist-approved, hypoallergenic, and fragrance-free claims remain strong in product offerings for kids and tweens."

Clean, vegan, and eco-friendly formulations are on the rise as well, driven by growing awareness of environmental issues and ingredient safety. "Parents are increasingly wary of ingredients considered harmful to children," said Mazzilli, adding that this concern is influencing product development.

Generation Alpha's heightened awareness of environmental sustainability also plays a crucial role in shaping their preferences. "They are being raised in the middle of a climate emergency," Mazzilli observed, which makes them "uniquely inclined to be more ethical and value-led," with a clear demand for transparency from the brands they support.

Educational resources and co-creation

In addition to product offerings, Mazzilli emphasized the need for brands to serve as educators. "Brands need to also be a resource and educational platform through blogs and tutorial videos," she said, highlighting the importance of demystifying beauty for young consumers.

Providing accessible explanations of skin care routines and ingredient benefits is key to helping both tweens and their parents navigate the beauty world confidently.

Looking ahead, Mazzilli suggested that brands can deepen their connection with Generation Alpha by involving them in the product development process. "By placing co-creation and community engagement at the heart of a product's process, brands can actively listen to their tween and teen consumers' needs," she explained. Through initiatives such as beauty teen committees, brands can ensure that products align with the interests and values of this young audience.

As Generation Alpha becomes an increasingly influential consumer group, beauty and personal care brands must adapt to meet their unique preferences. With a focus on safety, transparency, and age-appropriate solutions, companies that effectively engage with this digital-savvy, value-driven generation stand to build lasting loyalty. "By understanding their needs and preferences," concluded Mazzilli, "brands can recruit tweens and teens with products that specifically target the increasing sophistication of pre-pubescents."