

Press release



Never without ... deodorant

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It is not only their smartphone adolescents and young adults do not want to do without in their everyday life. A surprising must-have: deodorant.

At the beginning of puberty, young people experience their own body odour to be rather embarrassing or even disgusting – and the same goes for that of others. An unpleasant smell is to be avoided by all means. In extreme cases, adolescents and young adults are even mobbed because they smell of sweat – and they mob others because of their body odour.

Most young people therefore do not leave the house without deodorant. It is also a permanent companion in sports and school bags which helps to control some of the unpleasant sensations of the transition to adulthood. 83 percent of adolescents and young adults use deodorant once or several times a day. This is the result of an in-depth psychological-representative study with adolescents and young adults conducted on behalf of IKW – The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association.



For 81 percent, deodorant can even contribute to strengthening their self-esteem. There is a psychologically interesting explanation for this: One's own body odour is closely linked to the emerging sexuality during puberty. During puberty, young people actually and figuratively get 'hot' more frequently. And the body odour gives this away. Attraction and rejection are not least down to pheromones. Deodorant is therefore not only used to conceal the personal smell and instead create a more favourable scent, but also serves to mask the treacherous pheromones. This provides adolescents and young adults not only with more confidence when dealing with friends. They can also play it safe

when meeting the opposite sex, avoiding embarrassment and the risk of being rejected because people do not like their smell.

The connection between odour and the transition to adulthood can also be recognized from the fact that deodorants are often a bone of contention between parents and their children: parents often do not like the new scent or perceive it as extremely exaggerated – this is why young people frequently use deodorant in their own room or only after they have left the house.

This is what young people say:

“Deodorants are part of the day-to-day.”

“When I’m with my girlfriend, I do not want to stink.”

“We will leave a note on the table if somebody stinks: “Buy yourself a deodorant.” – You may easily be mobbed.”

“Deodorant leaves me feeling safe.”

“My father always says that it stinks and that I use too much of it – I’m only allowed to use it in my room.”

Deodorant plays a relevant role in the daily life of young people from an early age on. Come secondary school deodorant is used regularly. 24-hour-protection is very important in this respect – in the morning, at noon, in the evening and also in-between.

Is there anything else that is almost as embarrassing as body odour for young people?

Yes – for the boys and girls interviewed in the study, greasy hair is high upon the “scale of embarrassment”, too.



For further information please contact:

Karen Kumposcht

Public Relations/Public Affairs Manager

Industrieverband Körperpflege- und Waschmittel e. V.

The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association

Mainzer Landstraße 55, 60329 Frankfurt am Main

T +49.69.2556-1331 / F +49.69.237631

kkumposcht@ikw.org / www.ikw.org

Youth undisguised

The self-perception and self-esteem of adolescents and young adults

An in-depth psychological-representative study from rheingold salon compiled for IKW – German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association

Young people are currently not only struggling with uncertainties due to unusual mood swings and burgeoning sexuality. On a social and familial level, they likewise experience sort of a loss of control. The adolescents try to counter this basic feeling of insecurity by their very own strategy: they attach increasing value to their appearance.

rheingold salon has examined on behalf of the German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association the development of self-esteem in adolescents and young adults aged between 14 and 21 years. What role is played by a neat appearance for the self-esteem of young people? What influence does taking care of their appearance have on the self-esteem of young people? And in how far can cosmetics and beauty products support young people in their self-discovery? The first depth psychological representative study on the transition to adulthood provides answers to these exciting questions. Within the framework of the qualitative polling, group discussions and individual in-depth interviews were conducted with altogether 56 adolescents and young adults aged between 14 and 21 years. For the representative quantitative survey 1,012 adolescents and young adults aged between 14 and 21 years were surveyed. <http://www.ikw-youthstudy.org/>

About IKW

The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association, with headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, was founded in 1968. It represents the interests of more than 400 companies from the fields of beauty and home care on a national and European level. With sales revenues of almost EUR 18 billion, the member companies cover approximately 95% of the market and employ a workforce of approximately 500,000 people.

IKW is the contact partner for its member companies, ministries, public authorities, consumers, institutions and associations as well as for the media as far as scientific, regulatory or business topics are concerned. Experts from the beauty care and home care departments within IKW provide competent answers to questions concerning skin and hair care, beauty and self-esteem as well as hygiene and cleaning. More information on www.ikw.org