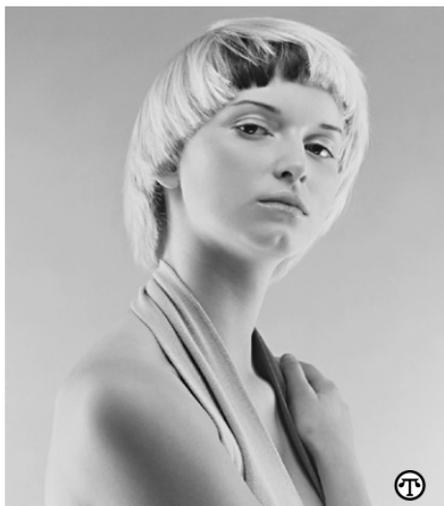


Youths Find Head-Turning Ways To Express themselves



Extreme color effects have gone mainstream and are now much in demand at salons. Gens X and Y are using color creatively—bright blues, pinks and greens—for a dramatic edge.

(NAPSA)—Expressing yourself can be hard, especially when you're young. The under-25 set is on a constant search for something different to help them stand out in a crowd, and dramatic haircolor is quickly becoming their latest mode of self-expression.

"This is a trend that started in the early '90s with rock stars and club kids who were using Kool-Aid to achieve extreme color effects on their hair," explains Marcy Cona, colorist and owner of M.C. Hair Consultants in Cleveland, OH. "But today, intense haircolor is mainstream and in hot demand in salons."

Gens X and Y, who represent 35 percent of salon color clients, are driving the latest boom in haircolor. They are using sensational shades of color—bright blues, pinks and greens—as the next must-have accessory. Research among salon color clients conducted by Clairol Professional revealed that 60 percent of women under age 35 color their hair to "look or feel more distinctive." As Cona says, "Experimenting with haircolor is a simple change that gives the satisfaction of making a memorable personal statement

without the permanence of a tattoo or body piercing."

Research shows that whether members of this group are having their hair colored in a salon or doing it themselves at home, they are looking for the same thing: head-turning color that makes them stand out. "It's not just women," observed Cona. "Young men are also using haircolor for self-expression."

Consumer demand has prompted companies to introduce products that deliver intense high-impact colors. Lines such as Clairol's Mc Max allow teenagers and twenty-somethings to achieve the look with daring, unconventional color. "Today's youth values their individuality and they want to express themselves boldly," says Cona.

To feed this appetite for edginess, hair colorists are applying funky shades to the hair in dramatic streaks and chunks. "Using haircolor for self-expression is rewarding for both the client and the colorist," says Cona. "It allows colorists to release their inner rock star and make bold artistic statements. After all, today's colorist was yesterday's club kid with Kool-Aid dyed hair."