

## Skin-deep? 200 high school girls give up makeup

By John Springer TODAY.com contributor

MSN.com

Nina Smith, 16, could not wait until her mother finally gave her the green light to wear makeup about five years ago. But now the Texas high school junior can't wait until Tuesdays roll around — the one day of the week she and some 200 other girls at her school forego their lipstick, mascara and other beauty products.

Nina says she enjoys the extra 30 minutes of sleep on Tuesdays, but that's not why she bypasses the makeup bag. She and five other girls formed a club at Colleyville Heritage High School this year. They wanted to send a small, symbolic statement that girls don't need all the goop and glitter to be beautiful.

Their message was heard loud and clear. The school-sanctioned club — Redefining Beautiful: One Girl at a Time — quickly grew to 200 members. Boys at the school even formed a support group to encourage the girls.

"We didn't think it was going to catch on, because people are self-conscious about how they look. It's high school: You want to look your best," Nina told TODAYshow.com. "To have over 200 girls, it's crazy."

But catch it on it did. Not only at Colleyville, but surrounding school districts and others from as far away as the Netherlands who have heard about the club.

### Only skin-deep

The formation of the club at Colleyville and the wide interest in it at other schools is reflective of the growing dissatisfaction many have with the message spread by TV, magazines and the Internet that girls have to look a certain way to be attractive, said Suzanne McGahey, the club's faculty adviser.

"It is definitely a response to that ... I think the girls wanted to send a positive message that you can be beautiful no matter what the circumstances," McGahey said. "It's about empowerment and self-affirmation for younger girls."

The girls wear sky-blue T-shirts with their club logo on Tuesdays. As a show of support, boys at the school will soon wear dark-gray Ts with purple lettering that says "Give me that girl" on the front and "That's the you I like best" on the back.

"It's really all been positive. Everyone's really excited," Nina Smith said.

According to Smith, the movement was inspired this summer by a mentor to the girls who referred them to a website called "Operation Beautiful," which was featured on TODAY in August. The site encourages women and those who love them to leave little notes around reminding them they are beautiful and loved, regardless of how they might look physically.

"I have heard about the Colleyville girls, and think they are amazing," said Operation Beautiful founder Caitlin Boyle, 26.

"Those girls are looking inward to define their own worth and not allowing their worth to be determined by outside sources, such as magazines, makeup companies, boys, or the impossible standards of beauty set upon women, and men, by society," Boyle said. "I really admire their efforts."

For more information about Operation Beautiful, visit their website by clicking [here](#).

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