

**Youth Undisguised: "Good looks to combat loss of control"**

*A study on the development of young people's self-confidence – with a special focus on hygiene, personal care and cosmetics*

Zeist, 15 May 2019 – The Dutch Cosmetics Association (NCV) gladly presents the results of the "Youth Undisguised" study.

Young people are currently struggling with uncertainties, not only due to their unusual mood swings and burgeoning sexuality, but also on social and familial level they experience sort of a loss of control. To counter this sense of uncertainty, young people try to strengthen their self-confidence and regain control over their own life. As a result, they develop their very own strategies, which have been decoded by rheingold salon on behalf of NCV in an in-depth psychological-representative study.

**Most young people strive for stability and security**

It is remarkable that a large part of the group does not feel protected at home and does not have a stable home and family environment. As a consequence young people become more nonchalant, show less ambition and lack vision and future orientation. This is strongly expressed in answers such as "I'll just do it", "I don't have to stand out", "I just want a job, a normal life". 79% of the young people interviewed mainly wanted stability and security. The Dutch young people surveyed in this study adapt to the situations in their lives and have little passion and no dreams.

**Personal care products contribute to their sense of control**

More than three quarters of the polled young people consider body and beauty care to be "very important" in their life and invest a lot of energy in their appearance. Good looks give them the feeling of social acceptance, security and control over their emotions. Researcher Ines Imdahl: *"No generation has ever worked so hard on the outer appearance as this one. Creating a well-groomed and attractive appearance is one of the few opportunities that enables them to develop a sense of support and control in their lives."*

Particularly greasy hair, suddenly emerging spots, and especially an unpleasant smell of sweat are perceived as the most embarrassing and give them a feeling of loss of control. Creating an attractive appearance is a good method to get in or take back control. The embarrassing and unpleasant feelings can be suppressed by focusing on the appearance. It serves to reset anything perceived as uncontrollable in the inner life.

The study also clearly shows the need for comfort and convenience. Not worrying about your appearance and not wanting to stand out. Somehow it seems to be a typical Dutch mentality, summarized in the words "simple" and "functional". This is clearly expressed in their attitude towards personal care products. They must be easy to use and functional.

### **Appearance as a reflection of the personality**

For young people it is rather important to control the way they are perceived by others. The control of their appearance by means of cosmetic products is a key factor in attaining self-confidence. It is therefore not a surprise that the three most used products are toothpaste, deodorant and shampoo.

To gain security and control, young people perceive cosmetics to be indispensable. Not only for themselves, but also for others. Young people judge their peers on their appearance: 56% believe that you can deduce personality from someone's appearance. Taking care of their appearance is so important to them that it not only expresses their own values and self-confidence, but they also believe that they can deduce whether another person shares the same values with them.

Ronald van Welie, NCV Director: *"We commissioned this study to learn more about the motives of young people and how personal care influences self-perception and self-esteem. We found it surprising how important cosmetics are for young people to feel safer and more at ease."*

### **Facts about the study**

For the quantitative part of the study, rheingold salon examined 1036 young people aged 14–21 via an online questionnaire. The qualitative part consisted of group interviews with 16 young people between the ages of 14 and 21. In 2016, rheingold salon conducted the same study in Germany. The Dutch study deepens central findings of the [IKW youth study](#).



Would you like to read more insights from our youth study "Youth Undisguised", see [www.jeugd Uitgelicht.nl](http://www.jeugd Uitgelicht.nl) or contact Marjolein van Oostrum via [m.vanoostrum@ncv-cosmetica.nl](mailto:m.vanoostrum@ncv-cosmetica.nl)