

LINDSAY LOGS IN

LINDSAY RANDALL



LET IT GO

Beauty is on the inside, or so the saying goes – and so Lindsay can't help but wonder why our preschoolers are being sold lip gloss?



“As my fortieth birthday looms uninvitingly around the corner, I am increasingly finding myself peering at my daughters' collagen. The clunking of my thin sagging cheek against her gorgeous plump pillowy face; the planting of a gentle kiss on the satin smoothness of my six-month-old's skin – all serve as a harsh daily reminder of my coming of age.

I've also found myself more transfixed than I should be on the characters in *Frozen*, with their huge Disney eyes, flawless skin, glossy tumbling locks and oh, that dress of Elsa's as she builds the ice palace...

I know I should have grown out of this, and I want to be a strong, positive influence to my girls, offering wise anecdotes and nuggets of maternal wisdom that it's more important to be happy and challenged than beautiful and blemish-free.

While searching the madness of my brain for the right method to deliver such messages to my offspring, I am filling their bedrooms with inspirational word art to do it for me, saying things like 'Dream Big Little One, Tomorrow You Will Move Mountains' (from the talented, and annoyingly stunning, Freya at www.freya-art.com) and the beautiful children's Typography Art Prints from www.wallfy.com. The Husband says the house is 'turning into an instruction manual'.

My 'almost 40-ness' has put a whole new spin on clothes shopping too. I'm suddenly not sure what to wear and find myself constantly questioning 'Is it too fluffy, too sparkly, too short?'

And ironically, while I'm busy trying to avoid the mutton-dressed-as-lamb look for myself, I am having to carefully

manage my own little lambs looking too much like, well, mutton. The choice of fashion and cosmetic products available for preschool girls these days is staggering. And children's desire for these products and their knowledge of what to do with them is even more so.

A search for the words 'make-up' on the Toys R Us website returns (unbelievably) over 300 products, many of which carry a recommended age of just 'three years plus'.

When my daughter was two years old I would privately judge friends with older girls who were allowing them to apply nail varnish at age four. On my daughter's fourth birthday, she opened at least two presents which contained sparkly arrays of pink polish for her tiny toes and, seeing a wide smile dimple her cherubic cheeks, I couldn't bring myself to take them from her.

I will, however, absolutely draw the line at t-shirts for preschoolers with words like 'Babe' emblazoned across the front in diamante, girls styling heads which come with make-up – and I am cross with Lelli Kelly for offering free lip gloss with their staggeringly expensive shoes.

It's hard enough steering little girls away from their pink sparkly adverts (I will never pay more for my daughter's footwear than I would for my own), let alone including make-up in the packaging which makes it very difficult for the parent to 'police'.

I suppose for us mothers it's about finding a comfortable balance of encouraging our children to feel good about themselves on the inside and teaching them that it's okay to enhance what mummy gave them (short legs, unruly hair and one slightly wonky eye – sorry girls) with a healthy but appropriate interest in fashion and beauty products.

For my part I'm still trying to find a happy medium between fashionable and forty. But I am working hard on letting (the angst surrounding) it go. However, one of the things I will never, ever succumb to is wearing a fleece on the school run. It is at that point I consider myself to have seriously checked out of fashion and surrendered to middle age. Besides, I'm down with Elsa: the cold never bothered me anyway."



Above: Inspirational art helps create balance.



Above: You wouldn't catch Elsa wearing a fleece on the school run.



Left: Preschoolers in make-up: too much, too soon?