

Why the need for skin bleaching?

Having witnessed a risky and self-harming practice both in the UK and abroad, Hannah Akeke wondering what it is that drives people to bleach their skin?

Why do people skin bleach?

Well, people do so for many reasons despite them knowing the side effects, and some do because they don't want to be 'left out'. Here are some reasons why people skin bleach.

Pressure: Some people do things that are not good to their body just because they do not want to be left out. Like when their friends are light skinned and they are darker, then they want to look like them so they don't get left out. Feeling "left out" is often down to low self esteem but can cause people to feel guilty about themselves, and when they think of a solution skin-bleaching comes to their mind which is very bad.

Appearance: People skin-bleach because they feel jealous of other people and wish they were like them. They don't feel comfortable in their own body - or rather their own skin - and they just want a change, resulting in skin-bleaching.

Racism: Why do people feel good by making other people uncomfortable? The fact that people enjoy making others feel rejected, bad and unhappy about their colour is a sad – and bad - part of society. When people make comments to others about their country, colour, or looks it is very bad and makes people feel very unwelcome and unsafe. They then feel like if they changed their skin colour then people would stop harassing them and leave them alone. Some people even go as far as altering their facial features, so it is not only their skin.

Being bullied: People are being bullied because of their colour, especially in school. This makes them feel very bad and those bullied are usually younger, which also makes the victim feel very scared and it can also make them traumatised or depressed.

Effects

The effects of skin bleaching are very bad for the skin because the chemicals in the bleach weaken the skin and it does not get to fight disease and protect the body. It becomes very light and tears easily. Bleaching leaves spots on the skin from scratching and injuries and then after a year or so the skin starts getting dark once again. The colour the skin now becomes at this stage will remain unless you continue bleaching which puts your life into more danger.

With this continuous bleaching the skin becomes so light that you can almost see what is going on inside of you and there is nothing that can be done about it. And you can't walk the streets without people making comments about you which is why you did it in the first place and then you don't feel safe again. A vicious circle.

Finally, it is very bad to make comments about people because of their colour because you never know how it is going to make them feel. I think it is very good to make them feel more welcome and also safe.

About this article

This article was written by Hannah Akeke, a member of Headliners' outreach programme Project Subway.

9 comments

Bleaching

I sat and wrote all this information on this website and I think this will make it for my school house debate. Thank you very much!

Tandra (age 10) from Buff Bay P.O Portland, 22 March 2011 00:23

Thanks

this simple and wonderful article has helped me in writing more on skin bleaching

Abah Nnenna Helen from nigeria, 08 April 2009 17:45

thanks

this made me change my mind about buying skin bleach because i have two different skin tones =)

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