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By LADOSHA WRIGHT
Contributing Hair Columnist

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The straightening or pressing comb has its place in the world of beauty. For some, it is an absolute must. It is like "old reliable." For others, it is horrible, damaging and is a disgrace to those with textured hair. The decision to straighten one's hair or their child's hair is a personal choice. In my years as a licensed professional, I can testify that I have never met a customer who opted to straighten (chemically or not) their hair because they were ashamed of their

texture or race. My professional experience revealed to me that every customer I serviced who opted to have their hair straightened did so out of two reasons.

The first common reason a person or parent opts to straighten their hair or their child's hair has to do with manageability. Textured (curly, kinky, wavy) hair can be very difficult to manage for many. Selecting the right product for one's textured tresses is like finding a needle in a haystack. If the FDA put the same rigors on hair care products as they do medicine; hair damage and un-satisfaction would not be an issue. Considering the lifestyle of a working person, college student and a house wife; spending hours detangling textured hair to wear any kind of hair style is very cumbersome. As a result, pressing or straightening the hair makes the grooming process faster if nothing else.

The second popular reason a person opts to straighten their hair or their child's hair is style. Hair's chief purpose is adornment. Adorning one's self is innate to humankind. We naturally want to look good! When a person looks great they feel great. Hair is a pliable fiber that moves, bends, flips, curl and straightens. Most hair is also an excellent conductor of heat. When a straightening comb is used properly with the right technique smooth, soft, shiny hair is the result.

Is the straightening comb safe for all textures? No. There are some textures of hair that cannot withstand any degree of heat. Making too much of an issue about using heat on hair is futile. Hair care is fun, creative and a representation of our uniqueness. To make your pressing situation a success be sure to not apply oil directly to scalp, use heat with caution, apply some oil to your hair before pressing, press hair slowly in small sections, then proceed with style (curls, ponytails, smoothed back) of your choice.

A part of ***Stephano & Co. Salon and The Reverence Design Team on Lee Road in Shaker,*** *Ladosha Wright is the Manager and Instructor of Cosmetology at Reverence Salon. She specializes in Trichology (the study of scalp and hair properties). This area of expertise allows her to teach clients how to care for their hair in between salon visits thus maximizing the use of their time and dollars.*