

# Kid Currency

Sometimes Dr. Phil *does* give good advice. Among my favorite Dr. Phil advice lines is: “every kid has his (or her) currency”. Unfortunately, our second-oldest daughter’s (age 5) currency (referring to something that can “buy” a kid; in other words, cheer up a sour mood) happens to be one of the girly things her parents despise most: makeup. She is starting to encounter the all-too-familiar plight of being a younger sibling: big sister leaves home bound for all kinds of fun adventures that little sister is not old enough to do; swimming at the pool, sleepovers, girl scout outings, the list seems endless when you’re ‘not old enough’... It’s hard to be the little sister and to get left behind – I know because I was there!

So anyway, the other day, our oldest daughter left for the pool, and Sammie was really upset she couldn’t go with – but I knew just the cure: makeup! I had bought a few makeup kits on clearance just after the Christmas season, and since I don’t wear makeup, what better use for it than to cheer up a sad little girl? We don’t want the kids wearing makeup out in public or to school, and we especially don’t want it leading to an “addiction” – a teenage girl who won’t leave the house without her makeup on, yuck! But for a special play-treat once in awhile to cheer up a left-behind little sis or two, makeup is just what the doctor ordered and works like a charm!

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## A Whole New World

During our community theater’s run of *The Nerd*, they designated one of the nights “80’s Night” since the play was

set in 1985. I enjoyed the opportunity to visit the local thrift stores with a mission – looking for components to complete my 80's look. 2 thrift stores are within walking distance so I just packed up the little ones in the double stroller and off we went. I found things with ease – a gaudy Mickey Mouse sweatshirt that I cut up to make it off-the-shoulder, a black lacy Madonna-like skirt, jelly shoes, hoop earrings, leggings, ankle socks... I was ready to go!

And of course, what 80's look is complete without makeup and lots of it? I read a hint on a website about dressing for 80's parties – “In the 80's, we didn't accessorize – we “excessorized” and LOVED it!” So I braided my wet hair in the morning, and by evening when I took out the braids, I achieved the “crimped” hair look I was going for. I pulled out the electric blue nail polish (though I ended up regretting that later since I forgot to buy nail polish remover and I was stuck with electric blue nail polish for a few days until I had the time to get to Walmart – OOPS), and I piled on the purple and blue eye shadow. It was lots of fun to get dressed up like a goofball – I may consider being an 80's time machine traveler for Halloween. But anyway, while I was getting ready for 80's night, I had a flock of admirers. My 3 little girls aren't used to me putting on makeup, dressing up, painting my nails, or spending lots of time on my hair (note to self – next time I dress 80's, I need some Aquanet!) – I'm just not the kind of gal who does – or has the time to do, for that matter – these things regularly. It was like a whole new world for them, and they gawked in awe as they watched me get ready. My oldest kept running up to her room to look for jewelry to use – everyone wanted to help, which was like a whole new world for *me*.

80's night was a few weeks ago, and the girls are still asking to have their nails painted and for us to do each other's makeup, much to my husband's dismay. He's never liked makeup and says he wants our girls to be at least 18 before they can

wear it. I've tried explaining to him that there is something innate in little girls that make them like dressing up and putting makeup on – it's just how little girls are made. Being a male, he doesn't get it of course, and so I imagine we'll have many a debate in this house once the girls get to the teenage years and want to wear makeup regularly. For now, I don't have a problem using it as a "toy" once in a while, as long as it's supervised and I can guide my girls to having the right opinions about makeup, especially when it comes to self-esteem issues – makeup does not make you prettier, you do not NEED makeup, it can be harmful to your face if you use it incorrectly, etc. So until they become teenagers, this is a way we can have fun together, and I also view it as an important bonding experience. One of the things I remember doing with my sister the most while we were growing up is her doing my hair and makeup, and I don't remember ever fighting while we were doing that. Anyone who knows my girls realizes how much we need an activity that Taylor and Sammie can do together without fighting! So if you see me walking around with a hideous makeup job someday, just remember that my face was probably painted by an 8, 4, or 2 year old!

**\*\*YOU ASKED FOR IT!!!\*\***

