

African Americans buy 30% of all hair care products

Written by Abeni Hill
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Well-groomed hair plays a significant role in African-American culture.

“Blacks are 15% of the population,” said Target buyer Chakiera Harris. “African-Americans buy 30% of all hair care products.”

Harris specializes in finding products for the ethnic hair care line at Target. She has recently seen triple digit growth in natural hair care sales at Target. “I am happy to see people embrace their natural hair and going back to their roots,” said Harris. Harris represented Target at a symposium on natural hair held Jun. 23 by Lynnea Doublette in St. Louis Park. Last fall, Doublette started wearing her hair natural. She said because of her job as a Zumba instructor she wanted to have a very manageable hair style.

Doublette said when she first started going natural she didn’t know how to take care of it. “I just went to Target and bought everything,” said Doublette.

She said she talked to a woman who gave her a different perspective on natural hair care.

“The way she cared for her hair was totally different than what me and my sister had heard,” said Doublette.

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As Doublette became more interested in the topic of natural hair, she decided she wanted to start a conversation about it. "I wanted women to come together and share stories and share products," said Doublette.

Hair products such as Kinky Curly, Soft N Free's Nothing but Hair care, and Curls were hair products featured at the symposium. Harris also talked about some top-selling natural hair care products sold at Target.

"Target is focusing on being at the forefront for natural hair care," said Harris. She said the products are gentle, organic and vegan. Target also sells sulfate-free shampoos.

Doublette also presented a PowerPoint from Go Natural Hair Body about finding the right product. It said African-Americans should avoid hair products that contain chemicals like sulfate, petroleum, and mineral oils.

Bessie Flemons represented her salon, Malobe Natural Hair Salon, 915 West Lake, Minneapolis, at the symposium. Flemons offered some hair care pointers.

"Kinky hair doesn't hold oil."

She suggests hot oil treatments and deep conditioners for keeping moisture in. Flemons said she gave one of her clients a deep conditioning treatment the other day. "My client loved the feel of her hair," said Flemons.

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Flemons said African-Americans have tight and curly or kinky hair and she has taught her clients the benefits of this type of hair.

“You can do your hair in any kind of style,” said Flemons. “And it will stay.”

“The most important thing it is that it is a continual process learning experience,” said Doublette when talking about managing her natural hair. “There is somewhat experimentation involved. I have learned that for myself I need to enact some patience.”

The next symposium is scheduled for October. For more information about the symposium contact Lynnea Doublette at lynnea.doublette@tria.com.