Simple Ways to Boost Black Children's Hair Growth

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African-American tresses are more vulnerable to breakage because of the tightly coiled structure of its hair strands. Its springy twistiness makes it difficult for natural scalp oils to reach the ends of the hair and prevent dryness. For young black kids, whose hair is often in its natural state, these tips from Livestrong.com will help defy dryness, the culprit that causes breakage, and decreases children's hair growth. Mom and Dad, listen up:

Don't relax. While African-American parents may find relaxers helpful in managing their child's hair, the chemical ingredients are harsher on children's hair, which is more sensitive and breakage-prone than adult's hair. Parents should avoid chemically straightening their kiddies' curls for as long as possible.

No daily shampooing, please. Not only can everyday washing dry out hair strands, but it also makes little ones' tresses brittle enough to break. Try shampooing once a week or every two weeks. Towel blot hair after washing then detangle with a wide-tooth comb. Start at the ends then work your way up to the root. This reduces breakage caused by too much tugging and pulling, which can also weaken hair strands.

Always use a conditioner after washing. Conditioners soften the hair, which helps reduce detangling damage. Also add hot oil and deep conditioner treatments to your child's hair care regimen to strengthen and reduce hair dryness.

Apply moisturizing oils. To add moisture and prevent dryness, try natural oils, such as jojoba, shea butter, olive or sunflower. Massage one of these oils into the hair after shampooing. But avoid hair products with mineral oil or petroleum. They weigh down hair and clog pores. Also, massage your child's scalp to increase blood flow and boost hair growth.

Don't use heat styling tools too often. These appliances can seriously damage African-American hair when overused. Daily use can cause breakage and prevent strands from achieving length. And always apply a heat protectant to hair before using thermal styling tools.

Read *RH*'s "ABCs of Children's Hair Health" for more tips on caring for black children's hair.

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