

Redmond salon and spa pampers teens

All That aims to serve young customers

By LINDA THOMAS
CONTRIBUTOR



Melinda Lytle's All That Salon and Spa offers haircuts, manicures and other services for teens and young adults.

PHOTO BY LINDA THOMAS

Teenagers know "all that" is an adjective that is usually used in a positive way.

"It describes a girl who can wear anything and look hot," said 16-year-old Monica.

Sara, who's 15, added that guys can be "all that" too. If someone is athletic and smart, that's a bonus and the person could be described as "all that and a bag of chips."

"All That" is also the name of a new Redmond hair salon and spa for teens and young adults.

Salon owner Melinda Lytle considered dozens of possible names for the business, which opened in March. She settled on the one that sums up what her salon provides for teens.

"We do haircuts, colors, manicures, pedicures, massage, eye brow waxing, facials, make-up. All that and more," said Lytle.

The salon and spa - located at Redmond Town Center - is the first in the region to cater to teens and young adults, she said. There are only a few similar businesses around the country in major cities such as Dallas and Los Angeles.

The teen market could be a lucrative one. There are about 33 million teens in the U.S. who spent \$158 billion last year, according to Teen Research Unlimited. The Illinois-based research firm noted that most of that was discretionary spending.

Lytle said she developed her business because of a need she noticed in the community, rather than a desire to tap into teens' spending accounts.

"For the past eight years I've owned a children's hair salon and a lot of my little kids have grown up and they don't want to come to a 'baby space' as they call it," Lytle explained. "Teens are not ready for the atmosphere of their moms' salons, but they don't want to go to a place with jungle

murals on the walls either."

All That features a maroon-colored velvet couch where as many as 15 girls could get pedicures at the same time. Chairs are positioned around an oval "chemical bar" where stylists mix hair coloring. The salon also has music videos playing on several television monitors throughout the 2,200 square-foot space.

Lytle wanted the spa to look appealing to teens, but it was also important to create an ambiance that fits their lifestyle.

"Teens are social and they don't like going anywhere by themselves," she said. "At our place girls can sit with their friends and have their hair done together. Even if one girl isn't having any services done, the other can be with her friend. They can't really hang out at most salons."

And while most salons offer coffee, tea or water with lemon to their clients, Lytle plans to serve mocktails.

She's also creating a menu of simple munchies to purchase along with the fruity, non-alcoholic drinks.

All That's prices are comparable to

what adult salons charge. Haircuts start at \$35 and go up to \$70. A teen will pay \$55 for a spa pedicure, \$30 for the deluxe manicure and \$45 for a makeup lesson.

One service that sets Lytle's business apart from other salons is its "prom prep party." For \$150 a girl gets pampered from head to toe with a hairstyle, manicure, pedicure and makeup for the evening.

"I think it's important for teens to feel special and confident," she said. "Appearance is only a small part of a person's self esteem."

Lytle would like to "team up with Bill Gates" to create programs for teens and young adults.

"It seems like they are always being yelled at and told where they can't hang out and what they can't do," she said. "We're not going to shoo them away. Teens are cool and we need to give them places where they can be themselves."

Lytle said she's learned a lot through the process of starting All That and she plans to open a salon in Seattle and maybe a couple more in western Washington in the next few years.

Young people everywhere face pressures and stress, she said, and they deserve to be pampered every once in awhile just as adults do.

Lytle added, "I wouldn't want to be a teen again. Would you?"