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Has men wearing makeup become more socially acceptable?

By Jess Little

Inclusivity in the beauty industry is increasingly prominent, with diverse representation reshaping the landscape.

Over the past decade, ethnic diversity has improved significantly, highlighted by brands like Fenty Beauty, which caters to a broader spectrum of complexions.

However, important questions remain: Is there enough male representation among major beauty brands? And has society generally become more accepting of men wearing makeup?

Men have worn makeup throughout various points in history. In the 18th century, makeup was a symbol of higher status for men.

During ancient Egypt

times wearing it showcased masculinity, and in the 20th century, it helped actors look pristine on the big screen.

Beauty norms are constantly evolving, and today, men are once again dismantling gender barriers that have long been entrenched in society.

Josh Trembowski, a 24-year-old carer in south London, spoke about his experiences as a man who wears makeup and what would typically be labelled as feminine clothes.

He said: "I have had quite a few positive and negative experiences.

"I have experienced people calling me homophobic slurs, and once someone even threw a drink on me on a night out.

"But I still do feel like



PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE: Josh wears make-up on almost a day-to-day basis.

it has become a little bit more acceptable for men to wear makeup as I feel like it has become a bit more mainstream in society due to influencers such as James Charles and Manny MUA on Instagram.

"I would say for me the compliments definitely outweigh the hate and I really feel like we are going in the right direction."

Despite the increasing presence of male makeup influencers on Instagram and their growing visibility in mainstream media, recent statistics from Statista as of October 2023 reveal that the London Metropolitan Police reported the highest number of recorded hate crimes based on sexual orientation.

There were 3,471 instances of sexual orientation hate crime offences recorded by the Met Police in London in 2022/23.

This figure is almost double that of

Greater Manchester who placed just below London with 1,813 of these types of crimes.

When asked whether these figures would ever deter Josh from being himself, he said: "I have always been a very expressive person when it comes to my appearance.

"From a young age I always had a desire to dress femininely and wear makeup and I have always been very comfortable about that and will remain so.

"I don't really take what people say about me to heart. I feel that a lot of the time when people say negative things about men who dress feminine they're probably just projecting their own insecurities onto others."

Although representation has improved over the years, the level of hate crimes occurring in London show that more needs to be done to tackle the issue.

How beauty businesses are using social media to reach success

By Jess Little

In the age of social media business owners are sitting on top of a goldmine – if used right.

According to the Digital Marketing Institute, TikTok is currently deemed the fourth most popular search engine, falling just behind YouTube, Bing and Google.

People are using social media to seek out businesses and products in a way that was previously done in person.

I spoke with Holly-Mae Bell, a 23-year-old beauty business owner in Welling, about how social media has impacted the growth of her business, Bell's Beauty, over the years.

She said: "At the beginning of my business journey most of my clients were just gained by word of mouth.

"This was a great starting point but as years have gone by Instagram has definitely had a bigger impact on my clientele growth as people are able to tag you and share your profile on to other people."

Bell recognised the potential of serious growth when using social media correctly to market your business.

Through social media not only has Bell used her own marketing strategies on her page, but she has also benefited from social media users sharing her page and



PERFECTING HER SKILLS: Bell has grown her business over the last six years

creating a buzz around her business.

After six years in the beauty industry, Bell has learned that building an image on social media is vital to continuous improvement and growth within her sector.

She said: "You learn that all social media is a free way of advertising meaning that you can gain clientele, but you also are able to build rapport and network with others in the industry.

"Doing this is just as important as you can take advice from them and learn how to become an even better business owner.

"From doing this myself I have managed to gain more professionalism, learned how to follow health and safety regulations better and become a more experienced and trustworthy beauty technician."

The role social media has in the success of small businesses, particularly in the beauty sector, can be credited to the way people are influenced by content they see on these platforms.

The Digital Marketing Institute revealed that 69% of consumers trust influencers' recommendations and 75% of people use social media for purchasing advice.

These figures demonstrate how the journey to success now relies heavily on having a respectable and trustworthy presence on social media.

Bell's top tips are to stay active across all social media platforms, don't be afraid to connect with others within your business sector to gain more experienced advice and set clear and fair boundaries in place with customers.

She said: "As a small business owner, personal relationships are built with all of your clients which is bitter-sweet, as they can begin to think that being an eye-lash technician is not a professional career.

"People assume that I am only in this business for fun or some extra money when this is not the case, and I have real overheads professionally and personally that I am solely accountable for."



TAKING ON THE HIGH STREET: Bell has opened her own beauty salon with her sister Evie Bell after growing her business online



MAKING A STATEMENT: Josh isn't afraid to create his own identity. Credit: Josh Trembowski

“Confront your mind”: What you can do to reach peak physical and mental wellbeing

By Jess Little

In today's digital world there is an excessive amount of information regarding our health that can become overwhelming and difficult to navigate.

There is an abundance of diet fads and fitness fanatical content that can often leave many feeling as though they can never achieve peak physical and mental wellbeing.

I spoke with three people who have dedicated themselves to reaching a better state of health and asked them to share their top tips for a healthy happy life.

Sam West, a fitness and sobriety influencer on Instagram, shared with me

the most important things that he swears by to better his mental and physical health.

He said: “For me sleep is the most important pillar in terms of maintaining and improving my wellbeing.”

“As soon as my sleep suffers, I find myself feeling much more anxious, overwhelmed and unable to perform well either at work or whilst exercising.”

“It's the foundation for everything else to sit on top of basically. Whether or not I get enough physical activity, social connection and be productive is all dependent on whether I've slept enough during that period.”

This is certainly the best starting point for anybody who feels as though their health is suffering.

Sleep deficiency has consistently been proven to change activity in some parts of the brain leading to troubles with decision making, controlling your emotions and behaviour and it has even been linked to more extreme mental health problems such as depression.

West also attributed his new happier lifestyle to giving up alcohol, which he said had positive effects instantly.

He said: “For me personally, stopping drinking alcohol has also been one of the most transformative things I've ever done for my physical and mental health.”

“I decided to cut it out completely for an indefinite period because my relationship with it was unhealthy, I'd binge drink quite heavily on the weekends and it would leave me feeling low well into the week.”

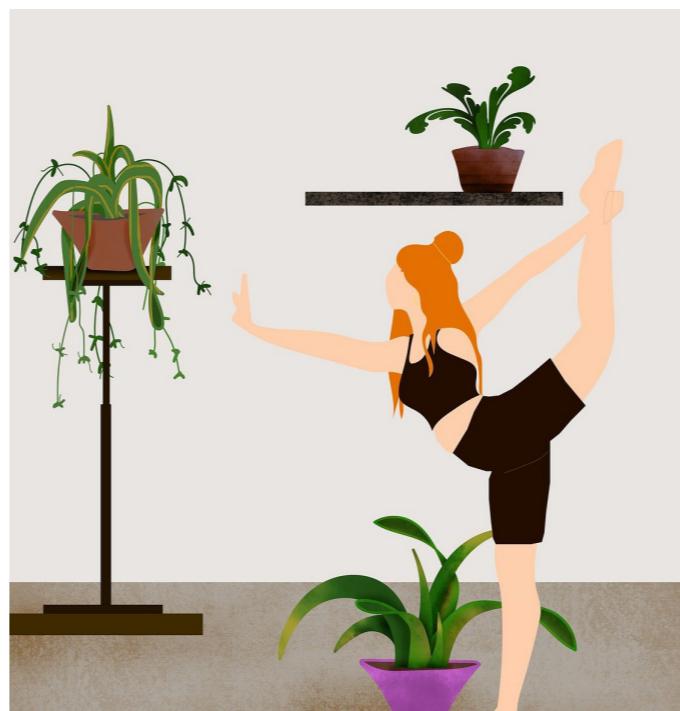
“So for some people it might not be about cutting it out completely, but drinking a bit less and discovering the amazing benefits that come with that. From improved sleep and fitness to reduced anxiety and enhanced productivity, it really can be a complete game changer.”

From his own experience, West found that alcohol was the source of most of his health issues. Giving it up empowered him and he has now gone on to motivate others to consider sobriety to improve their overall health.

I also spoke with Carly Bustin, the founder of the 'Moodment' app and health influencer,



ACCEPTING MY CRAZY: Self acceptance allows Carly Bustin to take control of her wellbeing. Credit: Carly Bustin



BALANCE IS KEY: Physical and mental wellbeing are inter-linked. Credit: Pixabay.

about her own journey of self-acceptance and health improvement.

Bustin boasts a following of 179,000 on Instagram and decided to move her family away from the UK to Costa Rica after her health transformation.

She now offers expert advice and mentoring on how individuals can better themselves.

When I asked her how she reached a better state of mental and physical health, she said: “Accepting my crazy has been so important in this journey.”

“Being a woman is hard, hormones are hard, life is hard and sometimes you just have to accept that you're having a wild day.”

“Confront your mind and say the things it is trying to get you to believe out loud. Even better say them to your partner or best friend and as the words start to roll off your tongue you'll realise how out of control and not true our mind can be.”

This technique has allowed Bustin to stay true to herself and inspire others and has helped her to build her own health empire.

When asked what a realistic way for all people to instantly see a positive change in their health is, Bustin's response was to simply ‘get outside’.

She said: “You don't have to run or hike or walk for miles (unless you want to) but just get away from the space you are in and be outside.”

“I know the weather can make things tricky but as my dad always said there's no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.”

“Being outside gives you a different headspace, extra points if you can watch the

clouds, a bird or stars for a little. Our problems seem so much smaller when looking into the sky.”

Similar to Bustin, empowerment and life coach Laura Davison found that it took completely abandoning her old life to follow her dreams to be able to reach her mental health goals.

Davison lived the typical London lifestyle whilst working a corporate job in London for 15 years. Despite being in what would seem to others a desirable position in life, she realised that she was just trying to please everybody but herself.

She said: “The most life changing advice I can give

is to be true to your values.

“If you're just doing what you think you should be doing or what people are telling you is right in terms of your career but your heart is in a different place then you are always going to stay stuck because you are being pulled in two different directions.”

“Instead of finding out what makes you truly happy you will just constantly be thinking to yourself ‘what if’ and soon years will fly by and you haven't lived your life how you truly want to.”

“There are many transformative ways to make change, but it has to be done in a way that suits your own agenda.”



INSPIRING OTHERS: Sam West has accomplished personal goals whilst on a sobriety journey. Credit: Sam West.



NEVER FEAR CHANGE: Laura Davison transformed her life to suit her desires. Credit: Laura Davison

Charity fights discrimination towards pregnancy and fertility treatment in the workplace

By Jess Little

It's 2024... So why are pregnant women still discriminated against in the workplace?

It is a universal right for every worker to feel comfortable in their workplace and adequately looked after by their employer – or at least it should be. But for a lot of pregnant women it may seem like a luxury.

Discrimination surrounding pregnancy within the UK is still unacceptably high. Even where some employers are trying to improve on this, the experiences and feelings of countless expectant mothers has proven they are still falling short when it comes to ensuring a sense of security and comfort.

Data acquired by the charity Pregnant Then Screwed (PTS) and Women in Data has unveiled some shocking figures proving workplaces need to adopt better attitudes towards mothers-to-be.

They surveyed 24,000 women and found 52% of all mothers have faced discrimination when pregnant, on maternity or upon returning.

And it's not just those who are pregnant that are facing these issues; women undergoing fertility treatment are experiencing discrimination in the workplace.

A report released by PTS in April 2023 revealed that one in four women are unfairly treated at work after telling their boss that they are undergoing fertility treatment. Of the 3540 surveyed, 24% of these women didn't get any support from their employer.

PTS has seen some major progress in its journey in obtaining appropriate pregnancy loss and fertility treatment support in the workplace in an attempt to prevent these types of experiences and hopefully see a dip in these numbers.

Emily Broadbent, support services and project



MARCH OF THE MUMMIES: The charity urged people to take to the streets to demand government reform
Credit: Pregnant Then Screwed.

manager at PTS, explained its latest achievement in gaining funding from the government to do precisely this.

Alongside charity Best Beginnings, it has tirelessly worked to implement meaningful change when it comes to this issue.

This funding from the Department of Health and Social Care will allow it to provide mandatory training in workplaces and then accredit them so it is blatantly clear who these women can trust.

Broadbent said: "Our main focus with this project is to bring about awareness and knowledge of women's health in the workplace and make sure their employers and management teams are set up well to then support these women who are experiencing things like fertility issues and pregnancy loss."

"Topics being covered are flexible working, eliminating bias, pregnancy loss, fertility, but also just

pregnancy as a whole in the workplace.

"The training explores how different people will have different needs and not every woman who is pregnant or who has experienced loss or fertility issues is going to need exactly the same thing.

"Each person's needs are different and we want managers to understand that and be sensitive to the needs of the people that are in their team."

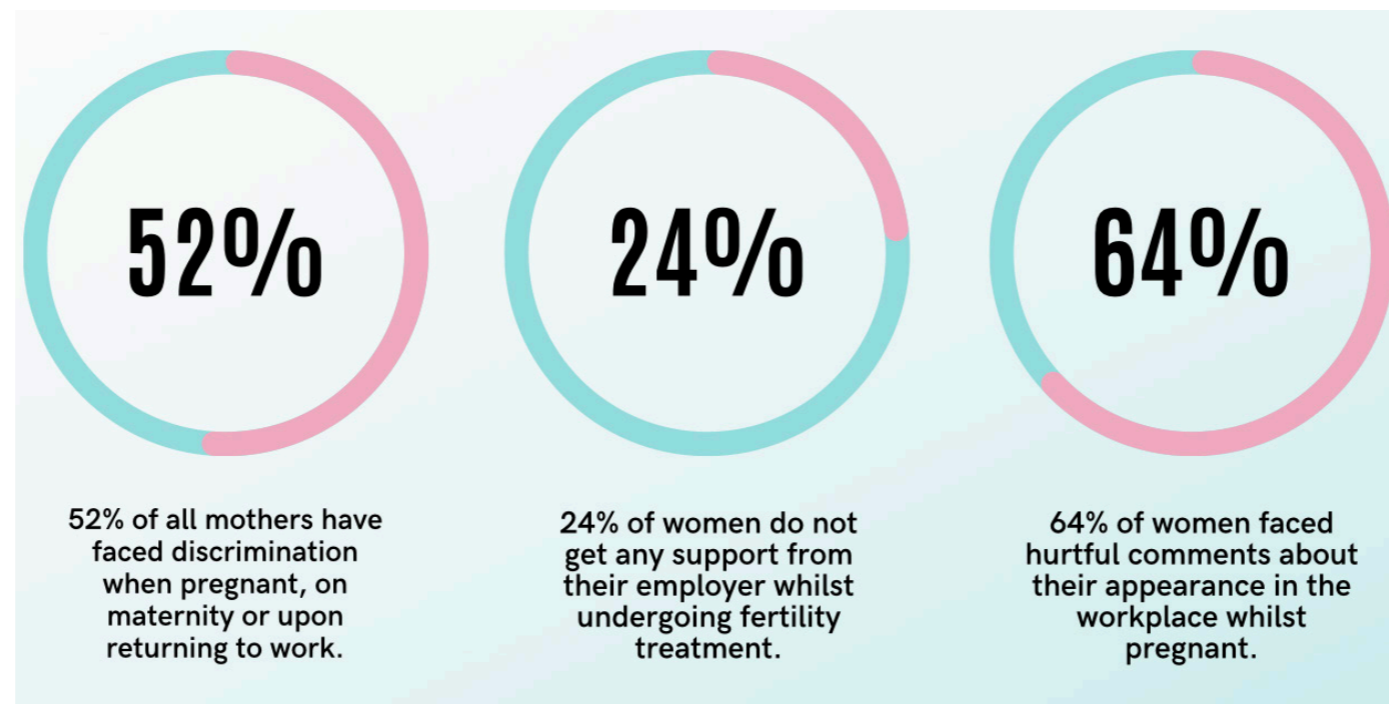
The project itself is two years long and will run until October 2025. There are two separate pilot programmes of the accreditation scheme with each one holding 20 SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises).

The companies are given six months to complete the training which includes six different topics of conversation, six webinars and 10 accompanying PDFs.

They are given an element of freedom in the way they decide to com



FIGHT FOR CHANGE: The charity has been given funding to implement change.



NUMBERS DON'T LIE: Data obtained by Pregnant Then Screwed show that a lot of work needs to be done to combat discrimination in the workplace.



FULL DISCLOSURE: Targetted training will be implemented in workplaces. Credit: Pregnant Then Screwed.

plete this depending on their team dynamic; they can do it all together or in separate groups, or in big chunks or smaller sections.

Broadbent said: "They will be given case studies to discuss and this is to encourage them to have those conversations internally within the management team about where they stand on these issues and how they want to move forward with them.

"It is very likely that some workplaces will say they are doing really well handling these types of issues and they are confident they do everything we give in the training already.

"However, our argument is if we asked your em-

ployees, would they say the same?

"We need the employers to engage with it well so that the employees can then reap the benefits and that is our overall goal – for women to feel supported, understood and valued in the place that they work."

There currently does not seem to be a common denominator when it comes to the types of jobs women find themselves being discriminated against in.

You would certainly expect anybody's pregnancy news to be a joyous occasion for all – but in some companies that is not the case.

The only thing wom-

en who have had these negative experiences share is that they are growing another human inside of them. This is news that should be celebrated by everybody in their life instead of looked at as a weight tying them down.

The number of women who faced hurtful comments about their appearance during pregnancy came in even higher at 64% according to data from PTS.

These excessive statistics are outrageous enough, but the details will send you into a state of shock.

Of these surveyed women, one in 61 said their boss insinuated they should have an abortion.

This is supposed to be the person that looks after you in a place where you spend a considerable amount of time – someone you can feel reassured by entirely.

PTS is actively fighting to minimise the number of women undergoing these experiences.

They called for women to fill out its State of the Nation survey last year as the 2024 general election was the perfect time for change.

Ensuring that childcare, parental leave, flexible working and legislation that will reduce pregnancy and maternity discrimination is in the government's manifesto is paramount to enforce new attitudes.



8 ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: Some women have said they received no support from their employer. Credit: Pregnant Then Screwed.



CALLING FOR ACTION: The charity hopes to see employers take more responsibility regarding the issue of discrimination towards pregnancy and fertility treatment in the workplace. Credit: Pregnant Then Screwed.



HEAR US NOW: People across London come together to fight for change. Credit: Pregnant Then Screwed.