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Moms open salon just for kids

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Daisy Whitney Special to The Denver Post

Caption: PHOTO: Rohde PHOTO: The Denver Post/Cyrus McCrimmon Gabrielle Doyle, 2, of Highlands Ranch rides a purple and pink hippo Friday as her mom, Danielle, checks out her haircut at the **LolliLocks Kids Salon** near the Park Meadows mall.

The newest salon in Lone Tree bribes its clients.

With free suckers.

The **LolliLocks Kids Salon** was created by three Highlands Ranch moms who met in a play group two years ago. They put up \$75,000 of their own money to open the hair salon for kids.

The salon opened in September.

"We thought there was a need for it down here, where all the kids are," said co-owner Tammy Rohde, formerly a regional marketing director for Boston Market. "We wanted a full-service salon, where you can get your hair cut, ears pierced, nails done, have birthday parties."

The founding moms decided to go with a lollipop theme for the salon, which offers complimentary suckers for each kid as well as a line of handmade lollipops from local candymaker Hammond's. The cuts, which cost \$12.99, are branded "LolliCuts," while birthday parties are billed as "Locks of Fun."

Rohde's partners are Martine Yano, who is a former hair stylist, and Anne Franklin, who previously taught elementary school. Together they have seven children, with an eighth on the way.

The trio researched children's hair salons around the country as they debated whether to buy into a franchise or develop a fresh concept. They're not the only such beauty shop in town - Littleton is home to Tiny Trims, Aurora has Little Clips and Westminster has Kids Cuts, to name a few.

Betty Valdez opened Cherry Creek's Deziners Kids Salon in 1986. She considered opening a second salon in Highlands Ranch, but it was too hard to find stylists familiar with kids.

"It's hard to find help because you are dealing with a moving target," Valdez said.

"There wasn't a children's salon in the area - it surprised me," Rohde said.

Seven-year-old Kelsey Huntley recently had her hair trimmed while sitting on a hippopotamus chair in LolliLocks.

"I think it's good because they had suckers," said Kelsey, sucking on a lollipop, her hair shining with green glitter sparkles.

The shop features lollipop swirls in blue and fuchsia across the floor with more swirls in varied shades on the walls. Little ones can sit on carnival characters as they get their tresses trimmed.

Rohde found a carnival ride manufacturer in Commerce City where she picked characters - a hippo, dinosaur, caterpillar and car - for the kids to sit on during their cuts.

The salon also features a regular chair for older kids. At the birthday parties, each girl gets her hair styled, receives a mini-manicure and makes a beaded necklace or bracelet with her name on it.

The salon has done little in the way of traditional marketing, but relies heavily on word of mouth and its website, www.lollilocks.com, to attract new clientele. The site averages about 50 to 60 visitors and six appointment requests each day.

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