

## Rhode Island Seeks to Further Limit Teen Tanning

Parents generally have some serious say-so in their children's lives up to age 18, when they legally become adults. And as such, many states require parental permission to allow teens to tan at an indoor tanning salon.

However, now in Massachusetts, state lawmakers are proposing to go a step further, and require a complete ban on indoor tanning for anyone under the age of 16 – and Rhode Island is likely to follow. This is leaving many tanning salon proprietors scratching their heads in frustration.

Most already have strict policies in place for minors. One Rhode Island salon owner says all their clients under 18 must have a consent form signed by a parent in front of an employee. "When parents come in and we explain all the facts, it's clear how time intervals work and how to tan responsibly," she says.

Parents themselves may object to having their authority usurped by state politics, and some point out that getting a tan in a controlled environment is better than over exposure outside. Another salon owner agrees the ban is going too far and points out: "I think the laws are sufficient as long as they are enforced."

When it comes to parental permission, the ban may be a moral battle ground, but for salon owners it's also a business battle ground – with a significant impact on the business bottom line. One owner claims it would affect almost 75 percent of her business – especially during certain times of the year.

It's all about tanning responsibly, salon proponents say. "Teens can go out and get fried outside, too," says one salon client. "In my opinion, if they're going to tan, it's better to do it in a controlled environment."

There are 29 states which currently regulate teen tanning.

To learn more about legislation in your state, contact your local government or visit the Indoor Tanning Association website .