

New Yorkers favor raising the minimum age for indoor tanning use to protect young adults from cancer-causing UV radiation.



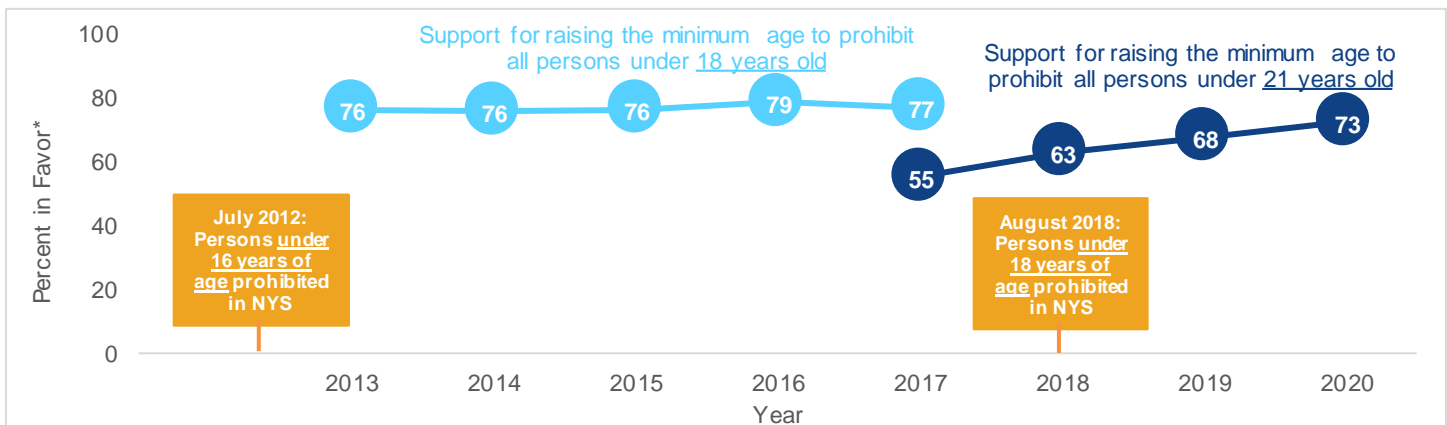
Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation through indoor tanning increases a person's risk of skin cancer, including melanoma, which can be deadly. Risk increases with each indoor tanning session and is highest among those who begin tanning at a younger age.¹ Despite known risks, an estimated 2.3 million U.S. adolescents tan indoors each year.²

Policies that restrict access to indoor tanning may be effective in reducing indoor tanning and preventing future cases of skin cancer. New York State (NYS) passed legislation in 2012 to prohibit those under 16 years from using indoor tanning devices and in 2018 raised the age to prohibit use by those under 18 years of age.

A survey of adult New Yorkers found there is widespread support to further expand state regulations to restrict use of indoor tanning devices:

- Approximately 3 out of 4 adults support raising the minimum age required to use indoor tanning devices to prohibit those under 21 years from using indoor tanning devices.
- From 2017 to 2020, support for raising the minimum age from 18 to 21 years increased from 55% to 73%, suggesting New Yorkers are growing more aware of the need to protect young adults from the harmful effects of indoor tanning.

Figure 1. Trends in public support to raise the minimum age required to use indoor tanning devices, NYS 2013-2020



Data Source: NYSCronic Disease Public Opinion Poll

*Percent in favor calculated by combining "strongly in favor" and "in favor" responses

Note: Sampling methods changed in 2020 to include addition of web panel – results may not be comparable to prior years.

Public Health Opportunity

The public is receptive to efforts that protect New Yorkers from skin cancer risks associated with indoor tanning, including strategies outlined in the [NYS Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan](#):

- Reduce tanning device use among those at increased risk for skin cancer, such as those under 21 years old.
- Ensure tanning salons enforce existing tanning regulations, including restricted access for minors.
- Educate parents, young adults, and consumers about the risks of using indoor tanning devices.

For more information, please send an e-mail to BCDER@health.ny.gov with IFA #2021-21 in the subject line. To access other Information for Action reports, visit the NYSDOH public website: http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/injury_prevention/information_for_action/index.htm

¹https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/indoor_tanning.htm

²Levine, Jody A. et al. The indoor UV tanning industry: A review of skin cancer risk, health benefit claims, and regulation. *JAAD*, 53(6), 1038-1044.