

Poster Session IV
Poster #13

Investigation of Health Behaviors, Risk Awareness and Risk Perception as Predictors of Allowed Use of Tanning Beds Among Parents of Adolescent Children.

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Purpose: The purpose of the present study was to measure the level of perceived risk concerning tanning bed risks and to evaluate those specific factors that influence parental permissiveness of tanning bed usage for their adolescent children.

Design: The research design of the study was cross-sectional. The study derived its population from a convenience sample (N = 264) drawn from parents whose children attended grades 7 through 12 from 5 schools in a community in Long Island, New York. Contact was made with schools and subject recruitment was accomplished by direct appeal to students who were asked by their teachers to deliver a sealed packet containing the survey materials (information letter, consent/assent form and questionnaire).

Measures: The health beliefs, risk taking behaviors, and demographic characteristics of parents along with the behaviors of their adolescent children associated with tanning bed usage were evaluated by the researcher-designed "Survey Instrument addressing Parental Attitudes concerning Tanning Bed Risks and Usage of Tanning Salons by their Adolescent Children".

Results: No significant differences existed between risk perception scores of parents that allowed their adolescents to use tanning beds (M= 23.00, SD = 4.49) as compared to parents who did not allowed their adolescent to use tanning beds (M = 23.57, SD = 3.42), $t(256) = 0.577$. Additionally, no significant differences existed between the sun protective behaviors scores of parents that allowed the use of tanning beds by their adolescents (M = 13.42, SD = 3.84) as compared to parents who did not allow the use of tanning beds (M = 14.47, SD = 3.96), $t(264), p = .333$.

Conclusion: The findings of this study suggest that for those parents who perceived of UVR exposure from the use of tanning beds to be unsafe were no more permissive with respect to their adolescent using a tanning salon as compared to parents who perceived them to be safe. The analysis suggests that preventative programs may need to be targeted towards less educated and younger parents in order to reduce their level of permissiveness.