

## Melanoma Foundation of New England Teaches Teens: “Tanning is Out - Your Skin Is In”

### Teens Encouraged to Sign "Tanning is Out" Pledge at MFNE.org during 7th Annual Pledge Drive, January - April 2014

*Melanoma Survivor and MFNE spokesperson Meghan Rothschild is celebrating 10 years of being melanoma-free.*

*She works with teens and warns about the dangers of tanning during Your Skin Is In.*

Boston, MA — The Melanoma Foundation of New England (MFNE) will hold its 7<sup>th</sup> annual *Your Skin Is In* Tanning is Out pledge drive from January 6 to April 30, 2014. The *Your Skin Is In* program educates teens and young adults on the dangers of tanning and the direct link between tanning beds and melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. All teens are invited to visit **MFNE.org** and join others who have pledged not to use indoor tanning beds or intentionally tan outdoors – especially during spring break or prom season. 103.3 AMP Radio Boston, Six Flags New England and Brigham & Women’s Department of Dermatology are proud sponsors of *Your Skin Is In*.

According to Deb Girard, MFNE’s Executive Director, “Teens want to believe that ‘it can’t happen to them,’ or that it’s safe to just get a ‘base tan’ before the prom or before spring break. The truth is that there is no safe tan - whether in a tanning booth or outside in the sun - tanning can lead to skin cancer.” Girard adds, “Through *Your Skin Is In* we’ve been able to reach a quarter million students over the past 6 years and we hope the message resonates throughout adulthood. By taking the Tanning is Out Pledge these students become empowered to take charge of their own health, and become advocates for safe skin-care.”

By logging onto [mfne.org](http://mfne.org), anyone can learn the facts about tanning and take the Tanning is Out pledge. A video entitled “Exposed” features the stories of melanoma survivors explaining where they became “exposed” to melanoma and how it might have been avoided. Girard stresses “While it is important to educate teens specifically about the dangers of tanning (2.5 million teens annually use tanning beds), melanoma can strike at any age and we hope community members of all ages will log on, watch the video, and take the pledge.”

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Annual New England School Contest:**

In the six New England states – MA, CT, RI, VT, NH and ME – MFNE will also hold a *Your Skin Is In* contest for area college and high school students during the same time period (January-April, 2014); schools that gather the most Tanning is Out student pledges can earn awards from a cash prize to t-shirts, gift certificates, trips to Six Flags New England, pizza parties and more. Individual students or schools in the six New England states can register for the contest at [www.mfne.org](http://www.mfne.org). MFNE representatives and young melanoma survivors, including 10-year survivor and Peer Leader Meghan Rothschild (pictured above) will travel to participating schools across New England educating about the dangers of tanning, offering facial scans, and teaching teens and young adults about melanoma prevention.

#### **The Facts about Teens & Tanning:**

- The World Health Organization has determined that UV rays from tanning beds cause cancer.
- The increased risk of melanoma associated with early tanning bed use is 59% for people whose first exposure to artificial UV rays in a tanning bed occurred before age 35 years and that risk increased with the number of tanning bed sessions per year.
- 2.5 million teens use tanning booths each year including 35% of girls age 17 – many start as early as age 13.

- Melanoma is the second most common cancer in teens and young adults ages 15-29.
- It is not safe to tan in the sun or in a tanning booth. Using a tanning bed for 20 minutes is the same as spending 1-3 hours a day at the beach with no sun protection at all. Tanning beds put out 3-6 times the amount of radiation given off by the sun.

For more information about *Your Skin Is In 2014* please see [mfne.org](http://mfne.org), call [800-557-6352](tel:800-557-6352) or email Amy Mason at [yourskinisin@mfne.org](mailto:yourskinisin@mfne.org).

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**About MFNE:**

MFNE is a non-profit organization that works to reduce the incidence of melanoma in the New England region. As the largest non-profit in the region dedicated to skin cancer awareness and early detection, MFNE provides a variety of free education programs targeting the prevention of skin cancer for children, teens and adults. MFNE's *Your Skin Is In* program was recognized by the American Academy of Dermatology with a Gold Triangle award in 2009. MFNE also assists patients and their caregivers struggling with melanoma by offering support groups and their "Billy's Buddies" program. Learn more about MFNE at [www.mfne.org](http://www.mfne.org).

*Hear Meghan Rothschild's story in her own words:*

<http://mfne.org/meghan-rothschild/>