

# CLIMATE CHANGE: TICKS, MOSQUITOES AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION\* (ECE)

## How does climate change contribute to children's exposure to ticks and mosquitos?

- Floods and hurricanes provide more standing water.
- Ticks and mosquitos breed in standing water.
- Increases in temperature and humidity expand geographic habitats and breeding seasons.

## How does exposure to ticks and mosquitos affect young children's health?

- Ticks and mosquitos bite and spread diseases by contact with blood.
- Tick-related illnesses include Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Ehrlichiosis, among others.
- Mosquito-related illnesses include Zika, Dengue Fever, West Nile Virus, among others.



## Child-Related Action Steps:

### 1. Remove standing water.

- Cover trash cans with lids.
- Cover outdoor water storage vessels with tightly fitted covers.
- Empty standing water daily.

### 2. Reduce habitats for mosquitos and ticks by removing:

- Piles of leaves and wood mulch
- Structures or plants that shelter mice

### 3. Secure entries to the building.

- Keep screens on doors and windows in good repair.

### 4. Wear protective clothing when outside.

- Wear light-colored pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Tuck pants into socks.

### 5. Conduct tick checks after leaving tick habitats.

- Check when ticks are active in your region.

### 6. Use EPA-registered insect repellent, if needed, with family permission.

\*ECE/Child Care

## Action Steps for Policy Change:

### 1. Share a parent communication policy to prevent tick-related illnesses.

- Dress infants and young children in clothing that covers their arms and legs.
- During the tick season, conduct tick checks and dry children's clothing on high heat for 20 minutes.
- Advise parents about prevention practices.

### 2. Collect written permission from parents/guardians to apply insect repellent.

- Notify parents when repellents are used.
- Wash skin with soap and water if repellents are used.

### 3. Adopt an Integrated Pest Management Program to reduce exposure to pesticides.

- Assess screens for holes or damage.
- Eliminate standing water outside.

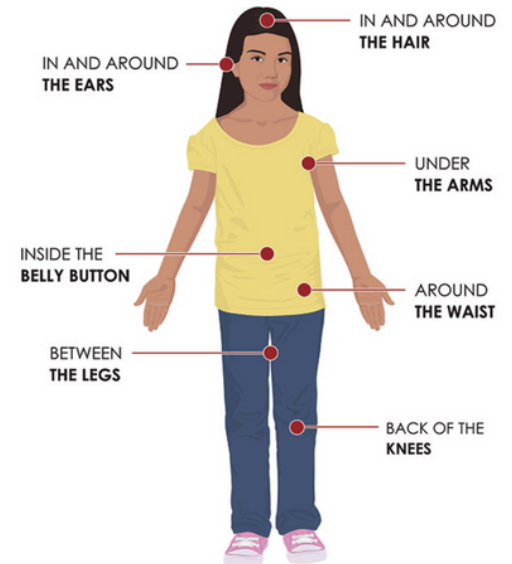
### 4. Contact your local or state public health department.

- Collect resources and information about local outbreaks.

## Resources:

- Caring for our Children. Insect Repellent: 3.4.5.2., IPM: 5.2.8.1., Insect Breeding: 5.2.8.2. <https://nrckids.org/>
- California Childcare Health Program. Integrated Pest Management Toolkit. <https://cchp.ucsf.edu/content/integrated-pest-management-toolkit-early-care-and-education-programs-0>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Using Insect Repellent Safely and Effectively. <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/using-insect-repellents-safely-and-effectively>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
  - Prevent Mosquito Bites. <https://www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes/mosquito-bites/prevent-mosquito-bites.html>
  - Preventing Tick Bites. [https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on\\_people.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on_people.html)
- University of Rhode Island. Field Guide to Ticks. <https://web.uri.edu/tickencounter/fieldguide/>

## Where to Check for Ticks:



[https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/pdfs/FS\\_TickBite-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/pdfs/FS_TickBite-508.pdf)