



Hollis Montessori School Policy on Tick Mitigation

Our campus, perched on the edge of Dunklee Pond and Spaulding Forest, offers a wealth of learning opportunities within. It is the intent and expectation of the children in all of our programs from Children's House through the Upper School to take advantage of our proximity to this natural classroom.

It is with this intent that we have written this Tick Policy in order to clarify the precautions for preventing tick contact and, if it does occur, how we will handle it.

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis and Powassan virus are transmitted by the bite of the black-legged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*), formerly known as the deer tick. Black-legged ticks have four life stages: eggs, larvae, nymphs and adults. The black-legged tick nymphs are most active in the late spring through summer months (usually May through August) and are the most likely to infect humans with tickborne diseases.

The NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS) has published a "State of New Hampshire Tickborne Disease Prevention Plan" which is available online and in our office if you wish to read. This document provides additional background information about the tickborne diseases documented in NH and is a resource for anyone seeking more information about how to begin modifying their behavior and physical landscape to reduce the risk of tickborne disease.

Tickborne diseases can be serious illnesses and can affect people of any age. The best way to prevent being infected with a tickborne disease is to take precautions to avoid being bitten by a tick. However, if a tick bite occurs, removal of the tick as soon and as safely as possible is recommended. As always, if you have any questions or concerns about a tick bite, contact your healthcare provider(s).

Information on tickborne disease educational materials and data are available from the NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) and can be found on the Lyme and Other Tickborne Diseases Publications and Data page.

Prevention

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services states that prevention of disease with frequent tick checks after outdoor exposure is the best way to prevent Lyme and other tick borne diseases. Following is Hollis Montessori School's protocol for at school prevention. Our staff is trained annually in these procedures.

1. Children will be given age appropriate lessons about ticks, tick-borne diseases, and methods of prevention and removal prior to their first trip onto the land. We encourage you to continue these discussions at home.
2. Provide clothing in your child's extra clothes bag that may be used for hikes (such as long pants and socks). Rain pants can also be used. Light colored clothing is best as it is easier to see the dark colored ticks. Children should have sneakers or boots at school at all times to be worn during hikes. Ticks can even be found on warm winter days, so this clothing should always be available.
3. Wearing protective clothing with pants tucked into socks and clothes treated with Permethrin spray are most effective for prevention. Parents may send in pre-treated clothing for their child to change into or the child may wear this clothing to school on a day they know they will go in the woods. You can find more information on treating clothing here: <https://www.insectshield.com>
4. If you wish to have your child sprayed with repellent rather than sending in treated clothing, please send in a bottle, labeled with your child's name, to be kept at school for this purpose. Teachers will apply repellent as needed (CH, LE, UE) or supervise application of repellent (AP) as needed. Please make sure that the repellent you choose is effective for ticks. **Please note: Repellent with 20% or greater of DEET is most effective, more than 30% should never be used on children.** Parents should determine which product they are most comfortable using on their children.
5. Parents should let their teacher and the office know (through email) if the child should change into pretreated clothing prior to going into the woods and/or be sprayed with repellent.
6. After time spent outdoors, tick checks will be done by classroom teachers. Special attention will be given to check: back of legs and knees, back of the neck, in and around the ears, and the hairline. A lint roller will be used to check clothing.
7. The office will inform parents as early as possible when the children have been in the woods so that further checks may be done at home. A shower is the best way to check for ticks at home. **Please take these emails regarding tick checks at home seriously and always recheck your children.**
8. If ticks are found on any children, attached or unattached, this information will be shared with all classroom parents as soon as it is available by office staff. This information is also recorded in the School Tick Log (located at the front office) so that we are aware of areas to avoid due to high tick counts. Please see Tick Removal below for more information.

9. Occasional tick sweeps of the property by parent volunteers will be done to determine the prevalence or absence of ticks in different areas of the property and commonly used trails in the woods. The results will be recorded in the main office Tick Prevention Binder. Parents may view this binder upon request.
10. Students are not typically sprayed with bug spray or wear tick clothing for outdoor time when they are playing in open areas on school property (out at recess, not out for a hike in the woods). Current tick sweeps have shown that ticks are not prevalent on our school property. Parents may request to have children sprayed with repellent prior to going outside on school grounds. Please inform your guide of this request.
11. If, in a given season, tick counts are high, the school will work to mediate the problem through various means which may include:
 - Spraying the edges of the property
 - Preventing students from playing in areas with known high tick counts
 - Avoiding forest areas with high tick counts

Tick Removal

If a tick is discovered unattached it will be removed promptly and safely discarded. If a tick is attached to the skin, it will be removed using the CDC (Center for Disease Control) recommendations as follows:

Staff will:

- Use a tick removal instrument to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure
- After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

When a tick is removed, the parent will be notified and the tick put into a plastic bag, labeled with the date, time and place, and sent home. This is done so that parents have the choice to send the tick in for analysis. A log is kept in the main office to record when ticks are attached and removed.

Staff Protocol for Tick Mitigation

1. Children will be given age appropriate lessons about ticks, tick-borne diseases, and methods of prevention and removal prior to their first trip onto the land.
2. Clothing should be provided by parents and kept at school to be used for hikes (such as long pants and socks). Rain pants may also be used. Light colored clothing is best as it is easier to see the dark colored ticks. Children should have sneakers or boots at school at all times to be worn during hikes. Ticks can even

be found on warm winter days, so this clothing should always be available. It is the staff's responsibility to make sure children have this clothing at school.

3. Parents may send in pre-treated Permethrin clothing for children to use when going into the woods. Classroom staff must allow time for children to change into this clothing prior to going in the woods. Children may also wear them to school for the day if prior knowledge of their day in the woods is known. Parents should email classroom staff to inform them that their child's clothes are treated and required for wearing in the woods.
4. Parents are heavily encouraged to send in bug/tick repellent of their choice labeled with their child's name. Parents will communicate that they are sending in tick repellent through an email to classroom staff and the office. Classroom staff must allow children time to apply bug repellent (outside) prior to going into the woods, applying for the child in CH, LE and UE and with supervision in the AP. Applications should be thorough, taking care to spray the lower legs and hats.
5. Guides/Assistants must notify the front office when their classroom goes out into the woods, signing out with the area they are going to. An email will be sent by the office to the classroom parent list when sign out occurs so that parents will know to perform a follow up tick check. AP sign out of classroom.
6. Classroom teachers will perform tick checks on all students once back in the classroom. Special attention will be given to check: back of legs and knees, back of the neck, in and around the ears, and the hairline. A lint roller will be used to check clothing. Each classroom will be supplied with lint rollers by the office for use on clothes.
7. Any ticks located on a student (attached or unattached) are to be reported to the front desk, and recorded in the Tick Report Binder. This information is then used to inform staff of areas on the property or woods to avoid taking children (office staff is responsible for this communication) and to inform parents on the importance of at home tick checks. **This information must be recorded as soon as ticks are discovered and all classroom parents will be promptly notified of the number of ticks found on children through email.**

- Name of Child (this is an internal document)
- Date
- Attached/Unattached/How Many
- Type of Tick
- Area(s) outside where child most recently was
- Weather (temperature, conditions)
- Humidity level
- Parent Contacted

8. Attached ticks are removed with school provided tick tool (training given annually, protocol listed above), bagged in a plastic bag and labeled with the name of the

student, date, location of hike and time of removal and sent home directly with parents. Record parent communication in the Tick Report Binder.

9. Tick Sweeps will be done periodically by parent volunteers on our property and the property surrounding the most used areas of the woods. The results will be recorded in the main office Tick Prevention Binder.
10. Students are not typically sprayed with bug spray or wear tick clothing for outdoor time when they are playing in open areas on school property (out at recess, not out for a hike in the woods). Current tick sweeps have shown that ticks are not prevalent on our school property. If future sweeps determine that in a given season the tick count is high, parents may request to have children sprayed with repellent prior to going outside on school grounds.
11. If, in a given season, tick counts are high, the school will work to mediate the problem through various means which may include:
 - Spraying the edges of the property
 - Preventing students from playing in areas with known high tick counts
 - Avoiding forest areas with high tick counts
12. Staff may designate a day, such as Forest Fridays, to go into the woods for consistency and clarity for parents who wish to send children in pretreated clothes on those days. Guides will email parents and the school office if they choose to designate such a day for their classrooms.