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DSHS Prevention Guidelines for Schools, Child Care, and Summer Camps

Currently, there is no vaccine or treatment for Zika virus. The best protection against infection is to prevent mosquito breeding and protect yourself from mosquito bites. The Texas Department of State Health Services offers the following guidelines to help schools, child care facilities, and summer camps decrease potential exposure to mosquitos.

1. Review school or organization operational policies related to environmental control of insects and update them to include prevention of mosquito breeding if it is not part of the current policy.
 - For more information about environmental controls from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), please read the CDC's Fact Sheet on Controlling Mosquitoes at: www.cdc.gov/dengue/resources/factsheets/mosquito-control.pdf. (Although the factsheet is about dengue, the same methods apply for Zika as it is transmitted in the same way by the same species of mosquito.) Also find relevant information at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Zika website: www.texaszika.org/prevention.htm
 - For Vector Control Professionals read the CDC's document on the control of *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* in the United States at: www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/resources/vector-control.html
2. Consider developing procedures that focus on preventing mosquito breeding that include:
 - Removal on a weekly basis any standing water around the school, child care operation, or camp grounds that may be located in buckets, trash containers, plant saucers, play-ground equipment, and other areas.
 - Check gutters to keep them clear of debris and standing water.
 - Cover trash containers.
 - Check and repair window screens in classrooms and other buildings. The use of air conditioning will allow windows to stay closed so mosquitos cannot enter the buildings.
3. Consider reviewing, developing, or updating policies and procedures as needed to protect children from exposure to mosquito bites while at school, child care or camp. Check the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website for a list of registered insect repellents that are safe at: www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-insect-repellent-right-you
 - Review and update school or organization operational policies, if applicable, related to over-the-counter medication administration (use and application of insect repellent) by schools or organization staff, to address the use of insect repellent when children are outdoors. This may include updating the parental consent form to include the administration of insect repellent.

- With parental consent, if required, have staff apply insect repellent before outdoor activities. For more information about proper application, read the product instructions or go to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website for instructions for applying insect repellent on children at: www.fda.gov/Drugs/EmergencyPreparedness/ucm085277.htm
 - Encourage parents to apply EPA-registered repellents before children arrive at school, child care, or camp.
 - Encourage parents and caregivers to provide clothing that covers skin to which insect repellent will not be applied. In warm weather, children should wear light colored, lightweight, loose-fitting pants and long sleeved shirts, as well as socks to cover the ankles.
4. Ensure that students and staff who are or may become pregnant have access to information about Zika and pregnancy. Information can be found at: www.texaszika.org/pregnantwomen.htm
 5. Determine appropriate mechanisms for educating and communicating with parents and children about the importance of avoiding mosquito bites whenever possible.
 - Provide educational materials to parents, caregivers, and staff on the prevention of mosquito bites. For educational materials, see the DSHS resources at: www.texaszika.org/materials.htm
 6. Continue to check the DSHS Zika website to get updates and additional information at: www.texaszika.org/