



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY  
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May 29, 2018

**To:** District Superintendents of BOCES  
Superintendents of Public School Districts  
Administrators of Public, Charter, and Nonpublic Schools

**From:** Kathleen R. DeCataldo

**Subject:** May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month

In recognition of Lyme Disease Awareness Month, the Department has partnered with the New York State Department of Health, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York State Library, and other expert organizations to bring awareness, education, and resources to promote the education of students, families and schools on the prevention of tick and tick-borne diseases. Please share this information with school health educators, school health professionals, and other staff in your school or district.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov), Lyme disease is caused through the bite of an infected blacklegged tick. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and sometimes a bull-eye looking rash. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

Being bitten by a tick and acquiring tick-borne diseases are both preventable and treatable. Therefore, it is critical that students, families and schools learn about ticks and tick-borne diseases as it relates to prevention, action to be taken if bitten by a tick, possible symptoms and seeking medical treatment. To accomplish this, the Department is encouraging the inclusion of ticks and tick-borne disease education in a comprehensive K-12 health education program and to integrate it into other curricula areas.

To teach our students about ticks and tick-borne diseases the Department has provided developmentally appropriate resources and sample lesson plans to aid schools in educating school personnel, students and families: [Tick and Tick-borne Disease: Education in Schools](#) . These resources are located at the Department's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) and the [Office of Student Support Services Health Services](#) Webpages.

Please review these comprehensive and inclusive resources to use in your schools. Thank you for everything you do to help and support our students, families and communities. Should you need any additional information or have any questions, please feel free to contact the Office of Student Support Services at (518) 486-6090, or [studentsupportservices@nysed.gov](mailto:studentsupportservices@nysed.gov) .