



Integrated Pest Management in Schools

- Oftentimes schools prevent infestations by utilizing chemical pesticide use. However, these chemicals are often toxic and can cause serious health issues. **Fortunately, however, they can be easily replaced with safe and effective alternatives.**
- Pesticides can cause short and long term health risks. **Exposure can lead to pesticide poisoning, which is under-diagnosed in the U.S.** According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, about 10,000 children experience pesticide poisoning each year.
- Experts believe there is **a link between pesticide exposure early in life and the rising number of children being diagnosed with developmental disabilities.**
- Of the 40 most commonly used pesticides in schools, 28 are known carcinogens, 14 are linked with endocrine disruption, and 26 could lead to adverse reproductive effects.
- Nationally, children between 6-11 years are found to have higher levels of pesticide residue in their bodies than any other group of people.

What You Can Do:

- **Meet with your school's PTA and administrative office to ask about their IPM policies.** PA state regulations require schools to implement IPM plans and alert parents and staff of chemical pesticide application prior to use.
- **Encourage your school to adopt a "no pesticides" policy for school grounds.**
- Work with your local Parent Teacher Association and school administration office to create a plan to raise awareness about the downfalls of chemical pesticides. **IPM plans often fail because school staff are not properly educated on the purpose and benefits of IPM strategies as opposed to pesticides.**
- Contact local environmental /health organizations for help drawing up a cost and benefit plan for IPM policies at your school.
- Organize volunteers to regularly check-in on IPM plans at your school.

What is IPM?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) revolves around six essential components: monitoring, record-keeping, action levels, prevention, tactics criteria, and evaluation.

IPM is a program that reduces or eliminates the use of pesticides in order to minimize the toxicity of and exposure to harmful chemicals.

To learn more about how IPM can be a safer alternative to chemical pesticides, visit the EPA at:

<http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/ipm/>



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