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Shapiro Administration Announces Student Winners of Art Competition to Raise Awareness About Ticks, Lyme Disease

Shapiro Administration promotes healthy outdoor activity through creative educational opportunities for students.

Harrisburg, PA – Shapiro Administration officials today announced 12 student winners of the 2023 **How to Prevent a Tick Bite Lyme Art Contest**. The contest promotes awareness of the prevalence of ticks and the diseases they carry.

“Spending time outdoors is important for our health,” said **Acting Secretary of Health, Dr. Debra Bogen**. “We encourage people to enjoy the outdoors safely. This student art competition offers a hands-on creative opportunity for students and their families to learn how to prevent tick bites, and about Lyme disease. The contest is part of the Shapiro Administration’s commitment to promoting healthy behaviors and preventing diseases.”

The Lyme Art Contest educates children about where ticks are found, how to prevent tick bites and about the symptoms of and treatment for Lyme disease. Poster and video submissions were received in March 2023 from students in first through sixth grade statewide. Winning artwork will be on display in the Pennsylvania State Capitol building near the cafeteria outside the Senate Fountain Area through June 22.

Leaders from the Departments of Education (PDE) and Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) joined in the presentation of winners.

“Education goes beyond the four walls of a school building, as outdoor learning and activities provide dynamic, hands-on experiences that engage students while improving their physical well-being with fresh air and exercise,” said **PDE Executive Deputy Secretary Angela Fitterer**.

“It’s important that we know how to prevent tick bites, and that’s why this art contest is so important. Each submission is a testament to the artist-*tick* creativity of our students, and to the importance of raising awareness about this public health issue.”

A total of 12 poster and video winners were selected from the following grade ranges:

First and second grade winners:

- 1st place: Izabela Shrift, Cambria County

- 2nd place: Noah Steele, Delaware County
- 3rd place: Kasen Rado, Washington County

Third and fourth grade winners:

- 1st place: Landon Hayes, Blair County
- 2nd place – Evan Yackey, Blair County
- 3rd place – Lea Caltumo Washington County

Fifth and sixth grade winners:

- 1st place – Caitlyn Kisner, Washington County
- 2nd place – Adam D’Biagio, Butler County
- 3rd place – Shayleen Shollenberger, Schuylkill County

Video Contest Winners

- Grades 1&2 – Stella Conrad, Indiana County
- Grades 3&4 – Richard (Tripp) Shoemaker, Indiana County
- Grades 5&6 – Emma DePrimio, Indiana County

Pennsylvania typically ranks in the top five or six states in the country for Lyme disease cases per 100,000 residents. Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with a short course of antibiotics. However, if the infection is left untreated, it can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

Ticks are usually found in shrubs, weeds, leaf litter, and tall grasses, but can be found anywhere there is grass. So, it is important to take the proper steps to decrease the chances of getting bitten. When outside, cover exposed skin, wear light colors to help detect ticks, and use insect repellent that contains 20 percent or more DEET. Use permethrin spray on shoes, clothes and gear before spending time outdoors. After being outside, check yourself, your kids, and your pets thoroughly for ticks and remove any that are attached. Then, take a shower to help remove any ticks that you may have missed. You can also throw your clothes in the dryer using high heat to help kill any ticks that might still be left.

The Shapiro Administration reminds Pennsylvanians to be safe when enjoying the outdoors and of the benefits of recreating outdoors, including:

- Improving cardiovascular health;
- Strengthening muscles and bones;
- Reducing chances of suffering chronic diseases;
- Reducing stress levels and improving mental health; and
- Becoming more socially connected.

For more information on Lyme disease, visit the Department of Health’s website at <http://www.health.pa.gov/ticks> or follow the Department of Health on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Editor’s Note: Video and photos of today’s event are available at pacast.com. This is an evergreen story good for anytime this weekend.

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