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Children deserve protections from toxic pesticides both inside and outside of the classroom. To that end, Beyond Pesticides provides model state policies to support the implementation of [Ecological Pest Management \(EPM\)](#) approaches within both school districts and the broader community.

MODEL POLICIES

[The Children's Health Protection Act](#)

This model bill prohibits the use of toxic pesticides both inside and outside of school classrooms. It tasks the state education department with the role of developing model pest management plans and requires school districts within the state to adopt these plans within two years after the Act's passage. Each school district must assign an ecological pest management coordinator to oversee the implementation of its pest management plan. Toxic pesticides may only be used under a public health emergency, and prior notification must be provided if such a situation is determined to be occurring by public health officials. Record keeping of all pesticide use is required, and each year school districts must publish a progress report and provide opportunity for public

[The Protect Children Where They Play Act](#)

This model legislation aims to protect children outside of school districts by restricting pesticide use on public spaces in communities where children play. It establishes a list of permitted outdoor pesticides that are the [least toxic yet still effective products on the market](#) that are compatible with organic landscape management. It also limits the use of harmful synthetic fertilizers, allowing only natural products that support healthy soil to be applied. Toxic pesticides may only be used under a public health emergency, and prior notification must be provided if such a situation is determined to be occurring by public health officials.

GOOD EXAMPLES

State School Pest Management Laws

While Beyond Pesticides encourages the use of its model language, the states of Connecticut and New York are already leading the country in their implementation of restrictions around toxic pesticide use in schools.

New York

The [New York Safe Playing Fields Act](#) was passed in 2010. The law bans the use of pesticides, excepting products containing active ingredients listed as exempt under 25(b) of FIFRA and emergency exemptions, on school playing fields and playgrounds. Schools were given a year transition period before the law came into effect in May of 2011.

Connecticut

In 2005, Public Act No. 05-252, An Act Concerning Pesticides at Schools and Day Care Facilities, was passed in Connecticut. That law bans toxic lawn care pesticides on the grounds of children's day care centers and elementary schools, allowing integrated pest management (IPM) on playing fields for a three-year transition period. In 2007 the ban was expanded to applying lawn care pesticides to school playing fields and playgrounds to schools with students through grade eight. In 2015, the state again [amended the law to include protections from toxic pesticides for all municipal playgrounds in the state](#). See here for a copy of the law: [Section 448](#) (p.563 at line 17579))

Local School District Pest Management Policies

In the absence of strong state-level restrictions, many school districts across the country have implemented their own forward-thinking pest management plans to protect children from hazardous pesticide use. Raising the level of protection across the nation to meet the highest possible standards regarding these issues is an important goal.

Irvine Unified School District

[IUSD's Progressive Pest Management Policy](#) prioritizes pest prevention strategies and emphasizes the use of organic pesticides when chemical controls are determined to be necessary. Any pesticide use is to occur only after non-toxic means have failed. However, the policy focuses on limiting exposure, rather than eliminating hazards. It could be improved by further limiting the list of pesticides allowed, rather than drawing distinctions between chemicals considered "preferred" or "exceptions." Nonetheless, the policy is an important step forward within the framework for [the California Healthy Schools Act](#), which sets a low bar by allowing voluntary adoption of school pest management policies.

LA Unified School District

[LA Unified School District's Strong Integrated Pest Management Policy](#) emphasizes a precautionary approach within its purpose statement, recognizing that pesticide manufacturers should be required to provide their products are safe, rather than requiring government to provide that humans are being harmed. It establishes a Pest Management Team comprised of fifteen stakeholders, including parents and other members of the public, to determine what products can be approved for use within the school district. However, some [products that continue to be used](#) still pose hazards to children's health. Nonetheless, the policy is an important step forward within the framework for [the California Healthy Schools Act](#), which sets a low bar by allowing voluntary adoption of school pest management policies.

More information about local and state school pesticide policies can be found through Beyond Pesticides' [State Pages](#). (Note: State Pages are in the process of being updated. We ask Beyond Pesticides' supporters to please send an email to info@beyondpesticides.org if you have new or updated information from your state or local school district that should be reflected on our State Page)

Getting a policy passed is just the first step to protecting our children while at school.

In the absence of protections for your children or children in your community, it is up to advocates to push for change. Where policies exist, make sure that they are enforced. Enforcement of existing

pesticide laws is often the most difficult phase of community-based efforts. Both the adoption of policies and programs and enforcement require vigilant monitoring and public pressure. For help in passing or enforcing a pesticide policy in your child's school, contact Beyond Pesticides at 202-543-5450 or by email at info@beyondpesticides.org.