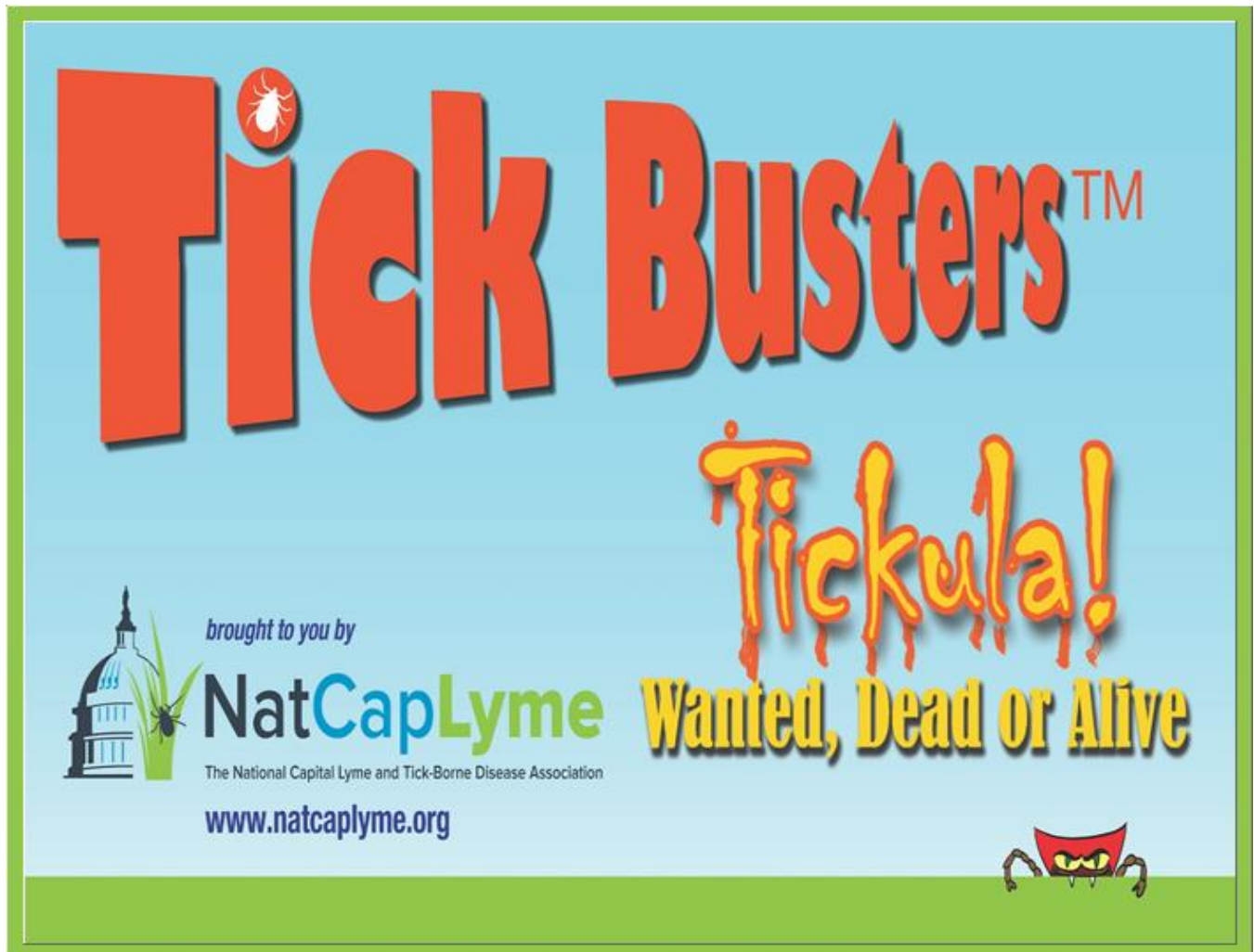


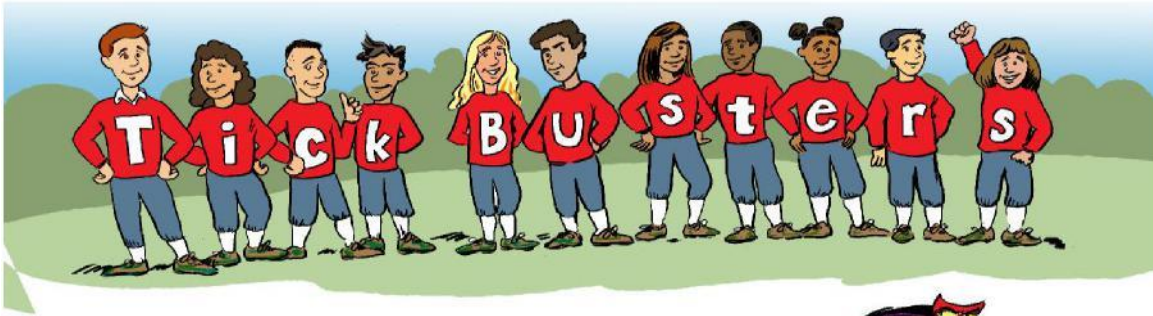
# National Capital Lyme Disease Association Submission to the



## Healthathon Contest



**July 20, 2021**



## Tick Busters - Wanted Dead or Alive Tick Education Program K-6 and Beyond

*“One of the biggest tragedies of Lyme disease is when an overlooked tick bite results in a child’s life being derailed - denying them years of health, joy, and happiness.”*

– Monte Skall, Executive Director, National Capital Lyme Disease Association

### GOAL

*The National Capital Lyme Disease Association’s (NatCapLyme) goal with this project is twofold: First, to fill a void that exists today in public and private school systems across the US concerning the lack of classroom education about ticks, the diseases they carry, and how to prevent being exposed to them. Second, as a public service, we want students, teachers, and parents to become active educators and share what they have learned from this program with others.*

### NEED

The CDC recently estimated that 476,000 people in the US each year are diagnosed with Lyme disease. Children 5-19 years of age are at the highest risk of acquiring Lyme disease, representing close to 30% of reported cases from 2001-2017. This risk is primarily due to the amount of time children spend playing outdoors, and a lack of awareness of the importance of finding and removing ticks. Unfortunately, most school curriculums do not include a tick awareness or prevention program. If misdiagnosed or improperly treated, Lyme disease can result in missed school days, individualized educational plans (IEP), and special accommodations. Some children require homeschooling because they cannot get out of bed to participate in a regular classroom curriculum. Could this be prevented if children were properly informed at school and home about ticks, the dangers they pose, and how to recognize and prevent a tick bite? Keep in mind, children may not know how to identify a tick, let alone tell their parents they found one!

### MISSION

Our mission is to reduce the incidence of Lyme disease, especially among children, by educating them about ticks and tick bites. Therefore, NatCapLyme is excited to introduce our education and awareness series for children and adults called **Tick Busters™** ([www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org)). This program is also for adults because we believe that education is your best defense against Lyme and tick-borne diseases. We advocate both the “educate-up” theory (from child to parent) as well as a “top-down” (teacher to student) approach to education. It really works! *Children make wonderful teachers and parents make great students.* When a parent asks their child what they learned in school today, there is no better listener than that parent who asked the question.

Our creative educational program is a novel learning tool for kids, parents, and teachers that helps to decrease anxiety by overcoming the fear of ticks. **It sparks a kid’s curiosity while tapping into the fun-factor, thereby empowering children with the knowledge to protect themselves.** This series took over two years to complete and was created by a group of dedicated and concerned parents, teachers, and advocates who wanted young people to be educated about the danger of getting bitten by a tick.

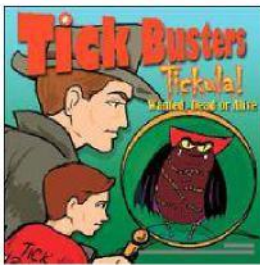


## ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

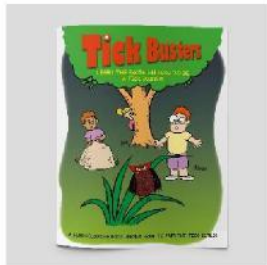
We believe that books can inspire a reader to make their world a better place – starting in their own backyards and neighborhoods. The original Tick Busters story booklet was published and funded by the National Capital Lyme Disease Association. The success of the booklet inspired the creation of the Tick Buster series, which is designed to reinforce the concepts taught in the booklet and to be used in a variety of settings such as schools, camps, park & rec centers, physicians' offices, family homes, as well as at community outreach events. The series is downloadable at [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org), except for the video, tattoo, and story booklet. Both the video and story booklet may be watched on-line.

The Tick Busters series consists of eight items:

1. **Tick Busters - Wanted Dead or Alive** story booklet which educates young people about the danger of ticks so that they — *don't get sick from the bite of a tick.*
2. **Tick Busters Coloring Book** where children can learn facts on how to prevent a tick bite and how to become a Tick Buster.
3. **Tick Buster Informational Brochure** which is a tri-fold brochure that provides facts about ticks, protection, how to check for ticks, and what to do if you find an attached tick. *Note: Children should not be encouraged to remove an attached tick but seek the help of an adult.*
4. **Library Rack Card** which provides the basics on ticks, prevention, tick removal, and Lyme disease.
5. **Tick Identification Card:** which is a two-sided card that is a great addition to any wallet. One side can be used to help identify various ticks. The other side is a Membership Card and allows children to fill in their names as the newest *Tick Buster!*
6. **Temporary tattoo** which kids can apply and show off to their friends.
7. **Tick Buster Video**, narrated by Brad Mendelson, a nationally known storyteller of children's books.
8. **Basic K-6 Tick Awareness and Prevention Lesson Plan for Teachers, Parents, and Students.** The student will learn about ticks, their habitat, life cycle, and tick bite prevention. This lesson plan encourages participants to perform a public service by utilizing and sharing their newly gained knowledge about tick awareness and prevention with other family members, friends, neighbors, and their communities. All these items can be viewed at [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org).



1. Story Book



2. Coloring Book



3. Information Brochure



4. Library Rack Card



5. Tick Identification Card



6. Temporary Tattoo



7. Video



8. Basic K-6 Lesson Plan





## TICK BUSTERS OUTREACH

As mentioned earlier in this proposal, Tick Busters is a two-part program. Not only do we want to educate children, parents, and teachers in the classroom, but we also want to partner with them so that they become an active participant in educating others. We want to make Tick Busters materials widely available so that the public becomes knowledgeable about ticks and helps spread the word about awareness and prevention. Besides materials for classroom use, there are two other ways we encourage the public to become involved with this campaign.

### ***First Way:***

The Tick Busters story booklet is available to anyone in any state. Participants begin by:

- 1) Requesting a booklet
- 2) Reading the story booklet with their family and watching the video – [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org)
- 3) Encouraging children to discuss what they learned with others: family members, friends, neighbors, classmates, and teachers.
- 4) Sharing the booklet with local schools, libraries, camps, physicians, public libraries, school nurses, county health departments, state legislators and county officials.
- 5) Contacting their neighborhood schools to see if they would be interested in a Tick Busters Box classroom presentation.

See: **Exhibit A** for Story Booklet Campaign flier.

### ***Second Way:***

Working together with families and the [Little Free Libraries](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org), a non-profit organization that has close to 100,000 library locations around the country, NatCapLyme is donating 5,000 *Tick Busters* story booklets. These booklets are to be distributed at Little Free Library locations by children, parents, and teachers to help spread the message about tick awareness and tick bite prevention.

See: **Exhibit B** for Little Free Library Campaign flier.

## **BENEFITS**

The Tick Busters series provides the opportunity for the reader to learn about ticks, their habitat, their life cycle, the diseases they carry, proper tick removal, and what to do with the tick after removal.

The Tick Busters series inspires not only children but adults to take preventive action, use safe repellents, avoid tick habitats and most importantly, become an advocate to educate others about ticks and how to avoid a tick bite.

The knowledge and new safety practices learned from this program will help lower the number of reported cases of children exposed to a tick-borne disease.

The Tick Busters series provides an opportunity for program participants to create and share new enrichment activities and ideas on the website, [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org), that other parents and teachers can reproduce and use for educational purposes.



## ABOUT NATCAPLYME

For 20+ years, NatCapLyme has been a nationally known advocacy organization for the recognition of tick-borne diseases and for acknowledgement of the people who suffer from these diseases. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, NatCapLyme has been a source of support for patients, created and passed tick-borne legislation, educated both the public and federal agencies about ticks and the diseases they carry, and raised needed funds for tick-borne research. Read more about us at: [www.natcaplyme.org](http://www.natcaplyme.org). Our focus this year is on a tick awareness and prevention educational program. We are especially targeting children since they are the most vulnerable population, given that they play outdoors extensively. Please check out [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org) for more information.

As a non-profit and philanthropic organization, NatCapLyme received no financial assistance in the form of outside grants for this project. This program was made possible by personal donations from Lyme patients and their families. NatCapLyme receives no profit from this project. Our offerings at [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org) are at our own cost and any reimbursements for materials are only necessary so that these valuable materials can continue to be made available to the public.

The National Capital Lyme Disease Association thanks the Department of Health and Human Services and the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Foundation for the opportunity to participate in their LymeX Education and Awareness Healthathon Contest. Our hope is that these types of challenges will result in better care for patients and continued research for this disease. We look forward to continuing to work with all governmental agencies in hopes of finding successful treatment for patients with tick-borne diseases.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**The NatCapLyme Tick Busters Team:** Monte Skall, Team Captain and Executive Director of NatCapLyme; Maureen Crystal, Advocate; Aleah Crystal, Student; Shawna Crystal, Student; Janis Ivicic, School Teacher; Cindy Eisenhart, School Librarian; Gregg Skall, Attorney; Veronica Hohenstein, Advocate; Cody Smith, Public Relations Specialist

The Tick Busters story booklet is dedicated to a courageous young man, Joey DiLiello, who suffered most of his childhood and young adulthood with Lyme disease and eventually lost his life to the disease. Joey's family hopes that the Tick Busters series will help other young people become aware of the dangers of a tick bite.





**Exhibit A**



## TICK BUSTERS ARE ON THE MOVE!

The National Capital Lyme Disease Association (NatCapLyme) is excited to kick off our educational and awareness outreach campaign for children and adults called ***Tick Busters - Wanted Dead or Alive*** ([tickbusters.org](http://tickbusters.org)). Education is your best defense against Lyme and tick-borne diseases, and we adhere to the bottom-up as well as a top-down approach to education. Children make wonderful teachers and parents make great students!

### WHO WE ARE

NatCapLyme has been a source of support for patients, created and passed legislation, educated both the public and federal agencies about ticks and the diseases they carry, and raised needed funds for tick-borne research. Read more at: [www.NatCapLyme.org](http://www.NatCapLyme.org) This year we are focusing on an awareness and prevention educational program; especially targeting children since they are the most vulnerable population, given they play outdoors extensively. Please check out [tickbusters.org](http://tickbusters.org) for more information.

### JOIN US

***We believe that books can inspire a reader to make their world a better place – starting in their own backyards and neighborhoods.*** NatCapLyme is requesting the opportunity to partner with you on a children's reading campaign with our recently published educational series ***Tick Busters, Wanted Dead or Alive***. This series is suitable for children Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The series teaches young people, parents, and the community-at-large about ticks, the diseases they carry and the benefits of prevention. This series is being provided to you at NatCapLyme's cost.

## YOU CAN HELP: Follow these simple steps:

1. Begin by contacting [natcaplyme@natcaplyme.org](mailto:natcaplyme@natcaplyme.org) and requesting your booklets.
2. Read the story booklet with your family and watch the video – at [tickbusters.org](http://tickbusters.org)
3. Encourage children to discuss what they learned with others: family members, friends, neighbors, classmates, and teachers.
4. **Share the booklet, the Tick Busters Bundle or Box with your local schools, libraries, camps, physicians, and county health departments. Call us with your ideas on how to get the word out effectively in your area.**
5. Contact your own child's school to see if they would be interested in a **Tick Busters Box** classroom presentation.

## TICK BUSTERS OUTREACH

- NatCapLyme will partner with you in educating your family about ticks. You will become an active participant in educating others. The **Tick Busters story booklet** is available to anyone in any state.
- A **Tick Busters Pilot Program** will be initiated in Virginia with the goal of promoting awareness and prevention. We will be sending **Tick Busters Bundles** to the following locations throughout Virginia: all county health departments, public & private schools, physician offices, summer camps, public libraries, girl and boy scout troops, classroom teachers, school nurses, state legislators and county officials.
- NatCapLyme is distributing 5,000 **Tick Busters story booklets** in [Little Free Libraries](#) across Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Washington DC to spread tick awareness and prevention. You can too where **YOU** live.
- NatCapLyme will be promoting an education bill in the Virginia legislation in 2021/22 calling for the development of instructional tools and materials for school districts and libraries to assist in an education and awareness program to protect children from Lyme disease and tick-borne infections.

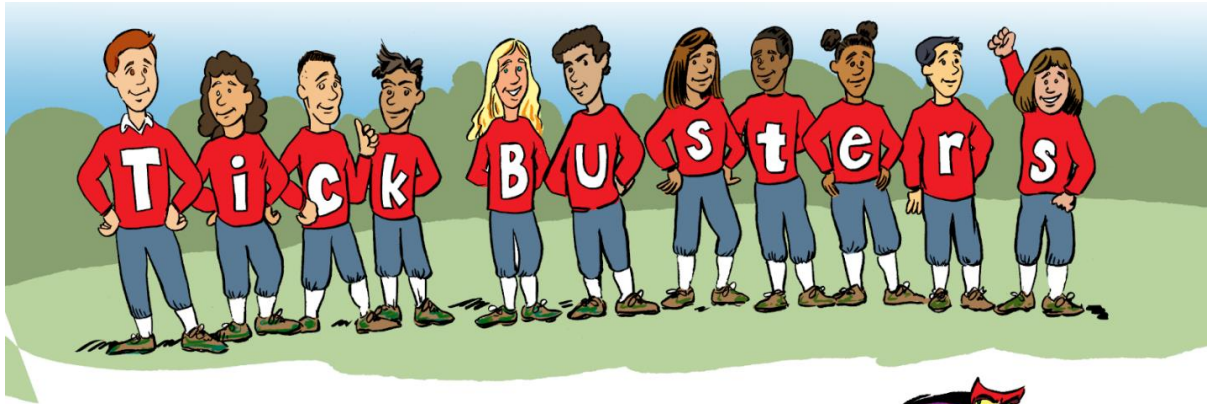
*With children spending more time outdoors, it is important for everyone to take precautions against ticks and the diseases they carry. Join us by becoming a Tick Buster and help educate others so that they "Don't Get Sick from the Bite of a Tick"!*

## Become a Tick Buster!





**Exhibit B**



## Be a Tick Buster and join our Little Free Libraries Campaign!

***Tick Busters** is a fun filled children's fantasy/mystery story that tells the tale of a menacing tick, Tickula, who is on the loose and causing havoc. Through the story, the reader learns about ticks, their habitat, life cycle, the diseases they carry, how to properly remove them and what to do after removal. See it all at [www.tickbusters.org](http://www.tickbusters.org)*

Working together with [Little Free Libraries](http://www.littlefreelibraries.org), a non-profit organization that has close to 100,000 Little Free Libraries around the country NatCapLyme is donating 5,000 *Tick Busters* story booklets to be distributed in Little Free Libraries to spread awareness about ticks and prevention.

**We believe that books can inspire a reader to make their world a safer place -- starting in their own backyards and neighborhoods.**

### HOW IT WORKS!

- 1) Begin by contacting NatCapLyme at [natcaplyme@natcaplyme.org](mailto:natcaplyme@natcaplyme.org) to find out how you can participate by receiving and sharing **Tick Busters** with your loved ones.
- 2) Read the story booklet and watch the video "**Tick Busters - Wanted Dead or Alive**".
- 3) Encourage children to discuss what they learned with others: family members, friends, neighbors, classmates, and teachers.
- 4) After reading share your booklet by donating it to a Little Free Library in your neighborhood.
- 5) To find a local Little Free Library in your neighborhood click on [Little Free Library Map and Search Tool](#) and put in your zip code.

### OUR ASK OF YOU!

Participate in this campaign and do your part to educate your family and neighbors so that they "**Don't get Sick from the Bite of a Tick!**"

**We thank those in our community who have already dropped off our children's story booklet at Little Free Library locations.**

**"Stay tuned!" More to Come! Our campaign has just begun!**