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promoting the value of play

MANAGEMENT OF PESTS IN SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES

Following an enquiry recently Play Australia has sought information on the management of pests in schools and Early Childhood Centres from both government, our members and associated experts in the area.

Play Australia suggests that if you are having a problem in your centre that you take the following steps:

1. Contact a Pest Controller in your area who is trained to know about pests and pest management. We suggest you find such a person through your local council or the local Yellow Pages. This person will give you specific advice concerning the particular pest, and will suggest what pesticides they recommend to deal with the problem;
2. Next, contact Anna Achia or Lucinda Westerman of the Environmental Health Unit in the Department of Human Services Tel. 03 9637 4158 or Anna.Achia@dhs.vic.gov.au or Lucinda.Westerman@dhs.vic.gov.au who will advise you of the potential health risks, if any, associated with the pesticide recommended by the Pest Controller. You should also check with Anna or Lucinda that your Pest Controller is registered with the Department, given that this is a requirement.

Play Australia also wishes to recommend that you familiarize yourself with an excellent website of the Total Environment Centre in Sydney which has a document accessible via the net and also available for sale called **Safer Solutions - Integrated Pest Management for Schools and Child Care Centres** by Jo Immig.

This document is a wonderful resource suggesting environmentally effective strategies to deal with cockroaches, ants, fleas, flies and mosquitoes, lice, spiders, rodents, timber pests and ticks and is also free. Website address is : www.tec.nccnsw.org.au/member/tec/ipm/online/common.html

Another suggestion is that a bag of salt - such as pool salt is a very good way of getting rid of things big and small. You just need to be careful of metal posts or metal constructions or metal toys. but washed through it cleans beautifully.

Barbara Champion
Executive Director