

September 9, 2019

NOTICE FOR PARENTS AND STAFF

A bat was found on the Keating school property last week, Wednesday, Sept 4 after school by the Out of School care program. It was discovered near the Out of School Care portable. The bat tested positive for the rabies virus. Island Health Communicable Disease assessed a number of people who were considered to have had direct contact with the bat (i.e. touching or handling). Those individuals determined to be at risk of exposure were provided preventative vaccine against rabies.

As the bat was found in the vicinity of the OSC portable area after school hours and this is an area currently out of bounds and not used during school hours, we believe it is unlikely that children attending the school would have had contact with the animal during school hours.

However, if any child (or adult) reports direct contact with a bat on the school grounds, please contact the Island Health Communicable Disease program immediately (1-866-665-6626). Please note that seeing or being near a bat is NOT a direct exposure nor a risk for rabies. Direct contact must be touching a bat with bare hands/skin or receiving a bite or scratch from a bat.

Please remind children that they should never interact directly with or disturb wildlife including bats. Children should not touch, poke, or pick up a bat. No one should tease or taunt any wildlife by poking it with sticks, nor try to catch it or throw things at it. Wild animals are an important part of our ecosystem and should be treated with respect and care - hands off is best! Remind children that if they find an animal that appears to be ill or dead, they should immediately tell a teacher or other responsible adult so it can be removed or moved as soon as possible.



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