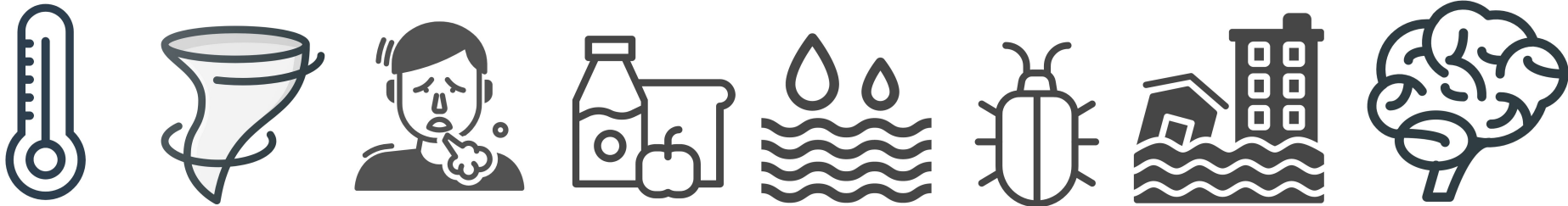




Climate Rx

*Anticipatory Guidance and Context-Specific Resources to Protect Children in a Changing Climate
Boston, MA*



Heat Related Illness



Action Plan

- **Dress for success:** Wear protective clothes (light colors, hats/sunglasses, SPF-lined)
- **Protect your skin:** Wear sunscreen SPF > 30, (re-apply at least every 2 hrs and after swimming/sweating)
- **Limit Exposure:** Avoid outdoor activity during peak sun hours (10 am-4 pm) and seek shade
- **Be prepared:** Drink plenty of water and other fluids to prevent dehydration
- **Take care of each other:**
 - Check in on neighbors, elderly, etc.
 - Engage in your local community to create and spread awareness cooling centers
 - Be aware of signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and seek medical help if they develop

Did you know?

Climate change increases Earth's temperature. Boston is warmer compared to neighboring towns because steel buildings, concrete and paved roads absorb heat and make it hotter. Hot temperatures impact children's physical and mental health and their ability to learn in school. Signs of heat-related health effects include feeling dizzy, dehydration, headaches, muscle cramps, difficulty focusing, increased irritability and more.

Community Resources

- ★ Head to a [Cooling Center](#) in Boston
- ★ Check out the [Water Features](#) in Boston Public Parks
- ★ Visit [Boston Centers for Youth and Families \(BCYF\)](#) to find the closest pool
- ★ Stop by the [Blum Family Resource Center Van](#), the sun safety screening center
- ★ Use the [Climate Ready Map](#) to explore which areas in Boston are most at risk

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Extreme Weather



Did you know?

Climate change increases the intensity and frequency of tropical storms, major hurricanes, and heat waves in Boston. These extreme weather events are a health risk for children's safety, physical and emotional health.

Action Plan

- **Be prepared:** develop an emergency evacuation plan for you, your family, and your neighborhood
 - Sign up for emergency alerts/warnings
 - Build an emergency kit with your family
 - Know how to seek shelter (FEMA App)
 - Develop a family communication plan
- **Strength in numbers:** Reach out and look after neighbors (particularly elderly or those with chronic health conditions who may be more vulnerable) if your community experiences an extreme weather event. Work as a community to develop and share evacuation plans
- **Take action:** Seek help from your child's pediatrician for any health concerns

Community Resources



Sign up for Boston [Emergency Alerts](#)

Create an [Emergency Plan](#) with your child

Build an [Emergency Kit](#) for your family

Sign up for [emergency alerts](#) and **download apps** to stay informed if you have a mobile device.



Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Asthma & Allergies



Action Plan

- **Set up for success**
 - Know your prescribed Asthma Action Plan
 - Avoid smoke and vape exposures
 - Discuss anti-allergy medications with your doctor
- **Be aware**
 - Check the Boston allergy index to assess daily risk
 - Avoid major air pollution sources like the highway
- **Be prepared**
 - Know how to quickly access your inhalers
 - Store medication(s) at room temperature
 - Note: inhalers are less effective if kept in extreme heat
- **Act quickly**
 - Be aware of the signs of an asthma flare up (coughing, chest tightness, fast or irregular breathing)
 - Seek help from your child's pediatrician for any concerns

Did you know?

Climate change creates longer, stronger pollen seasons, which can trigger asthma and make it harder to breathe. Extreme temperatures caused by climate change can also lead to asthma flares. Boston has the highest rate of asthma-related emergency department visits in MA.

Community Resources

Check the [Air Quality Index](#) for Boston. This resource monitors the five major pollutants present in the city.

Check the [Allergy Forecast](#) for Boston. This resource tracks the daily and projected pollen level.

Ask your provider if an [Asthma Home Visit](#) referral home visit would be appropriate for your child's care. (Provider [referral form](#))

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Nutrition



Did you know?

Climate change impacts the foods that are available to us in Boston, how much it costs, and how nutritious it is. As extreme weather impacts farming, changes in our ability to access healthy foods impacts how children grow and develop.

Action Plan

- **Screen for nutritional deficiencies:** Discuss your child's diet, growth, and eating habits with your pediatrician
- **Eat thoughtfully**
 - Meat and dairy are big contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, by incorporating plant-based meals into your diet you can improve both your health and the planet!
 - Support local farms and businesses
 - Sustainable diets are both good for the Earth, your community, and your health
- **Limit waste:** Excess food production contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Try meal prepping, donating to local pantries, and composting to reduce your impact
- **Take action:** Seek help from your child's pediatrician for any concerns about your child's growth or nutrition

Community Resources



Ask your provider about referral to the [Family Food Connections](#) located within the Mildred C. Hailey Apartments. This resource supplies families with fresh produce and other food staples

Find your local food bank to help access food with [Feeding America](#)

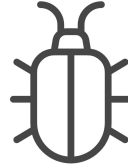
Sign-up for the [Food Resources Alert System](#). This resource connects those with food available for donation to people that need it or can distribute it amongst their community

Learn more about [Food Forests](#) and where to find them in Boston

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Lyme Disease



Action Plan

- **Avoid Exposure:** Avoid low-level shrubbery and edges of the woods
- **Dress appropriately:** Cover exposed skin by wearing long pants, high socks and closed-toed shoes. Use insect repellent with an EPA registered active ingredient (DEET or permethrin) for exposed areas
- **Conduct Tick-Checks** by searching your child's clothing and body including:
 - behind the knees, between fingers and toes, underarms and groin
 - belly button, in and behind the ears, neck, hairline, and top of the head
 - anywhere clothing presses on the skin
- **Recognize Exposures and Symptoms**
 - Deer ticks are approximately the size of a poppy seed. They can increase to the size of a sesame seed (or larger) when engorged
 - Typical symptoms include rash (in the form of a bulls-eye), fever, fatigue, headaches, and joint aches
 - Seek help from your child's pediatrician for any concerns

Did you know?

Climate change increases our exposure to ticks that carry Lyme disease (black-legged or deer ticks) and other diseases spread by infected arthropods such as mosquitos, ticks, and flies. Ticks are found in the woods and in low-level shrubbery around the trails and city parks in your neighborhood.

Community Resources

Use the [CDC Tick Bite Bot](#) to learn how to remove ticks correctly and determine if you need to seek medical care.

Read the [Monthly Tick-borne Disease Reports](#) issued by the MA DPH

Further questions: Contact MA DPH at (617) 983-6800 or online [click here](#)



Black-Legged Tick



Deer Tick



Lone Star Tick

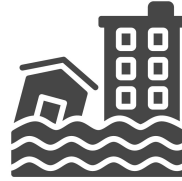


Most prevalent ticks in Boston, MA
Image: Massachusetts Department of Health

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Sea Level Rise & Flooding



Did you know?

The Boston Harbor sea level is rising more quickly due to increasing temperatures and precipitation. Sea level rise can cause flooding and pollute the water that children drink from and play in. Flooding in buildings can also lead to the growth of mold, which is harmful for our health.

Action Plan

- **Be Aware**
 - Know if your place of residence is at risk for flooding
 - Sign-up for emergency alerts
- **Be Prepared**
 - Create an evacuation plan
 - Teach your children how to contact you
- **Avoid Standing Water**, if possible
 - Stormwater can be a source of infectious diseases, contain chemical hazards, and cause injuries
 - Do not swim after storms
- **Know the Risks**
 - After flooding, excess moisture and standing water contribute to the growth of mold in homes
 - Exposure to mold is dangerous for children with underlying health conditions such as asthma
 - Seek help from your child's pediatrician for any concerns

Community Resources



Sign up for Boston [Emergency Alerts](#)

Use this [Flood Zone Mapping Tool](#) to learn if your residence is located within Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated flood zone or flood plan

Use the [Climate Ready Map](#) to explore which areas of the city are projected to be at risk of flooding due to sea level rise and increased precipitation

Check the [Water Quality](#) of Boston's public beaches after storms

Learn how to properly [Clean Up](#) moisture after flooding to prevent mold

Read about the [Risks](#) of sea-level rise and flooding in Boston

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Mental Health



Action Plan

- **Engage in conversations**
 - Discuss with friends, family, and children about climate and how it is impacting our lives
 - Emphasize your child's personal strengths and coping skills
 - Help children see they can be heroes and helpers in the community
- **Watch for warning signs**
 - Children may show stress and anxiety in different ways depending on their maturity
 - Look for changes in children's behavior, attitude, motivation, appetite, sleep patterns and school performance
- **Take action**
 - Develop a safety plan with your child(ren)
 - Remove access to harmful objects such as sharp objects, firearms, and ammunition
 - Seek help from your child's pediatrician for any concerns

Did you know?

Climate change affects our mental health. Climate disasters and forced migration have been linked to PTSD, depression, and anxiety. As children learn more about climate change, we are seeing a rise in “eco-anxiety” or “eco-grief”, as they become worried about a future with the threats of a changing climate. Feelings may fear, anger, sadness, etc. Extreme weather due to climate change limits opportunities for physical/outdoor activities and social events, which can make isolation worse.

Community Resources



Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1 (800) 273-8255 if you or a loved one are experiencing emotional distress or a suicidal crisis

Call the Boston Emergency Services Program at 1 (877) 382-1609, anytime if you or a family member are experiencing a mental health crisis

Complete an [activity book](#) with your child(ren) to help cope after a climate disaster

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.



Do Your Part



Did you know?

Climate change can be overwhelming, but you can be part of the solution. We can adapt, prepare and make progress in limiting the effects of climate change through our individual actions and community engagement.

Action Plan

- **Vote & Advocate**
 - Engage with community organizations in the fight against climate change
 - Let your lawmakers know this is important to you
- **Reduce, reuse, recycle (in that order!)**
 - Avoid buying single-use products
 - Turn off appliances and lights when not in use
 - Reduce food waste and limit meat consumption
 - Compost food scraps
 - Consider donating children's clothes that are outgrown
- **Be mindful of your transportation**
 - Walking and biking reduce your carbon footprint and are good for your health, win-win!
 - Use public transportation when possible
 - Decrease your personal energy consumption and consider using renewable energy sources to power your home/vehicles if possible

Community Resources

Explore the [Climate Ready Map](#) to see how climate change impacts your neighborhood

Check out this [Boston specific guide](#) that outlines ways you can combat climate change and prepare for it

Start a climate group using the [Toolkit for Youth Leaders](#) to encourage climate action

Learn more through local programs:

- Mass Audubon's [Youth Climate Leadership Program](#), a youth-led, action-oriented climate action immersion program
- [Harvard Chan C-CHANGE Youth Summit on Climate, Equity, and Health](#), a high school summer course in Boston

Connect with [climate creators](#) on social media platforms

Follow the QR code for live links and more resources.

