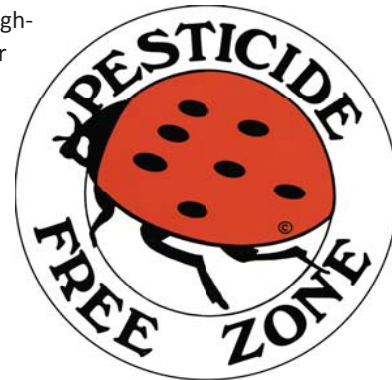


A substantial body of evidence in scientific literature shows that pesticide exposure can adversely affect a child's neurological, respiratory, immune, and endocrine systems, even at low levels. Fortunately, there are proven safe, effective, and affordable ways to maintain attractive lawns and playable fields without the use of toxic pesticides.

Use the resources below to help get pesticides out of your community - whether it's at the municipal, park, school or backyard level. Start with your own lawn, then talk to your neighbors and try to declare a pesticide free street or block. Consider talking with your municipal leaders to help enact a policy that creates organically managed parks, school grounds or bans pesticides on all community property.

### In Your Yard

■ **Go organic in your yard and display a Pesticide Free Zone sign.** Beyond Pesticides offers many resources to help individuals convert their lawn, garden or other outdoor area to an organically managed space. For a good place to start, go to [www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn) and download the Pesticide Free Zone sign owner's manual. Find the link to order the Honey Bee or Ladybug Pesticide Free Zone yard signs on the same page.



Use Pesticide Free Zone signs to show your neighbors that pesticide-free yards are important for the health of your family, the environment and the community. At eight inches diameter, these metal signs will not rust and will retain their bright colors for years. The sign comes with valuable information on organic lawn and garden management, pollinators, and how to talk to your neighbors about pesticides. Signs are available for \$13 each (\$10 plus shipping for ten or more) at our online store.

■ **Put your Pesticide Free Zone on the honey bee map.**

Aside from posing risks to your family's health, pesticides impact pollinator health and are increasingly implicated in colony collapse disorder. Consider creating bee-friendly habitat (see details in the Pesticide Free Zone sign owner's manual) and pledge your organically managed yard or park as a pollinator-friendly Pesticide Free Zone and mark it on the honey bee map. Get more information on what you can do and find a link to the map at [www.beyondpesticides.org/pollinators/protect](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/pollinators/protect).

### In Your Community

■ **Spread the word with "Safe Lawns for Children and Pets" Doorknob Hangers.** This unique tool is designed to help get the word out about the dangers of lawn pesticides and the ever-increasing availability of alternatives. It's an easy, non-confrontational way to approach neighbors that may be using pesticides. You can request a free pack of 25 doorknob hangers by sending an email with your name and address to [info@beyondpesticides.org](mailto:info@beyondpesticides.org). You can order larger quantities at [www.shopbeyondpesticides.org](http://www.shopbeyondpesticides.org).

■ **Utilize groundskeeper training.** Once you've convinced your town to commit to a pesticide-free park or as part of your strategy to persuade them, consider Beyond Pesticides' online "Organic Land Care Basic Training for Municipal Officials and Transitioning Landscapers," taught by board member Chip Osborne, a professional horticulturist and an expert on transitioning turf to organic care. See [www.beyondpesticides.org/pesticidefreelawns/training](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/pesticidefreelawns/training) for details.

### Policy Change

■ **Help pass a policy.** Many communities across the country have taken a stand against the use of toxic pesticides on their lawns and landscapes. In 2010, New York state passed the *Child Safe Playing Fields Act*, which prohibits the use of toxic pesticides on school and daycare center playgrounds, turf, athletic and playing fields. In New Jersey, over 30 communities have made their parks pesticide-free zones. Connecticut and Illinois policies reduce children's exposure to lawn pesticides. For model policies and a list of communities that have pesticide free spaces, see [www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn/activist](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn/activist). For assistance in proposing a policy in your community, contact Beyond Pesticides at [info@beyondpesticides.org](mailto:info@beyondpesticides.org) or 202-543-5450.

■ **Support the School Environment Protection Act (SEPA).** Children need better protection from toxic chemical exposure while at school. While some states have taken limited action to protect children from pesticides in schools, these policies represent a patchwork of laws that are uneven and inadequate. SEPA establishes a minimum national standard to protect kids in their places of learning by eliminating toxic pesticide use and requiring IPM indoors and organic-based land management on school grounds and playing fields. Ask your member of Congress to support SEPA and learn more at [www.beyondpesticides.org/schools/sepa](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/schools/sepa).



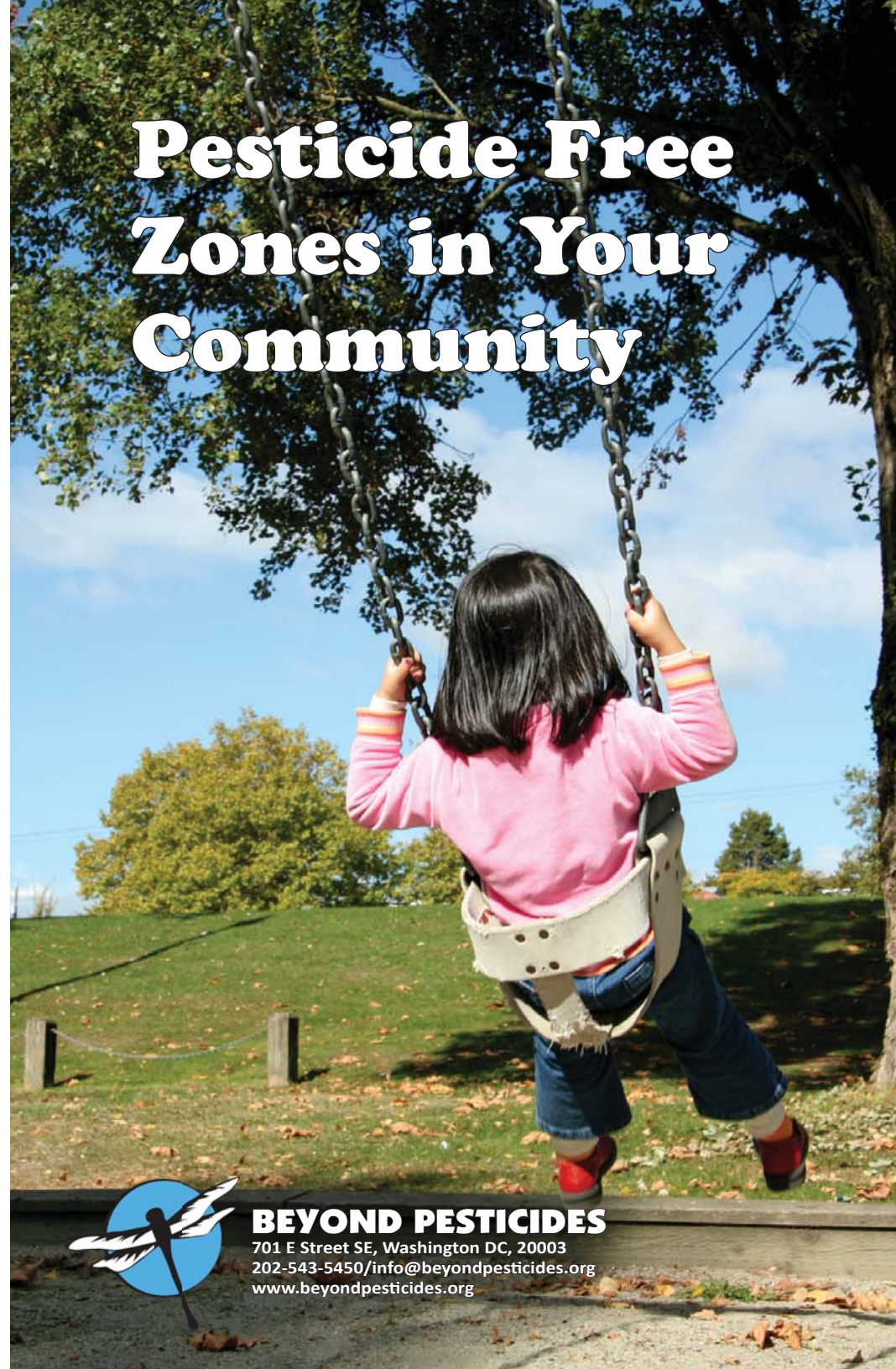
Teaching Biodiversity through Pesticide Free Zones  
Aside from educating neighbors and community leaders, Pesticide Free Zones provide a great opportunity for talking to children about biodiversity. Organic and chemical-intensive land management feature sharply contrasting approaches to interacting with the biodiversity of the ecosystem in which they operate. This divergence has enormous consequences for the sustainability of life. Recognizing that various land management practices may have different effects on the web of life that makes up the environment is crucial to maintaining the intricate balance and life-sustaining benefits of nature.

When discussing biodiversity, start with the soil. Recent science has shown that the organic pioneers were right –the soil is a living organism, and synthetic fertilizers and pesticides do kill the soil. The growth of all the plants we see above ground –from lettuce seedlings to redwood trees– results from a symbiosis between the plants and the fungi, bacteria, insects, and other soil-dwelling organisms. The foremost method for building biodiversity in the soil is composting. Composting breaks down organic matter, while growing the organisms necessary for a healthy food web.

To learn more, see Beyond Pesticides' articles, "Preserving Biodiversity as if Life Depends on It" and "Do-It-Yourself Biodiversity" from the Winter 2011-12 and Spring 2012 issues of *Pesticides and You*, [www.beyondpesticides.org/info-services/pesticidesandyou](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/info-services/pesticidesandyou).



# Pesticide Free Zones in Your Community



**BEYOND PESTICIDES**

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