

# PESTS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## What are pests?

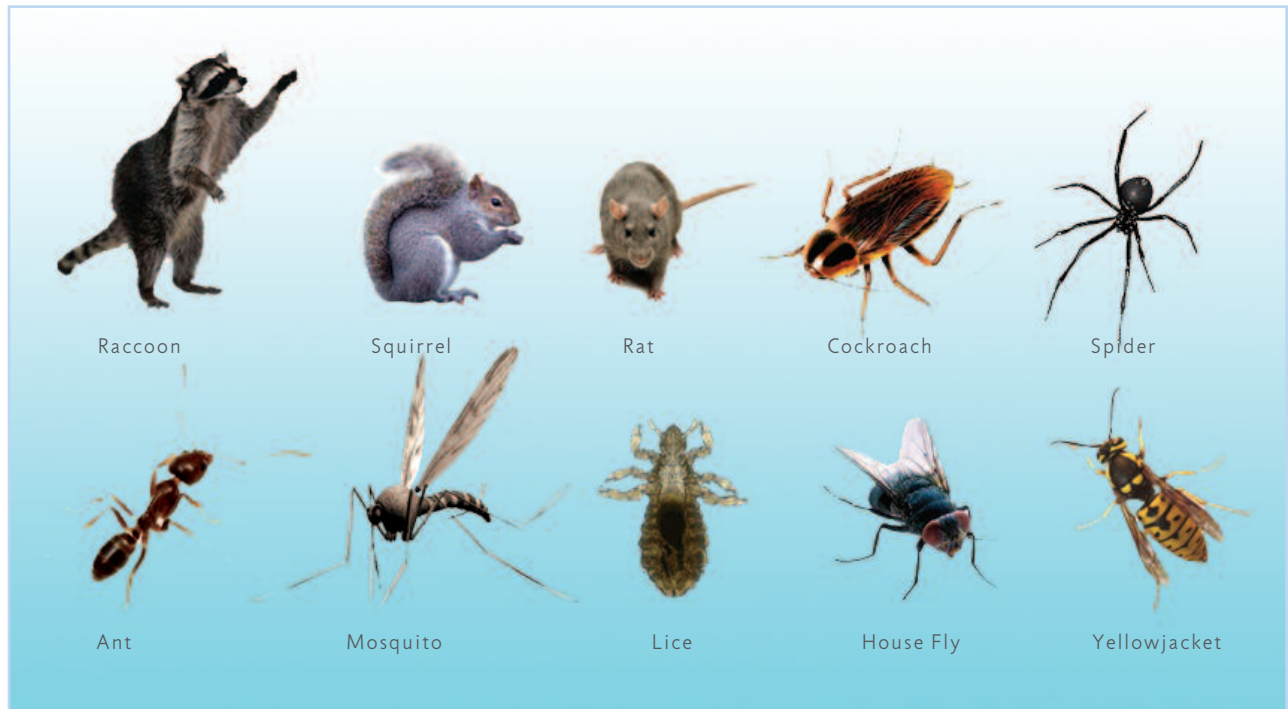
A pest is any living organism that causes damage or discomfort, or transmits or produces disease. Pests can be animals, plants or bacteria. A pest can also be something that is simply where it is not wanted, such as clover in a

grass play area. Rats, mice, cockroaches, house flies, raccoons, squirrels, ants, weeds and bacteria are all examples of different types of pests. Make sure something is really a pest before you remove it.

## Hazards of pests for young children

Some pests are merely annoying, but others can cause serious harm to children. For example:

- ▶ Rodents, such as rats and mice, can contaminate food, food preparation areas and other surfaces with their urine, feces and stray hairs. They carry diseases or fleas into areas where people are present. They can also trigger asthma.
- ▶ Cockroaches are a common trigger of asthma and can carry diseases.
- ▶ Stinging pests, such as yellowjackets, hornets and some ants and bees, can cause severe reactions that can be life threatening for some people.
- ▶ Flies can spread disease when they walk on food.



Most Common Pests in Child Care Centers