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1-1-2003

## Nita the Mosquito

Cooperative Extension Service  
*South Dakota State University*

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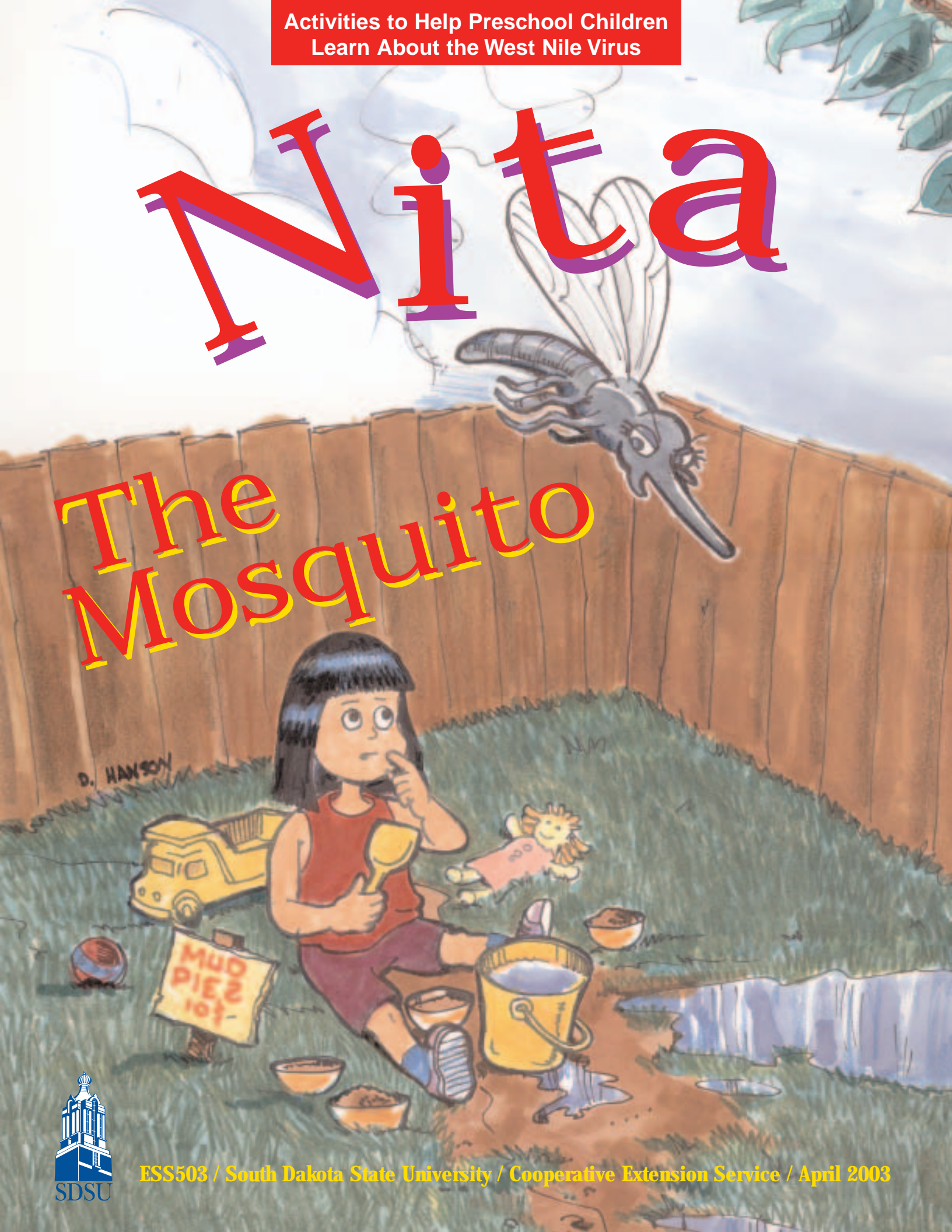
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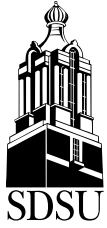
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Activities to Help Preschool Children  
Learn About the West Nile Virus

# Nitaa

## The Mosquito





## South Dakota State University Cooperative Extension Service

Dear Parents and Teachers:

This activity book is a fun, non-threatening way to help you teach children how to protect themselves, their families, and friends from a serious health threat, the West Nile virus. While it is not common in humans, the West Nile virus is a potentially dangerous disease spread by mosquito bites. It is important for everyone to be educated on the prevention of West Nile virus.

Step one in protecting humans from the West Nile virus is to control the mosquito population. This can be done in many different ways. However, we have chosen to discuss ways that children can help control the mosquito population.

Thus, it is important that you participate with the children in searching for and emptying containers that hold water. For example, the activity book challenges children to pour out the water that may be collecting in their wagons or sand buckets. Please complete the enclosed container checklist with your child.

Step two in protecting humans from the West Nile virus is to use insect repellents containing DEET. Products containing DEET are the most effective mosquito repellents available. The maximum concentration currently recommended for infants (greater than two months of age) and children is 30%. The concentration of DEET in products may range from less than 10% to over 30%. Higher concentrations of DEET will protect children for longer periods of time. One should select the lowest concentration effective for the amount of time spent outdoors. It is generally recommended DEET should not be applied more than once a day. For most children going outdoors, the once per day application of DEET will be most appropriate at dusk, one of the two times per day mosquitoes are most active, the other time being dawn.

DEET containing insect repellent is considered safe if used appropriately. Always follow the insect repellent directions. Additionally, according to the CDC, it is important to follow these guidelines:

- Do not apply DEET repellents to infants under 2 months of age.
- For other children, consider using repellents with no more than 30% DEET.
- Use only enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Do not apply to skin that is covered by clothing.
- Do not apply repellent on cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- When back indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- Do not spray repellent in an enclosed area.
- Do not apply spray repellent directly to the face. Spray your hands and rub them carefully over your or a child's face. Avoid the mouth and eye areas.
- Consult your physician if you have any questions about repellents for infants or toddlers.

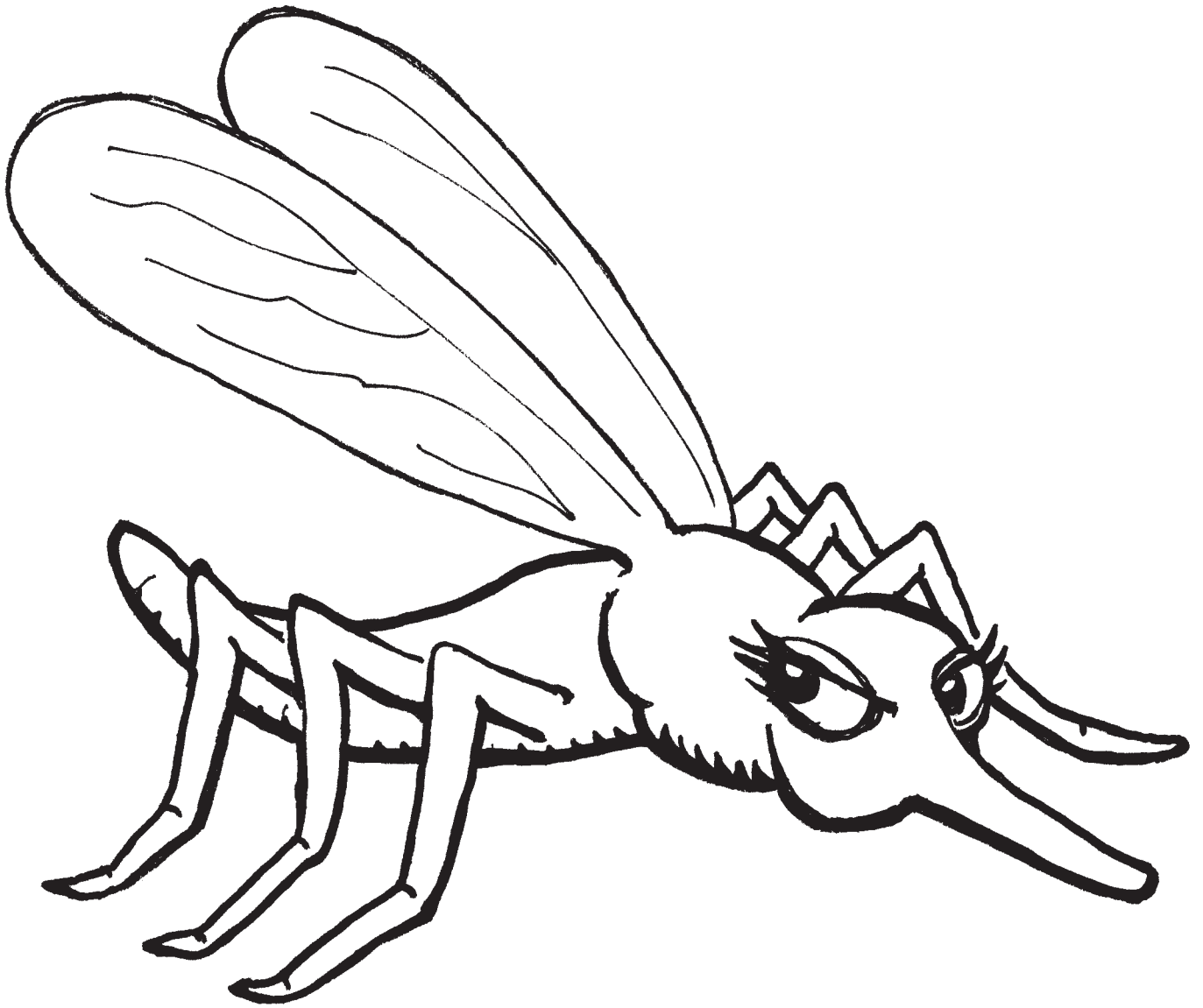
Please take time to complete this activity book with your child or with the children in your classroom. It is important to teach children that they can make a difference in their health and the health of members of their community.

Thank you for this opportunity to work together to make a difference.

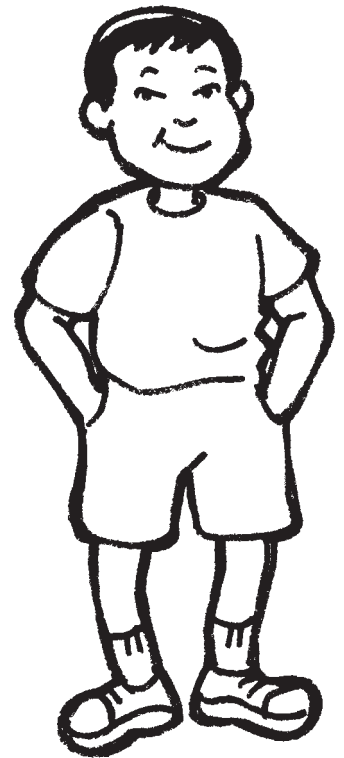
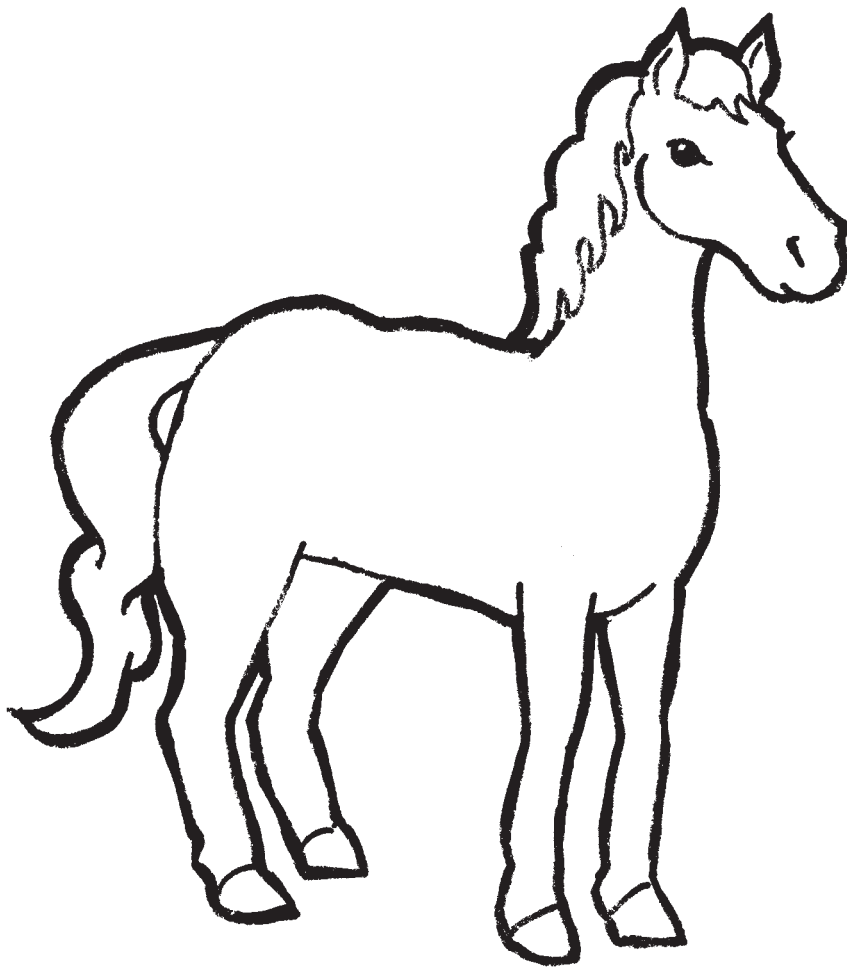
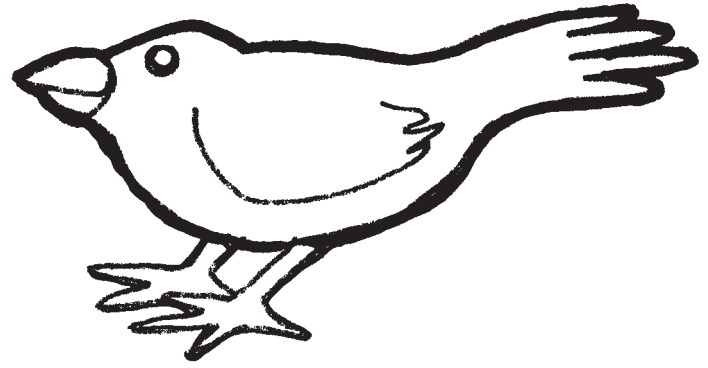
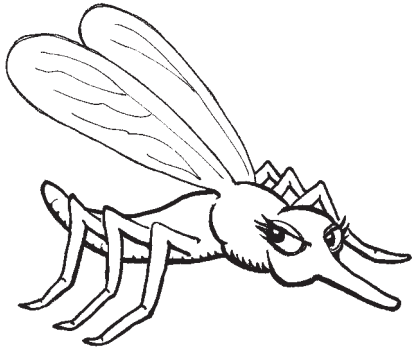
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Extension Family Life Specialist

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Extension Entomologist

Jim Wilson  
Extension Pesticide  
Education Coordinator



This is Nita the Mosquito.  
She is hungry!



Nita bites birds, horses, and other animals. Nita bites to get blood for food.





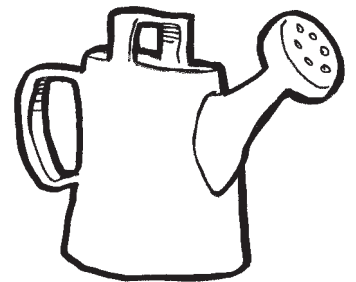
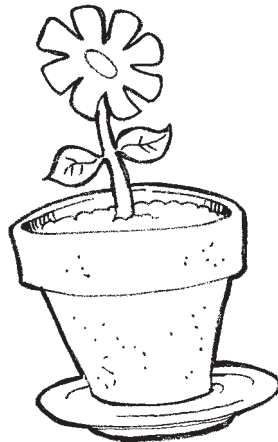
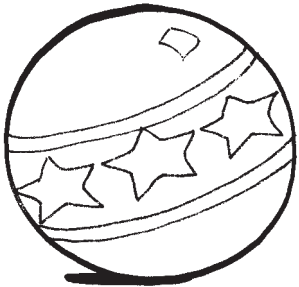
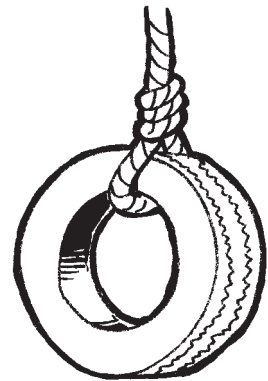
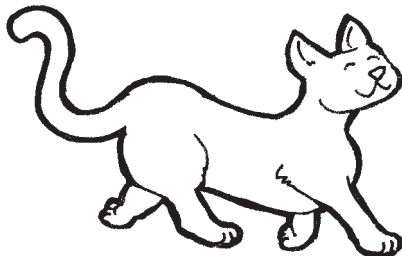
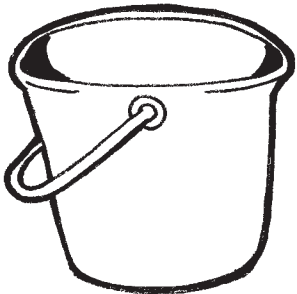
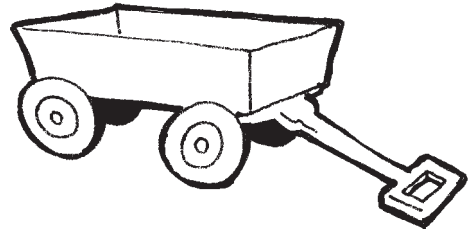
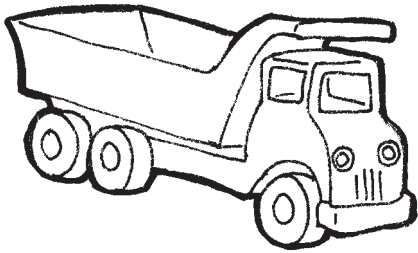
Nita and her friends also bite people. The bites can itch and make a small red bump. Tell your mom or dad if a mosquito bites you.

Some mosquito bites can make you feel sick. They can carry a virus called the West Nile virus. This virus makes you feel like you have the flu.



Put an X on the sad face.  
Draw a happy face, because  
you can protect yourself!

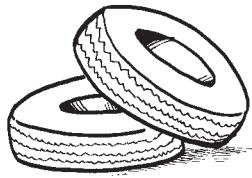
Mosquitoes grow in water.  
Circle the things that can hold water.



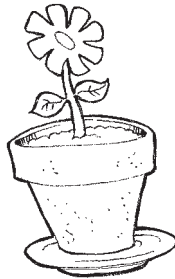




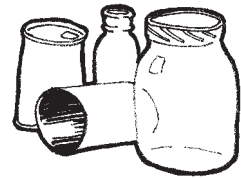
You have **POWER!**  
You can protect yourself  
and your family. Dump out water!



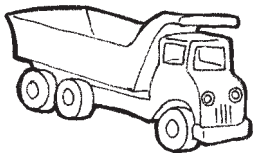
tires



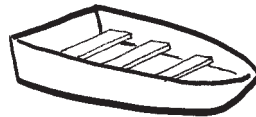
flower pot



cans and jars



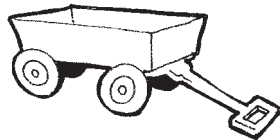
toys



boat



bird bath



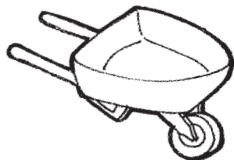
wagon



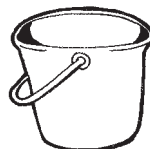
wading pool



tree hole



wheel barrow



pail



pet dish

Ask a parent to help you find things in your yard or play area that hold water. Put an X on all the things you find.



You can also protect yourself by letting your parents or teacher apply DEET on you and your clothes. Nita and her friends stay away from DEET.

## The Series

**(ESS503) Book 1 — Nita the Mosquito**

Activities to Help Preschool Children Learn About the West Nile Virus

**(ESS603) Book 2 — Little Bug, Big Bite!**

Activities to Help Children Aged 6 to 9 Learn About the West Nile Virus

**(ESS703) Book 3 — What's Up With the "Buzz"?**

Activities to Help Children Aged 10 to 12 Learn About the West Nile Virus

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The concept and some materials for this series of educational activity books about the West Nile virus were adapted for South Dakota audiences, with permission, from Mosquito Smarts (2001), a student activity packet created by Christopher Santini for Duke Power Company in Pennsylvania. Photo courtesy of Center for Disease Control/James Gathany.

## Series References

South Dakota Cooperative Extension Web site: South Dakota West Nile virus fact sheet. South Dakota Department of Health - Office of Disease Prevention (<http://sdces.sdstate.edu/>).

South Dakota Cooperative Extension Web site: Q & A on West Nile Virus. (<http://www.state.ssd.us/doh/WestNile/Q&A.htm>).

What's West Nile Virus? 2002. KidsHealth, The Nemours Foundation. (<http://www.kidshealth.org>).



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STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
M. MICHAEL ROUNDS, GOVERNOR

Dear South Dakota Kids:

More than 1,000 people in South Dakota got sick with West Nile Virus in 2003. They got sick with West Nile when mosquitoes with the virus bit them.

This year we want to stop mosquito bites, and you can help. "Fight the Bite" and stop West Nile Virus.

You can:

- Ask for bug spray when you go out.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts if there are lots of mosquitoes.
- Stay in at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are out.

Ask mom and dad to:

- Put up bug lights.
- Put screens on doors and windows.
- Check your yard. Get rid of things like tire swings that fill with water and give mosquitoes a place to live.
- Support your town's mosquito control program.

Have a safe and healthy summer. Help "Fight the Bite!"

*Mike Rounds*  
Mike Rounds  
Governor

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