



Raising awareness about bat rabies in the Americas through a One Health approach

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On Behalf of the Bat Rabies Education Team
One Health Commission



Three Truths

1. Most bats do not have rabies, but bats are responsible for countless human rabies cases in the Americas
2. Awareness of the facts about bats and rabies can help people protect themselves, their families and their pets
3. No single coordinated bat rabies prevention/education effort currently exists in the Americas



Congress Avenue Bridge, Austin, TX USA

Photo: AustinCityGuide.com



One Health Commission and Bat Rabies Education Team (OHC-BRET)

- One Health Commission (OHC) is a non-profit organization that seeks to create networks to improve health outcomes and well-being of humans, animals, plants and the environment.
- Bat Rabies Education Team (BRET) is an initiative of the One Health Commission; comprised entirely of volunteers dedicated to raising awareness about bat rabies
- OHC-BRET created due to seeming lack of focused health effort in the Americas to educate children and adults that bats can be infected with and transmit the deadly rabies virus



Purpose of Bat Rabies Education Team (BRET)



- To re-start and reinvigorate rabies awareness and education efforts in the Americas with emphasis on animal bite prevention and the importance of bats as a major reservoir species for rabies
- To inform about the ecological importance of bats as pollinators and insectivores – (Don't harm them)
- To urge seeking medical advice when a potential exposure to a rabid bat has occurred.
- **Goal: Reduce human deaths in the Americas due to bat mediated rabies**



“Never Touch a Bat – Bats Can Have Rabies” Posters

NEVER TOUCH A BAT BATS CAN HAVE RABIES



You can't tell by looking!

- Bats are shy animals that avoid human contact
- Any bat can have rabies, a deadly disease
- You could get rabies from a bat bite
- If you get bitten by a bat, wash the wound with soap and see a doctor

Keep bats out of your home:

- Ask your parents to bat proof your home
- If you find a bat in your home, call the health department

If you can touch a bat, don't!

- We need bats so don't hurt them
- A bat that lets you touch it may be sick
- If you see a bat, do not touch it
- Call an adult for help



www.rabiesalliance.org

NUNCA TOQUES UN MURCIÉLAGO LOS MURCIÉLAGOS PUEDEN TENER RABIA



No puedes saberlo solo con mirar!

- Los murciélagos son animales tímidos que evitan el contacto con los seres humanos
- Cualquier murciélagos puede tener rabia, una enfermedad mortal
- Puedes adquirir la rabia por la mordedura del murciélagos
- Si has sido mordido por un murciélagos, lava la herida con agua y jabón y procura un médico

Protege tu casa contra los murciélagos

- Pídele a tus padres que protejan la casa de los murciélagos
- Si encuentras un murciélagos en casa, llama al Departamento Salud

Si puedes tocar a un murciélagos, no lo hagas, déjalo tranquilo!

- Los murciélagos son necesarios, no los lastimes
- El murciélagos que se deja tocar puede estar enfermo
- Si ves un murciélagos, no lo toques
- Píde ayuda a un adulto



www.rabiesalliance.org

NUNCA TOQUE EM MORCEGOS MORCEGOS PODEM TER RAIVA



Não podemos dizer apenas olhando!

- Morcegos são animais tímidos que evitam contatos com seres humanos
- Qualquer morcego pode ter raiva, uma doença mortal
- Podemos contrair raiva pela mordida do morcego
- Se for mordido por um morcego, lave a ferida com sabão e água, e procure um médico

Proteja seu lar contra morcegos

- Procure orientações com seus pais de como proteger seu lar de morcegos
- Se você encontrar um morcego em casa, chame o Departamento de Saúde

Se podes tocar a um morcego, não o faça!

- Precisamos dos morcegos, então não os machuque
- O morcego que se deixa ser tocado, pode estar doente
- Se tiver a possibilidade de tocar a um morcego, não o toque
- Peça ajuda a um adulto



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Emphasis on Do Not Touch, Do Not Harm

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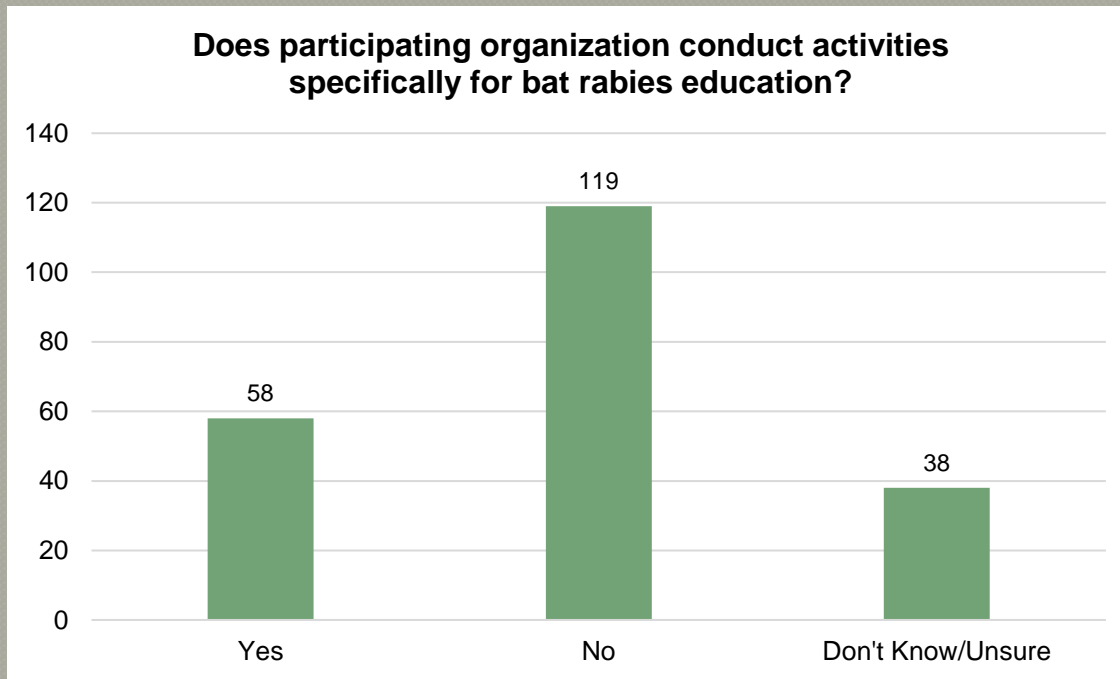
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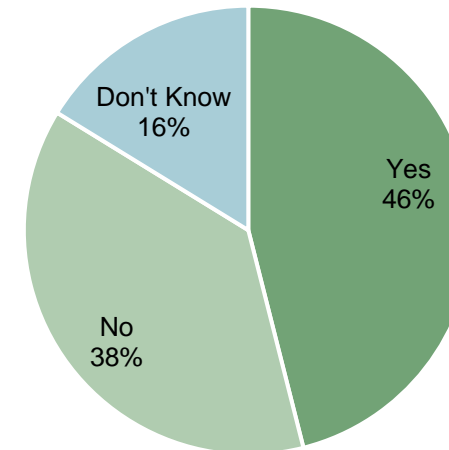
2017 BRET Survey of 228 Public Health Workers in the Americas (Human, Animal, Environmental)



Over half (55.3%) of the participating organizations do not conduct activities specifically for bat rabies education.

N = 215 (94%)

Has your agency developed any resources for bat rabies education?



Nearly 4 out of 10 (38%) of the participating organizations have not developed any resources for bat rabies education.

N = 228 (100%)



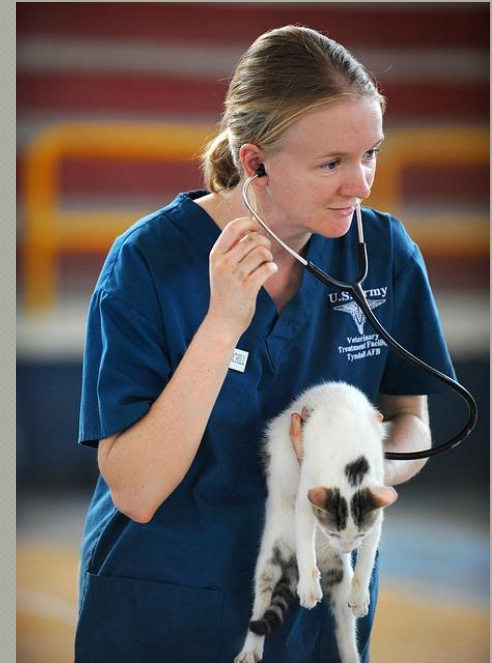
Public - Private Partnerships

- Pilot to educate children in U.S. classrooms
- Industry, Non-profit, Government and Academia
- Combination of existing and new resources
- Timing – World Rabies Day 2020
- Start Small, Keep it “SMART” then Scale-up



BRET Spearheading a Call for Veterinary Rabies Alert System to Help Raise Awareness

- Veterinarians provide a first line of defense against spillover of rabies from animals to people
- Need not only for surveillance of rabies but also getting timely information back to those working in the trenches
- Preparing publication/commentary calling for enhanced interactions and relationships between state and local public health departments and regional veterinary clinics



Regional BRETs Starting to Form

- BRET-Brazil (BRET-BRA) – July 2019
 - Brazil Bat Rabies Education Team
 - 45 Multi-disciplinary member volunteers



General Information	Media Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General education and awareness via news on the web, rumors, experiences and scientific papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating material specifically for use on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Instagram, and WhatsApp

- Online Engagement > Local Activities > National Meeting
- Use model to spread within Latin America



Need Single Point Source for Bat Rabies Information



BRET = Point Source for Bat Rabies Information



Some Available Resources on BRET Website

LA RABIA
Presentado por su veterinario y por la
American Veterinary Medical Association



AVMA
American Veterinary Medical Association

BATS AND RABIES
A public health guide

BAT CONSERVATION
www.batcon.org

CDC
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YouTube Search

0:25 / 0:32

Bats and Rabies at Schools

Bats, Rabies, and You

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

RESEARCH ARTICLE ◀ Previous Next ▶

One Health messaging about bats and rabies: how framing of risks, benefits and attributions can support public health and wildlife conservation goals

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Abstract

Context: Improving awareness to prevent exposure to rabies from bats is a public health priority. However, messages about bats and rabies often sensationalise this issue and represent bats in a negative way, which can negatively affect support for bat conservation.

Aims: The conflicts between public health goals and conservation needs seem unavoidable but are not irreconcilable. Natural resource managers and public health officials can work together to ensure that the importance of preventing exposure to rabies from bats is effectively communicated while at the same time promoting public appreciation of bat species. One efficacious way of achieving this communication goal may be through careful design of message content. This study aims to evaluate the efficacy of message design strategies in promoting rabies prevention and bat conservation.



How to Get Involved

AWARENESS IS THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST RABIES

- Raise awareness and education focused on bats and rabies
- Intensify messaging campaigns; timely, relevant and accurate
- Share effective education material(s) from your region on BRET website
- Communicate best practices and prevention strategies with others
- Help us create and translate resources for better reach and frequency
- Join BRET monthly teleconference for news, updates and projects
- Volunteer with BRET, email us at: batrabies@onehealthcommission.org
- Start a BRET group in your Region



More Information: OneHealthCommisison.Org

One Health Commission
World Health Through Collaboration

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BAT RABIES EDUCATION

- Bat Rabies in the News
- Additional Bat Rabies Resources
- Additional General Rabies Resources
- NATIONAL PET HEALTH SURVEY
- ONE HEALTH EDUCATION TASK FORCE
- ONE HEALTH SOCIAL SCIENCES INITIATIVE

Bat Rabies Education

OHC BRET - Bat Rabies Education Team

batrabies@onehealthcommission.org

Our Mission is to raise awareness about bat rabies in the Americas by promoting health education in a multi-strategic One Health approach.

Rabies is a deadly, yet preventable, viral disease that can be transmitted to people by infected mammals, including bats. Bats are an integral part of our ecosystem, serving important roles like pollination, seed dispersal, and eating disease-causing mosquitoes and crop-destroying insects. However, people may be unaware of the health risk that bats can pose to people and pets through the potential transmission of the rabies virus. Not all bats have rabies, but bats are responsible for most human cases of rabies in the Americas.

The One Health Commission Bat Rabies Education Team (BRET) is pleased to provide this webpage of educational resources and free downloadable educational posters (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese) to help get the word out about protecting bats while recognizing the potential for them to transmit rabies to humans and pets (see below for more information).

There are some key considerations that the public should be aware of regarding contact with bats.

You can't tell if a bat has rabies just by looking at it!
Rabid bats may exhibit none, some, or all of the following behaviors:



Thank You to BRET Volunteers & Co-Authors!



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Price



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Hulse



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Beyene





Gracias! Thank you! Obrigado! Merci!

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