

Rib Lake School District: Management of Head Lice Guidelines

Head lice (pediculosis) is a nuisance condition and appropriate measures will be taken to control the spread of lice infestations with the schools. Head lice control depends upon prompt identification, proper administrative handling of each case, effective treatment and prevention of its spread. The goal of this guideline is to manage head lice infestation without disrupting the education process and minimize lice related absenteeism and loss of family wages due to workday interruption.

Guidelines

- The lice management program will be under the direction of the District School Nurse, building principal(s), and the administrative assistants.
- Head lice infestations will be treated so as to preserve the confidentiality of the student(s).
- The District School Nurse will:
 - Train designated staff who will implement the program in the areas of (1) how to check a student's head if he/she is demonstrating symptoms of head lice, (2) the importance and difficulty of correctly identifying an active head lice infestation, and (3) appropriate treatment options.
 - Educate school staff regarding head lice causes, treatment and common misconceptions such as:
 - Getting head lice is not related to cleanliness of the person or his/her environment.
 - Head lice are mainly spread by direct contact with the hair of an infested person.
 - Head lice are not known to transmit diseases.
 - Head lice move by crawling, not hopping or flying.
 - Head lice are not reportable to the public health departments unless there are other communicable disease related concerns.
 - Educate students and their families about how to prevent lice and what to do if a family member has lice.
 - Examine the child's head, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck for crawling lice and nits (eggs).
 - All household members should be examined if lice or nits are found on a family member. Only those with evidence of infestation should be treated.
 - Head lice treatment must be followed exactly as instructed on the package.
 - Removal of all nits after successful treatment with a pediculicide is not necessary. Nits that are attached more than ¼ inch from the base of the hair shaft are almost always non-viable.
 - Soak all combs and brushes in very hot water for about 1 hour.
 - Wash sheets, blankets, bedding in hot water.

- Seal stuffed animals in a plastic bag for 1 week or, if possible, wash in hot water.
 - Vacuum carpets, furniture and mattresses thoroughly.
 - Retreat hair according to treatment protocol.
 - Collaborate with the Public Health Department or other resources in planning assistance to families who have chronic infestation.
- The School District will take measures to avoid isolating or stigmatizing students with suspected or known/confirmed head lice.
- Mass lice screenings will be conducted if determined necessary by the building principal after consultation with the District School Nurse. The goal of such screenings will be to educate students in hygiene and lice prevention and to remind parents of head lice prevention and the need to be vigilant about head lice checks at home.
- The District School Nurse will work in conjunction with the administrative staff, school medical advisor and community agencies to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the school district and its families and is following best practice deemed appropriate to our District.

Head Lice Protocol

- Students found with live lice and nits within a quarter of an inch from the scalp will be sent home as these cases are deemed “active.” [Students with nits further from the scalp are allowed to remain in school and will be monitored by trained staff.]
- The parent or guardian of the student with live lice and nits within a quarter of an inch from the scalp will be notified that day by telephone requesting the student be taken home and treated, stating that prompt, proper treatment of this condition is in the best interest of the child and his or her classmates. Parents and guardians will be provided a packet of comprehensive information addressing lice management. (There are many acceptable treatment options; however treatment with a product that is both a pediculicide as well as ovicidal is the most sure way to kill lice and prevent further re-infestation.)
- The student will be readmitted when the school receives documentation of treatment for head lice. This may include, but is not limited to, a note from the parent stating the treatment used, or a treatment product bottle, box top, label, receipt, etc.
- Students who are confirmed as treated will be checked by trained school staff to ensure there are no live lice and no nits within a quarter of an inch from the scalp before being allowed back in the classroom. They will be monitored for up to two weeks.
- Notification letters will be sent home to alert parents of the presence of lice only if multiple students in a classroom are found with lice. Notification letters will be generated by the building principal and District School Nurse, and sent to the parents of students in the specific grade, not just the classroom.

Legal References:

1. Sections 118.125, 118.15(3)(a), 121.02 (1)(i), 146.81 - 146.84 -- Wisc. Statutes
2. DHS 145.07(1), PI 8.01(2)(g) -- Wisc. Admin Code
3. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 34 C.F.R. Part 99 -- Federal Laws & Regulations

Supporting References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2016).
2. Frankowski, B. L., & Bocchini, J.A., and Council on School Health and Committee on Infectious Diseases. (2010). Head Lice. *Pediatrics*, 126, 392.
3. National Association of School Nurses. (2016). *Position Statement: Pediculosis Management in the School Setting*. National Association of School Nurses. (2015). Head First Lice Lessons.
4. University of Texas, School of Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner Program. (2008) *Guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of pediculosis capitis (head lice) in children and adults 2008*. Austin (TX): University of Texas, School of Nursing

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