

**Head Lice (Pediculosis)**

Head lice are a common problem among school-aged children and adolescents. The District shall take appropriate steps to assist parents/guardians in preventing and addressing head lice while respecting the confidentiality of students with head lice and limiting disruption to their education.

Lice prevention and management activities shall be under the direction of each school's school nurse OR each school's building principal OR secretary. Each school's school nurse OR each school's building principal OR secretary shall conduct the following tasks and/or train and designate other staff members to do the following:

Provide general information to parents/guardians on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice.

Encourage parents/guardians to perform regular lice checks on the scalp of their children who attend school, especially when excessive itching is noticed;

Conduct checks for head lice in students showing symptoms of head lice; and

Notify a student's parent/guardian if they are found to have head lice and provide resources on appropriate treatment options.

Individuals shall be trained and assigned within each school to assist in implementing this policy.

To prevent the spread of head lice at school, students should avoid head-to-head and hair-to-hair contact during activities. Students shall be discouraged from sharing such items as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair accessories, combs, brushes, or towels.

**Checking for Head Lice**

As described in Policy 3500, parents/guardians shall be informed that the school may conduct head lice checks as described below and shall be given the opportunity to consent to such checks ahead of time or decline to do so.

Any staff member who suspects a student has head lice shall report this to the school nurse OR building principal OR secretary. The school nurse OR building principal OR secretary may train school staff on recognizing signs of head lice.

If the student's parent has consented to such a check, the student will be checked for head lice in a confidential manner by trained personnel. Students who attend school in the District and are likely to have had head-to-head or other close personal contact with the student, such as siblings, may also be checked.

The District shall not conduct mass lice screenings of students not showing symptoms of head lice.

**Students Found to Have Head Lice**

Cases of head lice should be managed in ways that reduce disruption to the education process.

The student's parents/guardians shall be notified immediately by the school nurse OR building principal OR secretary if their child is checked for head lice.

The parent/guardian shall be notified of whether lice or nits were found. If signs of lice warranting treatment are found, the parent/guardian will be requested to begin treatment immediately. The notice shall state that prompt, proper treatment of the head lice is in the best interest of the student and their classmates.

Parents/guardians shall be provided with information on head lice treatment consistent with the recommendations of the school nurse OR medical professional consulted by the District. The information should include details explaining the problem, list the procedures for treatment, and explain any requirements for reentering school. In addition, the school nurse OR medical professional consulted by the District may offer extra help or information to families of children who are repeatedly or chronically found to have head lice.

Students who are found to have lice will be discouraged from making head-to-head contact with others and sharing personal items with other students. Students will not generally be sent home from school early due to signs of dead lice or nits. Exceptions may be made as determined appropriate and necessary by the school nurse OR building principal.

#### Return to School

The student may return to school once the parent/guardian affirms they have begun an appropriate course of treatment for the student's head lice. Students will not generally be excluded from school for having live head lice, provided treatment has begun. Exceptions may be made as determined appropriate and necessary by the school nurse OR building principal. In no case will a student be excluded from school due to the presence of nits only in their hair.

#### Notification of Head Lice Cases at School

The District will not normally send a notification regarding head lice cases in the school to parents/guardians of students, aside from notifications related to checks of their own child for head lice unless otherwise advised by medical personnel.

#### Review of Policy

The District's school nurse shall review the lice management program and related procedures periodically, in consultation with medical experts as appropriate, to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the students, their families, and the District and to ensure they are in compliance with current best practices.

Any records created related to head lice cases should be maintained in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and District policies regarding the maintenance and confidentiality of student records. Only information needed for purposes of assuring notification of the appropriate parties involved and for prevention of further exposures should be noted in a student's school records. Whether any student has or is suspected of having head lice shall be kept confidential.

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**Legal References**

IC § 33-512

**Description**

District Trustees - Governance of Schools

**Other References**

American Academy of Pediatrics

**Description**

Head Lice, Clinical Reports: Guidance for the Clinician in Rendering Pediatric Care by the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2022

American Academy of Pediatrics

Controlling Head Lice & Reducing Stigma by the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2022

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Head Lice Information for Schools by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015

National Association of School Nurses

Head Lice Management in Schools: Position Statement by the National Association of School Nurses, 2020

**Cross References****Code**

3500

**Description**

Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations

3520

Contagious or Infectious Diseases

**Policy History:**

Adopted on: 12/18/2023

Revised on:

Reviewed on: