

POLICY: JHCCA-R
Approved: September 26, 1983
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Revised: March, 2002

HEAD LICE GUIDELINES

IF SUSPECTED

1. If suspected of having head lice, the student shall be removed from the classroom for further inspection.
2. A student may be suspected of having head lice if the following signs are noted:
 - a. The student complains of itching behind the ears, at the back of the neck and/or the crown of the head, or
 - b. The student has a telltale pink rash, nits and/or live lice.

TO INSPECT:

1. The student may be inspected privately by designated building personnel. Severe cases are obvious to identify by simply looking at the student's head. Mild cases will require a closer inspection under good light. The following inspection procedures shall be used.
 - a. Student should be brought to an area offering good light. The examination should be done unobtrusively and privately.
 - b. A separate, clean implement (i.e., tongue depressor, unused pencil, toothpick) may be used to separate the hair. Gloves should also be used. Use of the above is at the discretion of the inspector (see #2 below).
 - c. Care must be taken not to convey the message that the student is too "dirty" to touch; the student has no control over the problem.
 - d. The individual conducting the examination needs to maintain a calm and reassuring attitude.
2. There is no reason to fear catching lice while inspecting an individual since lice cannot jump or fly and the nits are stuck to the hair shaft. (Physicians and other health workers have investigated hundreds of suspected and infested children without catching lice themselves.) Simply washing the hands with soap and water is sufficient upon completion of the inspection.
3. There are several ways to tell the difference between nits and dandruff. A nit is stuck to the hair shaft and will not shake off, as dandruff will. A flake is non-dimensional and white, while a nit is teardrop shaped and silvery white in color.

TO EXCLUDE:

1. If a lice infestation is suspected or confirmed, the building principal shall be informed. The building principal will exclude a student until diagnosis and/or adequate treatment has occurred. The student will be kept at school until the parent/guardian or the designated emergency contact person is notified.
2. Should chronic re-infestation occur in individuals, the school may request that additional measures be taken prior to readmission.

TO RE-ADMIT:

1. The parent/guardian will be given a copy of the treatment recommendations (JHCCA-E(2)) and will be instructed about the treatment verification form (JHCCA-E(1)). The student will not be re-admitted to school without this signed form. The school does require absence of nits for re-admittance to school.
2. Students may be re-inspected in 7-10 days after exclusion date, preferably by the person doing the initial inspection, to determine if re-infestation has occurred. If re-infestation is suspected, follow the above guidelines for exclusion from school.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

1. Only information needed for the purpose of assuring notification of the appropriate parties involved and for prevention of further outbreaks should be noted. All information shall be kept in confidence in accordance with State and Federal laws and regulations. Treatment verification forms are to be considered and treated as health records.
2. Health records, including verification of treatment forms, will be maintained by the school principal (see #1 above).

REPORTING:

1. Pediculosis (head lice) is not a reportable disease and it is not necessary for the school or parent/guardian to notify the local health officer of cases.
2. Parents/guardians are requested to report to the school cases of head lice infestation that they discover in order to help control outbreaks, but this is not required.

LIMITING OUTBREAKS:

1. The school reserves the right to inspect other known household contacts attending school in an effort to stem outbreaks in other classes. In elementary schools it may be necessary to inspect a classroom of children of child identified with head lice.
2. Parents/guardians of school children may receive printed head lice information. An individual school may elect to distribute additional information or parent notification of an outbreak.

3. School principals and/or their designee are encouraged to contact the Washington County Health Department for assistance when needed (262/335-4452).
4. The principal or designee shall monitor environmental conditions and be responsible for making recommendations to decrease transmission of head lice. Suggestions include: keeping coats and hats of individuals separated as much as possible; cleaning, disinfecting stuffed furniture/carpet, etc., early childhood/kindergarten/physical education classes with try-on clothes, hats, etc., will have to exercise care and discretion to prevent transmission of head lice, particularly when a student in the class is infested.
5. While no school can be entirely risk free from communicable disease, it is felt that efforts directed toward awareness and prevention will result in fewer infestations and be cost and time effective.