

Head Lice Procedure

Purpose

This tells staff what to do when a child has head lice.

Procedure

- Child remains in class
- Child goes home at end of school day
- Child can return to class after treatment has begun
- Staff to send home or post: *Exposure Notice to Families – Head Lice*
- Staff will not screen other children

General Guidelines

- **Immediate or long-term exclusion is not required.** Children with live head lice can remain in class and go home at the end of the school day, be treated, and return to school after the treatment has begun. Children can return to school with nits following treatment.
- Notify parent/guardian of the suspected case. Suggest resources for parents on how to treat head lice, such as those web sites listed below or available through the Washington State Department of Health Lice Web page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Pests/Lice>
- **Routine or periodic classroom screening is not recommended.**
- Refer to a licensed health care provider for evaluation of secondary infection (such as skin infections from scratching), if suspected
- Maintain and support confidentiality for the student. Document in child's file and report any related absences on the Illness Reporting Log form.
- Use universal precautions
- Discreetly manage lice infestations so that the child is not ostracized, isolated, humiliated, or psychologically traumatized.
- Children should be discouraged from close head-to-head contact with others.
- Follow-up with the family to ensure that the infestation is being addressed appropriately until the infestation has ended.

Refer to the OSPI guideline <http://www.k12.wa.us/healthservices/pubdocs/infectiousdiseasecontrolguide.pdf>

Classroom Guidelines

- Vacuum all rugs, upholstered furniture, car or infant seats and anything that can't be washed with warm soapy water.
- Discourage the use of shared helmets. Wash helmets with warm soapy water.
- Discard and/or replace vacuum cleaner bags and/or contents.
- Do not use spray insecticides (or lice sprays) in the classroom or outside. It can cause allergic or toxic reactions in children and staff.
- Wash all clothing, bedding and linen of infected person in hot water or dry in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.
- Dress up clothing and hats should be washed and dried in a hot dryer.
- Items that cannot be washed such as pillow or stuffed animals should be placed in a dryer on "high" for at least 20 minutes.
- Discourage children from sharing combs, hats, coats or other clothing.

Head Lice Procedure

- Keep coats and hats separated on different hooks or hangers so they don't touch. Paper grocery bags (or cloth) can be used for keeping children's coats separated.
- No need to re-examine child (children) when returning to class after treatment has begun.

Related Documents:

Exposure Notice to Families – Head Lice

Illness Log (only if necessary)

The Nit Picking Chart – Who Does What Work Chart

Resources:

Lice Kits – call your Health/Nutrition/Safety Coach for more information.

Web sites for more info:

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/parents.html>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/diseases/headlice.aspx>

<http://www.headlice.org>

<http://www.seattlechildrens.org/medical-conditions/symptom-index/lice/>