

Hamilton Wenham School District Pediculosis Procedures

Although Pediculosis (Head Lice) is a nuisance, it is not considered to be a public health concern. Due to the changing environment, head lice have adapted, survived and continue to affect school-aged children everywhere. Head lice are not considered a sign of unclean individuals or homes. Education and treatment remain the forefront of our approach to controlling pediculosis in the schools. With the cooperation of parents and resources from primary care providers, pharmacists, and school nurses, infestations can be minimized.

According to the National Association of School Nurses, the American Academy of Pediatrics and CDC, the management of pediculosis should not disrupt the educational process. No disease is associated with head lice and in-school transmissions are rare. Lice are the result of direct head-to-head contact.

Treatment: It is recommended by the CDC, upon initial infestation, an over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medication be used. It is important that when using a pediculicide, the parent or guardian reads the specific directions provided as each treatment could differ. **In addition, a conditioner and shampoo with conditioner should not be used immediately before or after treatment as it reduces the effectiveness of the treatment.**

Hamilton Wenham School Nurses will approach the problem through *Education and Monitoring*

Guidelines:

- When a student is suspected to have pediculosis, the school nurse will be notified.
- The school nurse will examine the student. If a student has a **positive infestation or live lice, he or she will be dismissed from school.**
- The school nurse will notify the parent/guardian and will provide educational information on treatment and care options.
- **Students may come to school with nits (eggs). Nits cannot jump or crawl and therefore do not cause infestations.** Parents are encouraged to nit-pick until the nits are removed from the hair as viable nits could cause re-infestations.
- Students may return to school the next day after recommended treatment. **The school nurse will inspect the student upon return to school and 7-10 days later until the student is free of lice.** Parents are responsible for routine examination of their child's hair for at least two weeks.
- Research has shown that classroom-wide or school-wide screening is not warranted; however it may be appropriate to monitor those children who have had close head-to-head contact with a student who has an active infestation. Each reported case of head lice will be recorded and head lice infestations will be monitored by the school nurse.
- At the discretion of the school nurse, and considering the privacy of the students, notices will be sent home notifying parents if there are several cases of lice in a classroom or grade level.
- The elementary school nurses will regularly make parents aware of the availability of resources regarding pediculosis and remind parents to screen their children for head lice.

Resources: Massachusetts Department of Public Health
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/cdc/factsheets/head-lice.pdf>
American Academy of Pediatrics
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/110/3/638.full.pdf>
National Association of School Nurses
<http://www.nasn.org>

