

HEAD LICE

Based on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Board recognizes that school-wide screening for nits alone is not an accurate way of predicting which children will become infested with head lice, and screening for live lice has not been proven to have a significant decrease on the incidence of head lice in a school community.

The school nurse will periodically provide information to families of all children on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice. Parents are encouraged to check their children's heads for lice if the child is symptomatic. The school nurse may check a student's head if the student is demonstrating symptoms.

The Board recognizes that head lice infestation poses little risk to others and does not result in additional health problems. The management of pediculosis should proceed so as to not disrupt the education process. Nonetheless, any staff member who suspects a student has head lice will report this to the school nurse or Principal. Students known to have head lice will remain in class provided the student is comfortable. If a student is not comfortable, he/she may report to the school nurse or Principal's office. Such students will be discouraged from close direct head contact with others and from sharing personal items with other students. District employees will act to ensure that student confidentiality is maintained so the child is not embarrassed.

The Principal or school nurse will notify the parent/guardian by telephone or other available means if their child is found to have head lice, and may recommend that the child be removed from school. Verbal and written instructions for treatment will be given to the family of each identified student. Instructions will include recommendations for treatment that are consistent with New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services recommendations.

Based upon the school nurse's recommendation, other children who were most likely to have had direct head-to-head contact with the assessed child may be checked or screened for head lice.

Students will be allowed to return to school after proper treatment as recommended by the school nurse. The Board recognizes that The American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses discourage "no nit" policies. In alignment with these recommendations, no student will be excluded from attendance solely based on grounds that nits may be present. The school nurse may recheck a child's head. In addition, the school nurse may offer extra help or information to families of children who are repeatedly or chronically infested.

Legal Reference:

RSA 200:32, Physical Examination of Pupils

RSA 200:38, Control and Prevention of Communicable Diseases: Duties of School Nurse

RSA 200:39, Exclusion from School

American Academy of Pediatrics, Clinical Report on Head Lice Infestation, September 2002

<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/gci/content/full/pediatrics;110/3/638>