

WLWV Health Services Guidance on Head Lice

Rationale

Pediculosis (head lice) are a fairly common occurrence in school-aged children. While highly inconvenient, lice do not cause any medical harm and can be effectively treated. The WLWV District Nursing staff follows the current recommendations available for head lice management from the Center for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics as well as the National Association of School Nurses. These organizations recommend not excluding students with nits only. We will only exclude students with live lice, so that they can promptly access measures for treatment. We understand what a nuisance lice are, and it is our expectation we will work together with parents to work to minimize the impact of head lice in our schools and community.

School Response

In order to minimize outbreaks, the schools must receive timely information from parents whose children have confirmed cases. We work to minimize the interaction of students' heads and clothing, and to clean or remove items that could serve as temporary hosts. A classroom check will be performed when there have been 3 non-related cases of head lice in a classroom within 10 consecutive school days. If your student is treated at home for head lice, we do ask that you bring your student back to school where the school nurse or secretary will inspect the scalp before they return to class.

Parent Responsibility

Checking your students regularly (every three days) by closely examining the scalp and hair behind the ears and neckline, is the best way to minimize outbreaks in the school. If lice are discovered, please be diligent about treating your child's scalp, using special combs designed for "nit-picking", and clean all fabric surfaces/items that could be serving as temporary hosts. We ask that parents accompany students to school to be checked for any further live lice, so that if live lice are found, they may bring the student home for another round of treatment.

Definitions

Head lice are tiny, crawling bugs the size of a sesame seed. Head lice are not socially motivated; they go to the human head that is the closest, and take up residency. They **cannot** jump or fly, and will not survive long off the human head. Nits are the lice eggs. They are the size of a poppy seed and are glued to the hair shaft by a type of insect "super glue ". Nits can be found anywhere on the hairs of the head but mainly behind the ears and on the back of the head and neck. Nits may look like dandruff but are glued firmly to the hair shaft and can't be easily removed.