

Head Lice Policy and Procedure

Goal

The collective goal of the school community is to have lice and nit-free classrooms. *This is seen as a communal effort between parents and the school.* It is agreed that the best way to eliminate the cycle of re-occurrence is for every family to help and support this goal. Families are the first line in lice management and prevention. This policy has been developed within the framework of Coastal Health Guidelines.

Method of Prevention

The school adopts the following guidelines that allow for the ongoing detection and treatment of lice and nits.

- The school will provide resources for education regarding lice to all staff, parents and children. Teachers will offer reminders to students throughout the school year to minimize activities that spread the infestation of lice (sharing hats, combs, close head-to-head contact, etc.)
- If lice or nits are suspected, a phone call to the parent will be made by the receptionist. If lice are found by the parents, they must inform the school receptionist, who will then notify the class(es), through the school's publish system.

Children may return to class after the following steps have been completed:

- Completion of lice treatment using Option A or Option B as per Coastal Health documentation available below.
- Removal of all lice and nits
- Ongoing checks by children's parents must be conducted on a daily basis.

Ratified by the College of Teachers, September 26, 2013

Head Lice

Head lice, also known as pediculosis, can be itchy and uncomfortable but are not a major public health concern because they do not spread illness or disease. Head lice spread from person to person. Schools, parents and the school public health nurse all have a role to play in the control and management of head lice.

Our role

The school public health nurse does not perform individual or group checks, support mass screening head checks or provide treatment to individuals or groups. Instead, he or she will:

- Ensure schools are provided with standardized, evidence-based head lice information for staff, teachers and parents.
- Act as a resource for clarification or information about the management of head lice including speaking to parent groups, advisory meetings or preschool/kindergarten entry meetings as requested.
- Provide support and resources to schools for development of head lice management practices. We do not support exclusion from school due to head lice.
- Build capacity of facility staff, parents and other caregivers in the treatment and management of head lice.

Your role

- Implement head lice management protocols and guidelines based on best practices and health recommendations. Our head lice package includes a [notice to parents](#), [alert letter](#), [fact sheet](#) and [treatment options](#) materials for you to use.
- Promote best practices for head lice management as outlined by the public health nurse. This can include holding annual or biannual head lice awareness weeks where activities are designed to promote facts and dispel myths or distributing ongoing awareness materials and head check reminders via newsletters, websites, bulletin boards, health fairs, open houses, parent-teacher evenings, PAC meetings or other group events.
- Develop a resource library or section on the school website with information and best practice guidelines for management of head lice.

Parents' role

- Take a proactive approach in understanding lice facts and myths.
- Teach your child about prevention of head lice (not sharing hats, headsets, scarves, helmets, etc)
- Ask questions and get information about lice, prevention and treatment options.
- Check the heads of every member of the household when lice have been identified in a close contact.
- Treat only the household members who have head lice with a recommended treatment.





OPTION A: HEAD LICE SHAMPOO

(Special head lice shampoos and rinses are used because they have been tested and deemed to be a safe and effective treatment)

Kill the Head Lice and Remove The Nits

This option involves using two (or three) treatments with a special head lice shampoo or cream rinse, 7 to 10 days apart. This special shampoo or cream rinse is available without a prescription at any pharmacy. The shampoo or cream rinse kills the head lice on the head but may not kill the nits. The nits need to be removed from the hair using a special “nit” comb and by using your fingernails. Resistance and or re-infestation can occur, and if it does, consult a Public Health Nurse.

ASK A PHARMACIST ABOUT HEAD LICE SHAMPOOS AND CREAM RINSES

STEPS TO FOLLOW

DO	REMEMBER
1. <u>Check the heads</u> of all household members. Using a fine toothed lice comb, check the entire head, especially behind ears and back of neck. You are looking for live lice.	1. If one person in a house has head lice, there is a good chance that other household members have head lice too.
2. <u>Treat</u> infested household members at the same time. Read and follow the directions on the head lice shampoo or cream rinse carefully.	2. Unless you treat all infested household members, head lice can be passed on from one person to another when heads touch.
3. <u>Remove all dead lice and nits</u> using a nit comb or your fingers. Rinse nit comb or fingers in a sink or bowl of warm water and wipe dry after each stroke.	3. Metal and plastic nit combs are available at your local pharmacy. If the nit comb tugs the hair, try untangling the hair with a wide tooth comb first and then try the nit comb again.
4. <u>Wash</u> clothing worn in the past 2 – 3 days, bed sheets and pillowcases and place in <u>hot</u> cycle of the dryer <u>or</u> put the items in a sealed plastic bag for 10 days.	4. There is no reason to do a major clean up of the house to get rid of head lice. Only items that have been in direct contact with the affected person need to be washed, such as shirts, jackets, hats, combs, brushes.
5. <u>Treat a second time</u> 7 – 10 days after the first treatment. Repeat steps 2 and 3 above. - a third treatment is optional.	5. A second treatment will make sure that any head lice which hatch after the first treatment will be killed before they have a chance to lay any eggs. Two treatments and a follow-up check of the head with nit removal is the best way to make sure head lice are gone.
Contact your local Public Health Nurse if you have any questions.	



OPTION B: WET COMBING

(A non-chemical way to find and eliminate head lice)

Remove the Head Lice

Wet combing is based on the life cycle of head lice. It is about removing the live head lice from the head. Combing treatments are done every 3 – 4 days over a two-week period. This breaks the life cycle of head lice by removing them before they are fully grown and able to lay more eggs. This option is low cost and safe but takes time and requires that the steps below be followed carefully and completely. Talk to your Public Health Nurse if you need more information.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

DO	REMEMBER
1. <u>Wash</u> hair with normal shampoo and rinse.	1. Note: On average, a wet combing session takes about ½ hour per person.
2. <u>Apply</u> at least ½ cup of normal conditioner (any brand) to cover and wet all of the hair. Do not rinse out the conditioner.	2. Untangle hair with a regular wide tooth comb. Wet conditioner will stop the lice from moving around as quickly.
3. <u>Comb</u> sections of hair using a fine toothed lice comb. Divide hair into small sections. Firmly draw the comb from the scalp to the end of the hair. After each stroke, check the comb for lice. Rinse the comb in a sink or bowl of warm water, and wipe dry. Continue section by section until the entire head is done. Make sure hair stays wet with conditioner during combing.	3. Metal or plastic nit combs are available at your local pharmacy. If the comb tugs the hair, use a wide toothed comb first and more conditioner, then try the nit comb again.
4. <u>Rinse hair.</u> Leave hair dripping wet. Repeat Step 3 combing without conditioner, until no lice are found.	4. Check the comb and your fingernails for head lice (you do not want to put any lice back in the hair).
5. <u>Wash</u> clothing worn in the past 2 – 3 days, bed sheets and pillowcases and place in hot cycle of the dryer or put the items in a sealed plastic bag for 10 days.	5. There is no reason to do a major clean up of the house to get rid of head lice. Only items that have been in direct contact with the affected person need to be washed, such as shirts, jackets, hats, combs, brushes and pillowcases.
6. <u>Repeat</u> Steps 1 – 4 every three or four days for two weeks.	6. Follow the schedule below.

Contact your local Public Health Nurse if you have any questions.

DAYS TO WET COMB

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14