

The Slinger School District follows guidelines established by the American Academy of Pediatrics in detecting and screening for head lice. We also follow recommendations from the District Medical Advisor, National Association of School Nurses, and public health resources.

Head lice outbreaks are common among children. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) determined that “No-nits” policies that require a child to be free of nits before they can return to school are not recommended. Head lice are a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Our procedural guidelines are a “middle of the road” approach to recommendations made by the AAP. Children with live lice are sent home for treatment.

Head lice control is a community-wide problem. Parents/guardians should assume that lice are present all year. Parents should screen their own children on a regular basis. Current evidence based practice has determined that classroom and school wide screenings are not effective in decreasing the incidence of head lice and are not cost effective. Furthermore, due to the disruption of classroom activity, all class or all school checks are rarely done. Classroom letters are rarely sent out in an effort to protect a child’s privacy.

Prompt treatment of lice can result in minimal school absence. Parents are responsible for the treatment of lice and nits.

#### IF A STUDENT IS SUSPECTED TO HAVE HEAD LICE:

1. The student shall be removed from the classroom as discretely as possible for further inspection.
2. A student may be suspected of having head lice if the student:
  - a. complains of an “itchy” scalp or is observed scratching his/her scalp
  - b. has nits and/or live lice
  - c. has open sores/lesions on the scalp
3. The student shall be inspected privately by the Office (or District Nurse when available) or other trained building personnel in collaboration with the District Nurse.

#### IF THE STUDENT IS FOUND TO HAVE LIVE HEAD LICE OR NITS:

1. The parent/guardian or designated emergency contact will be immediately notified.
2. If live lice are identified on a student for the *first time* in a school year:
  - a. Parent/guardian will be contacted by the staff member to determine if recent treatment has been completed.
  - b. The student will be sent home if live lice are visible.
3. *Before* a student, who has been identified as having live lice, comes back to school, a parent/guardian must verify a lice-killing treatment. This treatment can consist of shampoo, special cream rinse, prescription treatment, manual removal or an alternative treatment that does not contain a pesticide. Parents are encouraged to check with their Pediatrician for any recommended treatment.
4. The student shall be allowed to continue to attend school during treatment as long as no live lice are present.

5. Students sent home will be rechecked by school staff every 2-3 days after having been treated for live lice. This is to determine that nits/eggs closest to the scalp are being removed and the continued absence of live lice.

6. Trained school staff will continue intermittent checks for live lice for the next 3 weeks. The checks can be discontinued after a student is lice free for at least 3 weeks and there is evidence of diminishing nits.

7. Parent/guardian should make every attempt to remove any eggs, 1/4 inch or closer to the child's scalp, within 7 days of discovery of the nits/eggs. This diminishes the chance for successful hatching of any viable nits. Nits that are greater than 1/4 inch from the scalp are no longer considered to be viable. *Parents should initially concentrate on those nits closest to the scalp.*

8. Further absences due to head lice, for the current/initial infestation, will be considered unexcused. Parent conferences may be appropriate when a student is frequently absent due to head lice infestations. Referrals to community agencies may be appropriate.

9. If live lice are identified for a second time within a school year parents will be notified and expected to follow their lice product manufacturers recommended treatment guidelines-again.

10. If live lice are identified for a third time in a school year, within a short period of time from the second infestation, parents of the student will be asked to treat again using a different product and asked to remove the majority of all nits remaining on the hair—before returning to school. Parents can also call their medical provider for treatment prescriptions at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Head lice shall deserve the same level of confidentiality as any other medical concern.

**REPORTING:** The District Nurse will work with the local county health department to determine when to report an outbreak.

#### **LIMITING OUTBREAKS:**

1. The Slinger School District reserves the right to inspect other known close personal contacts (such as siblings and friends attending the same school) in an effort to stem outbreaks in other classes. However, seldom is inspecting an entire classroom or student body necessary or effective.
2. An informational letter about head lice prevention, diagnosis, and treatment will go home to the parents/guardians of all students in a classroom if there are 2 or more cases of live lice in that individual classroom.

#### **EDUCATION:**

1. Parents/guardians of all elementary school children shall receive head lice information each school year. Information will be sent to middle and high school parents/guardians upon the discretion of the building Principal.
2. Head lice information shall be available upon request from the child's school.
3. While no school can be entirely risk free from lice, it is felt that efforts directed toward awareness and prevention will result in fewer infestations and be cost and time effective.

#### **Cross References:**

**Adoption Date:** 12/16/19

**Revised Date:**

