



Head Lice in The School Setting

**All procedures coincide with recommendations from
the American Academy of Pediatrics
and the
National Association of School Nurses**

The Burlington Area School District Policy states that children will only be excluded from school if LIVE lice are present.

1. Individuals may be screened for head lice per request by school staff and/or parent.
2. ***Entire classroom screening is no longer performed or allowed due to HIPAA / FERPA regulations, which are federal privacy laws. In addition, notes are not sent home to all children when lice has been found in the classroom for the same reason.***
3. A student with live lice found in their hair, will be sent home for treatment. A parent or emergency contact is required to pick the student up from school.
4. It is an expectation that the child returns to school within 24 hours.
5. Students who have been determined to have live head lice, are required to report to the health office upon return to school with a parent / guardian. The purpose of this visit is to ensure that the child has been treated and to examine the scalp for live lice. In the event live lice continue to be present, they will be excluded from school again. This step will be repeated until no live lice are detected.
6. A student with only nits (lice eggs) found in the hair, will not be sent home. The parent will be contacted and head lice treatment information will be sent home with student.
7. Students who have been determined to have nits, are required to report to the health office upon return to school. The purpose of this visit to ensure that the nits are being removed. The family will be encouraged to continue to remove nits from the child's hair.
8. General reminders to parents will be sent out periodically throughout the school year to encourage parents to be assessing their child for this health nuisance.
9. Awareness of social implications that spread head lice is critical for parents to consider. "Selfies" have quickly become one of the number one ways that head lice is spread. In addition sleep-overs, sharing personal items and business places with cloth lounging chairs are generally the ways head lice are spread.

Despite popular belief that schools are havens for head lice - the chances of your child getting head lice in school is extremely rare.

Lice Myths Dispelled

Definitions

Infestation: Having an insect present, in this case, in your hair

Lice: More than one louse

Louse: Small insect that lives on the scalp

Nits: Eggs, dead or alive, of a louse

Parasite: An organism that lives off another. Lice survive on human blood

Pediculosis: Having an infestation of lice

| Myths | Truths |
|---|---|
| Lice are easy to get. | Lice are spread only by head-to-head contact. They are much harder to get than a cold, flu, ear infection, pink eye, strep throat, food poisoning, or impetigo. |
| You can get lice from your dog, guinea pig or other animal. | Lice are species specific. You can get human lice only from another human. You cannot get another animal's lice. |
| Lice are often passed via hats and helmets | Rare, but possible. Hairbrushes, pillows and sheets are much more common modes of transmission. |
| School is a common place for lice transmission. | School is a VERY RARE source of transmission. Much more common are family members, overnight guests and playmates who spent a large amount of time together. |
| Poor hygiene contributes to lice. | Hygiene makes absolutely no difference. Lice actually like clean hair more than dirty. You get lice by close personal contact with someone else who has lice, not by being dirty. |
| Lice can jump or fly from one person to another. | Lice can only crawl. They can neither fly nor jump. They must crawl from one person to another. |
| Eggs or nits can fall out of the hair, hatch, and cause lice in another person. | Nits are cemented to the hair and are very hard to remove. They cannot fall off. Newly hatched larvae must find a head quickly or they will die. |
| Lice can live a long time. | Lice live only 1 to 2 days off the head. |
| All members of a family should be treated if one person has lice. | Only the person with lice should be treated. Lice shampoos are INSECTICIDES and can be dangerous if used incorrectly or too frequently. Household members and close contacts should be checked, but only treat those who actually have lice. |
| Checking a classroom when one student has lice can prevent lice from spreading. | Classroom transmission is EXCEEDINGLY RARE and a waste of valuable teaching time. Checking family members and close playmates is much more appropriate. |
| Avoiding lice is important as they spread disease. | Lice do not spread any known disease. They are annoying and time-consuming to get rid of, but cause no disease. |