

Managing Head Lice in Schools



Managing head lice in schools is very important because it is in the school setting that head lice is most likely to be transferred.

It is important that the school and parents work together as a team where each take responsibility for certain tasks.

The School's Responsibilities In Managing Head Lice

- Have a head lice school policy in place that describes procedures that will be followed to identify head lice, notify parents, minimize transmission, as well as how and when to do follow-up after treatment.
- Train teachers and other school personnel in identifying and managing head lice.
- Maintain confidentiality when head lice are identified and notify parents in a sensitive manner.
- Provide practical advice for parents of infested families and maintain a sympathetic attitude.
- Make the head lice school policy known to all parents.
- Make an informed decision whether children with live lice and nits should be allowed to attend school. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that no child should be forced to stay home because of live lice or nits.
- If a school adopts a no-lice or no-nit policy, clear guidelines should be available as to when the child will be allowed to attend school again; for example, after one treatment or when the school nurse is satisfied that there are no nits or lice left.
- Extra help should be given to children with chronic or prolonged infestation, to minimize the number of days they are absent from school.



Head Lice Center.com

For more information about head lice, visit www.headlicecenter.com



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The Parent's Responsibility In Managing Head Lice

- Check your children's hair for head lice on a weekly basis and inspect household members regularly.
- Treat an infested child as soon as possible after lice have been identified.
- Notify the school and the parents of close friends if you have identified head lice, to make sure that if the lice were transmitted, treatment can start as soon as possible.
- Notify the school of the treatment procedures you have followed so that your child can attend school if the school has a no-lice or no-nit policy in place.
- Make sure that children with long hair attend school with hair tied back.
- Be willing to attend head lice information sessions or meetings organized by the school.

Tips For Preventing The Spread of Head Lice In Schools

Head lice are transmitted through close person-to-person contact. Head lice cannot fly, but only crawl and can also be transmitted through sharing personal belongings like brushes, combs, helmets and hats. The following measures can be put in place to avoid getting head lice in the classroom:

- Desks should be spaced apart so children are not sitting shoulder to shoulder.
- Children with long hair should be encouraged to tie it back.
- Have separate pegs for coats and hats. Children shouldn't hang coats and hats on top of those of other children or pile them on top of each other.
- Ensure ample space between children in lines or when working together as groups.
- Minimize shared use of headgear such as earphones, helmets and clothing.
- Make sure that the health curriculum of all pupils contains information about head lice and how it is identified, transferred and treated.



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