

Guideline for Controlling Head Lice in the Schools

Definitions:

- **Live lice**-these are live lice that have hatched from the eggs and can be seen in a person's hair. They are capable of laying eggs and continuing the life cycle of lice.



- **Nits**- these are the eggs that are found on hair shafts, can be hatched or unhatched. They are cemented on the hair shaft and are hard to remove. Nits close to the scalp have not hatched. Nits further away from the scalp (more than 1 inch) have already hatched.



- **Classroom**- this is the specific room that a student with live lice or untreated nits were identified.
 - **Grade level**-this is the grade level (i.e. all third grade classrooms) where cases of live lice or untreated nits were identified.
 - **Unit**-this is the two grade levels that share time together at recess/lunch (i.e. 4th and 5th grade, or 2nd and 3rd grade)
1. At the beginning of each school year, schools will include the introductory letter on head lice in the informational packet to parents. This introductory letter informs parents about the district actions on head lice and actions parents can take to help manage head lice in the school.
 2. Keep Alert! Be suspicious of students who repeatedly scratch their heads.
 3. If a student is found to have head lice or nits that have not been treated, send the student home to be treated along with the letter ("Live Lice/Nits") and the checklist for treating head lice.

4. All other household members to the identified case, who attend the School District of Janesville, should be checked. Household members should be sent home for treatment if live lice are noted or the student has nits that have not been treated. If no live lice are noted, the student may stay in school.
5. Other students in the same school as the case person, who may be considered a suspect or close contact, should be checked for head lice. Students to consider include:
 - Frequent playmates
 - Students who recently shared combs, brushes, hats, coats, gym towels and/or equipment, helmets, dress up clothing, etc.
 - Students who share the same locker or cubbies. Students who are frequent “huggers”.
6. At the elementary school level:
 - a. If no other close contacts are found to have live head lice, the follow up screening can stop.
 - b. If 2 or more close contact students are found to have live lice or nits, proceed to check the students in the classroom(s) of the students found to have head lice.
 - c. If three or more students in the classroom(s) are found to have live head lice or nits, then check the entire grade level.
 - d. If three or more students in the grade level are found to have live head lice or nits, then check the students in the unit.
 - e. If more cases of live lice or nits are found in the unit, then check all students in the school.
 - f. The letter to parents (“Classroom”) informing them of head lice being identified in a classroom shall be used when one case of head lice has been identified in that classroom. At a minimum, this letter should be used one time per semester when the above criteria are met.
 - g. Anytime the school conducts a head check of students for head lice, a letter (“Head Check”) will be sent home to all parents in the classroom that was checked. This letter will inform parents of the suspicion of head lice and encourage parents to also check their child’s head for lice. The school also has the option of sending an Alert Now message.
7. At the secondary school level:
 - a. Other suspected students should be checked for the presence of head lice or nits. Suspected students include those who have recently shared combs, brushes, hats, helmets, hair clips, etc.
 - b. Suspect students found to have live head lice or nits that have not been recently treated shall be sent home for treatment.
8. Students sent home for treatment can return to school after completing treatment and changing into clean clothes.
9. Upon returning to school, students will be checked for live lice. If no live lice are found, the student can return to class. If live lice are found, the student will be sent home with the proper letter.

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10. Students with nits and no live lice will be able to return to class. The school district supports a reduced nit plan. Students with reoccurring cases of head lice shall be encouraged to have the nits removed. If no nit reduction is noted in 7 to 10 days, students may be sent home to have the remaining nits removed.
11. Students sent home for head lice should also be checked 7 to 10 days after treatment for live lice. Use lice letters based on findings at that time.
12. Names of students frequently identified with head lice (3 or more times in the school year) may be given to the school nurse for additional follow up with the parent/guardian.
13. The following actions are recommended to prevent the spread of head lice at school:
 - Store each student's hats, coats, jackets in separate lockers or cubbies.
 - Do not have dress-up clothes at school that different students can play with and wear without being laundered between students.
 - Teach students not to share clothing, towels, hats, scarves, helmets, combs, hair clips, head bands, or other personal grooming articles.
 - Store smocks, gym clothes, etc. in separate lockers or cubbies.
 - For longer hair, braid your child's hair or have it pulled back in a pony-tail.
14. There may be exceptions to parts of this guideline as allowed by the Director of Student Services.