

## ROCORI School District Head Lice Guidelines (Pre-K guidelines and K-12 guidelines)

### **Pre-K guideline:**

ROCORI School District will contact the parent and request that the child is picked up as soon as possible and be treated. “In-school transmission is considered rare, but when transmission occurs, it is generally found among younger-age children with increased head-to-head contact” (Frankowski & Bocchini,2010). Parents should remove all live lice before the child returns to school. The child may remain in school if only nits are found, parents will be notified, and progress of removal of nits will be monitored by school staff.

### **K-12 guideline:**

The ROCORI School District head lice guidelines are in accordance with the evidence-based practice and are based on recommendations from the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Association of School Nurses. The CDC says “students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice”.

Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Children found with live head lice should remain in class, but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others. The school nurse/health tech should contact the parents to discuss treating the child. Students with nits only should not be excluded from school, although further monitoring for signs of re-infestation is appropriate. Classroom-wide or school-wide screening is not merited (Andresen &McCarthy, 2009).

### **When a student is found to have live lice:**

- The parent is notified by phone if possible, and information related to detection and elimination of head lice can be provided at that time or sent home with the student in a sealed envelope.
- The student is allowed to stay in school unless the parent desires to pick up the student. Confidentiality must be maintained. Parents are instructed to remove all live lice before the student returns to school.

- Follow up checks may be done by trained school staff to confirm lice management efforts.
- If live lice are found, the process of notification to parents/guardians begins again.

#### When a student is found to have only nits:

- The parent is notified by phone if possible and encouraged to comb nits out at least daily for the next two weeks.
- The student is **not** sent home from school.
- Information related to the detection and elimination of head lice is sent home with the student in a sealed envelope.
- If future checks reveal an increased number of nits present or it is obvious to the screener that the student's hair has not been treated (live lice are present), the parent will be contacted for follow up and support.

#### Classroom environment:

The classroom is only one of many environments where head lice can be transmitted. According to the CDC, **most transmissions** occur in the home environment (friends, sleepovers, camp, etc.).

1. The past practice of separating coats, backpacks, etc. are not necessary, as healthy lice do not stray from the head.
2. No environmental pesticide treatments (sprays, pesticide bombs) are to be used.
3. Encourage students to avoid sharing hats, combs, and pillows; and to avoid head-to-head contact.
4. Full classroom screenings for head lice are **not** done unless deemed necessary by the School Nurse/Health Tech. "Screening for nits alone is not an accurate way of predicting which children will become infested and screening for live lice has not been proven to have a significant effect on the incidence of head lice in a school community over time." (AAP Policy, September 2002).

## **Tips and Tricks for Head Lice**

1. If it's not dirty, don't wash it! It's not the water that kills lice; it is the high heat in the dryer. When using the dryer, use the highest temperature possible for 40 minutes.
2. Lice can't survive in the extreme heat or extreme cold-if it's really cold outside hang your blankets/linens outside for 6-8 hours.
3. After you have vacuumed or wiped down your furniture, place a sheet over it-at the end of the day throw it into the dryer for 40 minutes and replace.
4. Every morning take pillows/pillowcases that have been slept on and throw them into the dryer for 40 minutes.
5. If your child plays in their closet or drawers and you feel that all the clothes could be contaminated, you could take out five days of clothes and tape over drawers/closet, so the child does not have access to the clothes. (Lice die after 48 hours without a host)
6. With long hair, try to keep it in ponytails or braids.
7. Inform parents with children that your child plays with frequently. Also, inform your child's school
8. Encourage your child not to share any sports gear, hats, combs, wigs, dress-up clothes, headphones, or anything else that encounter your head.

## **Environmental Cleaning**

1. Dry all linens, pillowcases, hats, and clothes on HIGH HEAT for no less than 40 minutes-or use the outdoors in cold weather conditions, below the freezing point.
2. There are many items that are not machine washable but need to be treated. The best treatment option is isolation. Tightly bag these items for at least two weeks.
3. You can vacuum any surface that cannot be wiped down or washed.
4. Boil hairbrushes/combs for 20 minutes or put in the freezer for at least 23 hours. Do not share hairbrushes or combs!

### **You are diagnosed with Head Lice, now what?**

1. Check all family members for head lice.
2. Notify those who have been in close contact with the infested person so they can be checking for head lice.
3. Notify the school or daycare they attend.
4. Clean your environment.
5. Persons treated for head lice or nits should be checked for lice and nits EVERY DAY, and a thorough comb out with a lice comb should be done to remove any debris from the treatment for five days.
6. Do NOT share beds, pillows, hats...etc.

### **Treatment Options**

There are many effective lice treatments. In the past Rid or Nix has been recommended, but we are finding that the lice have become resistant to this treatment. Other good options are: mayo or Cetaphyll lotion applied to hair-this suffocates the live lice-this must be left on the scalp with a shower cap for a minimum of 2 hours up to overnight. Then take your Lice Comb (this is a must) and comb through cleaned hair sectioning it off pulling nits off the hair. This is a very LONG process, but effective. It should be repeated in 5-7 days. Lice comb hair several times a day. Some products use essential oils to remove or repel lice-these are safe and effective if done correctly. Listerine (mint) poured over the hair then left on for about 1 hour with a shower cap, pour vinegar on hair and let

sit for another hour, with a shower cap then rinse and use conditioner. Use lice comb to comb out all dead lice along with looking for nits. Please ask your school nurse/health tech for more information on these products. Parents must continue to do lice checks over the next several weeks. Routine lice checks should be done throughout the school year at home.