



# Head Lice Protocol and Guidelines

At this time, MDCH and MDE recommend a policy that focuses on the exclusion of active infestations only. Active infestations can be defined as the presence of live lice or nits found within one quarter inch of the scalp. Nits that are found beyond one quarter inch of the scalp have more than likely hatched, or are no longer viable. The following guidelines are designed to manage head lice in the school setting and to reduce student absenteeism due to head lice.

## Head Lice Protocol

Any student with live lice may remain in school until the end of the school day and is allowed to ride the bus home. They should be restricted from activities involving close head-to-head contact or sharing personal items. **Immediate removal of the student is unnecessary.** Maintaining the confidentiality of the student is a priority. Immediate treatment is advised.

Once treatment is completed, the student must be re-examined by the designated school personnel. This can be conducted the day before or the morning of their potential return to school. If staff are not able to accommodate, a Re-examination can be performed by trained staff at Grosse Pointe North by appointment. An adult must accompany their student for re-examination and bring along the confirmation of the treatment form.

- If, upon examination, the school nurse or trained staff finds no live lice or nits closer than ¼" of the scalp, the student will be re-admitted to school.
- If nits are found within ¼" of the scalp, the student may return to school but must be re-checked the next school day to verify removal of those nits.
- If live lice are found, the student will not be re-admitted to school.

## Head Lice Procedure

### Student identified during school hours to have an active case of head lice:

- The school nurse or office personnel should check the student for head lice. • If confirmed, the school nurse or office personnel should notify the parents/guardians directly that lice have been found and begin education regarding treatment and policy.
  - The student can remain in school until the end of the school day and is allowed to ride the bus home (if applicable). They should be restricted from activities involving close head-to-head contact or sharing personal items. **Immediate removal of the student is unnecessary.**
  - The office secretary will send home a copy of the "Quick Guide for Managing Head Lice" along with other educational resources and a parent documentation of treatment form. • The office secretary will send out notification letters to the students' classroom along with educational material.
- Once treatment is completed, and the student with a suspected case of head lice is ready to return to school:
  - The family should contact designated school personnel to schedule a re-examination of the student's hair. This can be conducted the day before or the morning of their potential return to school. If staff are unavailable, re-examination will take place at Grosse Pointe North by appointment. An adult must accompany their student to the appointment and bring along the confirmation of treatment form.
- Designated school personnel will re-examine the student's hair:
  - If, upon examination, no live lice or nits closer than ¼" of the scalp are found, the student will be re-admitted to school.
  - If nits are found within ¼" of the scalp, the student may return to school but must be re-checked the next school day to verify removal of those nits.

- Parents will be educated about the need for the removal of those potentially viable eggs.
  - If live lice are found, the student will not be re-admitted to school.
- Periodic checks of the student's hair by designated school personnel shall be done over the next few weeks to ensure successful treatment.
- Parents will be requested to continue daily lice checks and nit removal (if needed) at home for the next two (2) to three (3) weeks.

**Recurrent or Chronic Cases** (Continued active infestation after appropriate treatment has started, persistent infestation after six consecutive weeks, or three separate cases within one school year.)

Multidisciplinary group consisting of parents, teachers, administrators, social workers, and school nurse, and other appropriate individuals to determine the best approach to resolving the issue and improve school attendance.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Parents' Role:

Parents have the ultimate responsibility for their children. This includes:

- Becoming educated about head lice.
- Performing regular checks on all individuals in the home.
- Treating a child with head lice as soon as possible and committing to following through until there are no longer signs of an infestation.
- Teaching children how to minimize the chance of getting head lice by avoiding head-to-head contact, not sharing hats, combs, brushes, and hair accessories, and by containing long hair in braids or ponytails.

### School's Role

- Develop and adhere to the school district's policies and procedures
- Periodically disseminate current educational materials on head lice to parents (twice a year October and January):
- When a significant increase in head lice cases is detected, provide a general factsheet or parent education letter.
- Utilize a school nurse or designee to train other school staff to evaluate cases of head lice. ● Vacuum Items that should be vacuumed include carpets, floors, stuffed animals, couches, and chairs. There is no need to discard the vacuum bag after cleaning. For items that cannot be washed, seal them in a plastic bag and store them for 14 days at room temperature or 24 hours in temperatures below freezing.

### Additional information

Mass screening for head lice **are not recommended** by the CDC, MDCH, and MDE and will not be done. Having regularly scheduled mass screenings does not reduce the incidence of head lice. School personnel (our school nurses) will be available for inspection on an individual basis.