HINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Head Lice Information

General Information

Head lice is a common community health occurrence. While head lice may be annoying and inconvenient, they are not a health hazard nor are they responsible for the spread of communicable disease.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), the Hingham Public School (HPS) Nurses have instituted the current nursing practice guidelines for the presentation of head lice infestations during the school day. Listed below are the district guidelines adopted to ensure the recommended best nursing practice for head lice in the school setting.

1. **Student Exclusion:** According to the AAP, NASN, and the CDC, a student that is discovered to have an active head lice infestation during school should not be sent home. Science shows that the infestation has likely been there for a month or more and that the case poses little risk to others. In accordance with these standards, students may remain in school, in most cases, and the nurse will notify the student's family.

2. **Head Lice Notification Letters:** The AAP, NASN, and CDC all emphasize that sending classroom head lice alert letters violate privacy laws and cause unnecessary public alarm. Head Lice Notification Letters will not be sent home when a case of lice is identified.

3. **Classroom-Wide Student Head Checks -** HPS nurses will only perform head checks on individual students who present themselves to the nurse's office with symptoms of lice. Classroom-wide student head checks do not take place. According to the AAP, NASN, and CDC, classroom-wide screening for active lice infestations has not been proven to have a significant effect on the incidence of head lice in a school community.

Families are encouraged to consult with their child's pediatrician for information and guidance on head lice treatment.

Families are encouraged to check their child's head for lice regularly and/or if the child is symptomatic.

Below are some helpful websites that may further clarify information about head lice and the transmission and treatment of lice:

https://www.mass.gov/info-details/head-lice-pediculosis

https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-head-lice

https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/resources-by-topic/head-lice

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/from-insects-animals/Pages/signs-of-lice.aspx

https://www.cdc.gov/lice/about/head-lice.html

https://www.cdc.gov/lice/treatment/index.html

Approved & Reviewed by Hingham School Nurses – December 2024