

Conroe ISD Health Services

Procedure Regarding the Presence of Head Lice at School

Head lice continues to be an ongoing nuisance. Conroe ISD follows the requirements of TEC 38.031, and the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), as well as those contained in the position papers of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) in the treatment for head lice.

The goal of the District is to support families in their efforts to control and eliminate head lice while maintaining student privacy.

PROCEDURE FOR HEAD LICE DETECTION AND MANAGEMENT AT SCHOOL

The District's Health Services Department utilizes the most current scientific research and best practices in its efforts to detect and manage head lice in the school setting. The school nurse trains campus staff in head lice detection and management procedures. As required by law, information about head lice infestation will be shared with parents, while at the same time maintaining confidentiality of student information in compliance with FERPA. Both the school nurse and the campus staff play a vital role in documenting head lice detection and management efforts. The following procedures should be followed

1) **When a student is found to have *live lice*:**

- a) The parent/guardian is notified and information related to detection and elimination of head lice will be provided.
- b) The parent/guardian of student and school officials will determine if the student should be sent home.
- c) The parent/guardian is instructed that the student should be treated before returning to school.
- d) In some cases, (based on the School Nurse's professional judgment), it may be appropriate to have the student's head checked upon return to school.

2) **When a student is found to have nits present (no *live lice* detected):**

- a) The parent/guardian is notified and encouraged to pick the nits from the student's hair at least daily for the next two weeks.
- b) The student is not sent home from school.
- c) Information related to detection and elimination of head lice is sent home with the student.

3) **When to check beyond the identified student with *live lice*:**

- a) If the student has siblings in the same school, check the siblings for head lice.
- b) If the student has siblings in another District school, notify the parent/guardian that all members of the household should be checked and that precautionary measures should be taken to avoid family infestation.

4) **Classroom environment:**

The classroom is only one of many environments where head lice can be transmitted. Current evidence and best practices does not support performing classroom checks for head lice. Steps should be taken to minimize the opportunity for transmission in the classroom by:

- Cleaning play items such as hats, wigs, dress up clothes etc. after each child's use.
- Encouraging children not to share their personal items such as combs, brushes, hats, scarves, sweaters, coats, etc.
- Vacuuming the carpet frequently.
- Discouraging the sharing of cloth or upholstered pillows, mats, etc.

- Separately storing nap items such as (pillows, blankets, towels etc.) in cubbies or plastic bags. These items should be taken home at least weekly to be washed.
- Hanging sweaters, backpacks, and coats on hooks and not touching or by storing them in each student's backpack.
- Encouraging students with long hair to wear their hair in "contained" hair styles (ponytails, buns, braids, etc.).

5) Notification Procedures

- Written or electronic notice, which will contain information related to detection and elimination of head lice, will be provided to the parent/guardian of the student found to have *live lice* within 48 hours of detection by the school nurse or school administrator.
- For elementary schools only, written or electronic notice, containing information related to detection and elimination of head lice, will be provided to the parent/guardian of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice within 5 school days after the date on which the administrator or nurse determines or becomes aware that a student in the classroom has head lice.
- In rare circumstances a student may be excluded from school. (See *Exclusion Procedures*) Notice of exclusion will be given to the parent in person or by phone contact.

6) Exclusion Procedures

- In cases of chronic head lice infestation or severe head lice infestation that is disruptive to the learning environment, the School Nurse will be consulted to determine if a student should be recommended for exclusion.
- The nurse will consult with the building administrator to determine if the student should be excluded from school.
- For chronic head lice infestation cases, the nurse must secure documentation of repeated and unsuccessful head lice management measures.
- Notification Procedures (See #5 above) should be followed.
- The return of the student after exclusion will be predicated on a head check in the school clinic with evidence of progress in head lice management and progress toward eradication of the head lice. Evidence will look like elimination of live lice and a decrease in the number of nits.
- It may be appropriate, in the judgment of the school nurse, to monitor progress of head lice management over a period of time to ensure the family has been successful in eradicating the head lice.

Resources:

Head Lice Cynthia D Devore MD FAAP Gordon E Schultze MD FAAP The Council on School Health and Committee on Infectious Diseases April 27, 2015
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2015/04/21/peds.2015-0746.full.pdf+html>

Center for Disease Control: Head Lice: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html> September 24, 2013

Clinical Report On Head Lice Barbara L. Frankowski, MD, MPH, Joseph A. Bocchini, Jr. MD, Council on School Health and Committee on Infectious Disease, PEDIATRICS Vol. 126 No. 2 August 2010

Managing Head Lice in the School Setting and at Home <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm>
 Pediculosis Management in the School Setting; National Association of School Nurses Position Paper
<https://www.nasn.org/PolicyAdvocacy/PositionPapersandReports/NASNPositionStatementsFullView/tabid/462/ArticleId/40/ Pediculosis-Management-in-the-School-Setting-Revised-2011>

Note that the *Head Lice Frequently Asked Questions* may also provide helpful information.