

ROCORI School District Head Lice Policy/Procedure

Pre-K through 12 Guidelines

This policy can be overridden by the Health Office and any student can be sent home if the Health Office/District Nurse deems necessary

The ROCORI School District head lice policy/procedure is in accordance with evidence based practice and is 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 at the conclusion of the school day (Frankowski & Bocchini, 2010). Students with nits only should not be excluded from school (American School Health Association, 2005, Frankowski & Bocchini, 2010, Pollack, Kiszewski & Spielman, 2000), although further monitoring for signs of re-infestation is appropriate. It may be appropriate to screen other children who have had close head-to-head contact with a student with an active infestation, such as household family members, but 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 can return 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 nits in the hair (no live lice detected):

- 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 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 CSC, **most transmissions** occur in the home environment (friends, sleepovers, camp, etc.).

- Past practice of separating coats, backpacks, etc., are not necessary, as healthy lice do not stray from the head.
- No environmental pesticide treatments (sprays, pesticide bombs) are to be used.
- Encourage students to avoid sharing hats, combs, and pillows; and to avoid head-to-head contact.
- 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 5 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 pony tails 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 can come in contact with 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 2 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 hair brushes or combs!

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 EVERYDAY and a thorough comb out with a lice comb should be done to remove any debris from the treatment for 5 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 Cataphyll lotion applied to hair-this suffocates the live lice-this must be left on 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. There are products that use essential oils to remove or repel lice-these are safe and effective if done correctly. Vinegar hair rinse is also a good option, pour vinegar on hair and let sit for about 20 minutes 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. It is necessary for parents to continue to do lice checks over the next several weeks. Routine lice checks should be done throughout the school year at home.

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