



## GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HEAD LICE IN SCHOOL

### EDUCATION

1. Upon request school board nurses will provide head lice education to students which will include general head lice information and specific prevention measures.
2. Upon request the school board nurse will offer in-service training for school staff to review control measures.
3. Parents and guardians should be informed of SCPS guidelines regarding head lice management procedures.

### SCREENINGS

1. Criteria for screening an individual for lice are persistent itching or scratching, known exposure to sibling or other close contact with head lice. Individual checks for head lice should be done in a confidential manner in a private location.
2. Research indicates routine classroom and/or school wide head checks disrupt the educational process and are not essential strategies in the management of head lice.
3. However, three non-related cases of head lice in a classroom within ten consecutive school days requires that all children in the classroom be screened. To maintain confidentiality, if a student is found to have lice or nits do not inform the student or anyone in the classroom. Following completion of the screenings, student(s) should be discreetly called to the clinic and their parents notified.
4. School personnel will spend no more than five minutes performing a single head check.
5. Screenings will NOT be done based on information received by anonymous phone calls.

### SCHOOL SITE PREVENTION

1. Carpeted areas of classrooms should be vacuumed.
2. Avoid furniture with cloth upholstery.
3. Coats and backpacks should be hung on separate hooks or on the back of the student's chair.
4. Commercial insecticide sprays are not to be used on furniture or mats. Vacuuming or washing with soap and warm water is sufficient and does not pose risks for students with respiratory problems.
5. Headsets should be wiped off with a clean cloth between student uses.
6. Avoid sharing of hats, helmets, wigs, pillows, stuffed toys, or dress-up clothes. Wash all of these items in the event of a classroom outbreak whenever possible.

## **STUDENT WITH HEAD LICE OR NITS**

1. Refer to Procedure for Management of Head Lice flow chart.
2. If assistance is requested by a parent, school personnel will contact the school board nurse. The nurse will assess the needs of the student and family and offer an anti-lice shampoo if needed.
3. Parents should be given the form letter for treatment of lice or nits.
4. Readmission
  - Students found with live lice will be excluded from school.
  - Students found with no live lice may return to class, even if nits are present.
  - Students will be rechecked at 7 and 14 days. If live lice are present, the student will be excluded from school again.
  - After 14 days if live lice remain present, absence of lice and nits is required for student's readmission to school.
  - Students with nits only should not be excluded from school but rechecked on the seventh (7th) and fourteenth (14th) days for the presence of live lice.

**In accordance with SCPS School Board student attendance policy AP 5200, absences in excess of three (3) days due to head lice (nits) shall be recorded as unexcused absences. School personnel will notify the school board nurse who will assess the need for referring the student to the school social worker.**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The above guidelines are intended to help schools make fair and consistent decisions for their students. Education in prevention and transmission is the key to the management of head lice.