



ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

Title: **Pediculosis Management**

Effective Date: June 14, 1999

Responsibility: Superintendent of Program and

Revised Date: February 28, 2008

Schools

1.0 **Development**

This Pediculosis Management Guideline was developed collaboratively by the Near North District School Board, the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board, the Conseil Scolaire Catholique Franco-Nord, the Conseil Scolaire Public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario #56, and the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit. It is being implemented in schools across the Nipissing and Parry Sound Districts.

2.0 **Preamble**

Inquiries to Health Units, physicians and pharmacists from the community confirm that head lice infestations are ever present. Although most infestations occur among young elementary school students, head lice can be acquired in other settings and must be considered a community problem. Joint community efforts are required to address this problem effectively, although the control of each head lice infestation is ultimately a family concern. School boards and boards of health together can encourage families to take responsibility for the prevention and control of head lice.

Under current Ontario legislation, an infestation of head lice is not defined as a reportable disease. It is more appropriately defined as a nuisance and an aggravating condition. Activities undertaken by boards of health related to head lice infestations are neither prescribed by regulation nor mandated under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1983.

The Ministries of Health and Education and Training endorse collaboration at the local level to prevent and manage head lice infestations.

Activities undertaken by school boards related to head lice infestation fall within a broad responsibility to provide a school environment that is conducive to pupil learning. School boards are encouraged to participate with other community members in local programs for effective management and control of head lice infestations that involve school pupils.

3.0 Sharing the Responsibility

The primary strategy to be used in an effective program to manage head lice infestations is education. This approach will assist in eliminating many misconceptions and fears concerning head lice. It is therefore necessary for local programs to have the commitment and input of the following three groups: the Health Units, the District School Boards, and the key members of the local community (including parents, leaders of children's groups, pharmacists, physicians, hairdressers and others).

4.0 General Screening For Pediculosis

4.1 Checks

Parents and schools are urged to check their children on a regular basis, especially:

- 4.1.1 Early in September
- 4.1.2 After the Christmas holidays
- 4.1.3 After the March Break

In September, a general reminder notice will be sent to all families (see **Appendix A**).

4.2 When Nits are Detected

4.2.1 Steps:

- 4.2.1.1 The principal is notified. The principal notifies the staff of the presence of head lice.
- 4.2.1.2 If detected at school, a letter is sent home to advise the parent/guardian of the infested child (see **Appendix B**).
- 4.2.1.3 Each case is recorded by the school (see **Appendix C**) to assist with internal monitoring.
- 4.2.1.4 Infested students are excluded from school by the principal (pursuant to the Education Act, section 265m) until all nits are removed (regardless of the type of treatment used).
- 4.2.1.5 The principal may re-admit students if they have been checked for treatment and removal of nits. Checks may be done by any trained staff or volunteers designated by the principal.

4.2.2 Screening:

- 4.2.2.1 In order to determine the extent of pediculosis, siblings of infested students attending the same school are screened as well as students in the same class as the infested student.
- 4.2.2.2 Screening may be accomplished in two ways:
 - i. In class by a trained volunteer **OR**
 - ii. At home by the parents. (In this case, the request is made by sending a note home)(see **Appendix D**).

5.0 Recruitment and Training of Volunteers

5.1 Steps:

- 5.1.1 Principals will canvas parents to recruit volunteers to support head lice screening, preferably in June in order that training may be completed in preparation for September.
- 5.1.2 All volunteers are required to attend a training session in order to ensure accuracy of interpretation of the district wide policy. It is advisable that principals restrict their choice of volunteers to those who have completed appropriate training.
- 5.1.3 Schools shall have volunteers sign a statement of confidentiality **(see Appendix E for a sample)**.
- 5.1.4 The principal may contact the appropriate Health Unit for assistance with volunteer training.
- 5.1.5 In September, principals will revise/update the list of volunteers who have completed training and have signed statements of confidentiality.

6.0 Awareness Program

6.1 Time:

September (optional in January and after the March Break)

6.2 Initiatives of the School:

- 6.2.1 The principal shall distribute a letter to each family outlining:
(see Appendix A)
 - ✓ The pediculosis problem in the community
 - ✓ The approach to be used by the community
 - ✓ A request that parents check their children.
- 6.2.2 **(Optional)** Upon request, a school or family of schools may host a parents' information night which may be conducted by the Health Unit.

6.3 Initiatives of the Health Unit:

- 6.3.1 The Health Unit shall respond to requests to speak at information sessions on the subject of identification, treatment and management of pediculosis.
- 6.3.2 The Health Unit shall respond to general inquiries from the community regarding identification, treatment and management of pediculosis through our CIS program.

7.0 Distribution of Shampoo

7.1 Schools will not purchase or distribute head lice shampoo. Some school parent councils provide treatment vouchers for families as deemed necessary by the principal.

7.2 Principals will encourage parents/guardians to contact local community agencies if assistance is needed to purchase head lice shampoo.

Appendix A

(School Letterhead)

(Date)

Dear Parents:

The problem of head lice and nits is usually present in our community at any given time. In the schools, this nuisance is usually more prevalent after each major school break: after summer and Christmas holidays and after the March Break.

Representatives of all District School Boards, in consultation with the Health Unit, have jointly initiated a management policy to deal with occurrences of head lice.

Head checks should be made on a regular basis, especially after major school breaks and whenever a case is detected in your child's class. The school will send you periodic reminders.

Here are some key points to consider:

1. Head lice are easily transmitted from one person to another; children are especially vulnerable.
2. The occurrence of head lice has nothing to do with dirt or cleanliness standards in a home.
3. Extra house cleaning and use of insecticide sprays are not needed. Wash all clothing, towels, pillows, linens, combs and brushes as well as headgear used by the infested person in the past two days in hot soapy water.
4. Prompt action is necessary to prevent spreading.
5. Advise the parents/guardian of your child(ren)'s playmates.
6. Advise the principal at your child(ren)'s school or daycare.
7. Everyone should be advised: never share a hat, comb, hairbrush, scarf or toque with anyone else.

The policy of dealing with an occurrence is as follows:

1. **If a case has been verified:**
 - a] the principal is notified
 - b] the child is excluded from school until the treatment is initiated and nits are removed.

2. **The parent should:**
 - a] obtain appropriate treatment from a pharmacy. Consult a physician about appropriate treatment for:
 - i) anyone with seizure disorders
 - ii) children under age 2
 - iii) lice in eyebrows, eyelashes or beard
 - iv) broken or infected skin of the scalp
 - v) anyone who is pregnant or breast feeding

 - b] follow through on these recommendations quickly and efficiently.

 - c] have a trained school staff/volunteer designated by the principal check the child to determine if the child(ren) is/are free of lice and nits.

We firmly believe that with your co-operation, we can be effective in preventing and curbing major outbreaks.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours truly,

{School Principal}

Appendix B

(School Letterhead)

(Date)

Dear

An inspection of _____'s hair today showed that he/she have head lice or nits. Your child must be excluded from school until he/she is nit free.

Having lice is not a health hazard but it is an ongoing community problem requiring immediate treatment. Please read and carefully follow the instructions below.

1. Please see the attached Fact Sheet.
2. Use approved products to de-infest your child. Such products may be obtained at the pharmacy. If desired, consult the pharmacist.

A physician must also be consulted for:

- i) anyone with seizure disorders
 - ii) children under age 2
 - iii) lice in eyebrows, eyelashes or beard
 - iv) broken or infected skin of the scalp
 - v) anyone who is pregnant or breast feeding.
3. Use the product carefully, following the routine instructions which accompany it. Use of the produce to **prevent** an infestation of head lice is not recommended. **Some preparations state removal of nits are not required. Because treatments are not 100% effective, it is a policy of the District and School Boards that nits be removed as a condition of re-entry to school. Since it is very difficult to determine treated infestations from untreated infestations this policy must be followed**
 4. Inspect other family members and de-infest accordingly.
 5. Extra house cleaning and use of insecticide sprays are not needed. Wash all clothing, towels, pillows, linen, combs and brushes as well as headgear used by the infested person in the past two days in hot soapy water.
 6. A school staff/volunteer designated by the principal will be checking your child to determine that he/she is nit free. When sending your child back to school after head lice treatment, please assure that a parent/guardian accompanies the child. In the event that nits are found, the child needs to return home for further nit removal.

Please note that schools and school councils are not authorized to directly dispense head lice treatment medication.

If you have any questions or would like further information regarding this policy, please contact the school. If you need further general information about head lice, please visit <http://www.health.biz> or call the North Bay Parry Sound Health Unit at 705-474-1400 extension 2282

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

Yours truly,

(Principal)

Appendix D

(School Letterhead)

(Date)

Dear Parents:

We wish to inform you that **head lice** have been detected in your child's class. In an effort to control the problem immediately, ***please check your child's hair.*** As you know, head lice is a community problem existing at any given time.

Also, we would ask that you please take the time to read the information that is provided. Some key points for your consideration are as follows:

1. Head lice are easily transmitted from one person to another; children are especially vulnerable.
2. The occurrence of head lice has nothing to do with dirt or cleanliness standards in a home.
3. Extra house cleaning and use of insecticide sprays are not needed. Wash all clothing, towels, pillows, linens, combs and brushes as well as headgear used by the infested person in the past two days in hot soapy water.
4. Prompt action is necessary to prevent spreading.
5. Students should be advised never to share a hat, comb, scarf or toque with anyone else.

Our policy for dealing with an occurrence is as follows:

1. **If a case has been verified:**
 - a) the principal is notified
 - b) the child is excluded from school until treatment is initiated and he/she is nit free.
2. **The parent should:**
 - a) obtain appropriate treatment from a pharmacy. A prescription is not needed. Some drug plans may cover the cost if a prescription is obtained from a doctor.

A physician should be consulted for:

- i) anyone with seizure disorders
- ii) children under age 2
- iii) lice in eyebrows, eyelashes or beard
- iv) broken or infected skin of the scalp
- v) anyone who is pregnant or breast feeding

- b) if necessary, contact the health unit or other trained person for instructions regarding shampooing and clean-up requirements.
- c) follow through these recommendations quickly and efficiently.

***Note: Removal of nits is required as a condition of re-entry to school, regardless of the type of product used. Since it is very difficult to determine treated infestations from untreated infestations, this policy must be followed.**

- d) Have school staff/volunteer designated by the principal check the child to determine if the treatment has been successful. Please assure that a parent/guardian accompanies the child to school after head lice treatment. In the event that nits are found, the child needs to return home for further nit removal.

If we can all become more knowledgeable concerning this problem and its symptoms, and follow through with the procedures for dealing with it promptly, I am sure that any infestations that crop up from time to time will be controlled quickly.

If you have any questions or would like further information regarding this policy, please contact the school. If you need further general information about head lice, please visit <http://www.health.biz> or call the North Bay Parry Sound Health Unit at 705-474-1400.extension 2282

Sincerely

(Principal)



P.O. Box 3110, North Bay, Ontario P1C 1A5
Phone: 705-472-8170, Fax: 705-472-9927

CONFIDENTIALITY FORM
For
VOLUNTEERS/SCHOOL COUNCILS

In the course of your activities in our Near North District School Board schools, you may learn personal facts about students, their families and staff members.

Because the privacy of students, their families and staff members must be respected, confidentiality is of prime importance.

Protection of Confidential Information

I, _____, have been made aware of the confidential nature of information when working with students and staff in the Near North District School Board's schools. Whether or not such confidential information may be available to me in the normal performance of my duties, occasionally or inadvertently, the confidentiality will be respected.

I understand that confidential information which shall be disclosed to me, or which may come to my knowledge, may not be divulged within or outside the school unless authorized in writing by the school principal, the staff member or the parent/guardian of a student.

Date

Signature