

HEAD LICE

The Board of the district is committed to maximizing students’ academic performance and physical wellbeing in a healthy and safe environment. The district recognizes that head lice infestations do not pose a health hazard, are not a sign of uncleanliness, and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. However, past practice caused many unnecessary absences from school with potential negative effects on academic performance. Misinformation about head lice causes anxiety for parents and school staff.

The district defines a healthy and safe environment as one in which adults work together to provide the following environmental factors established by current research as necessary for the health and wellbeing of students with head lice:

- Educating staff, students, and parents/guardians about head lice.
- Establishing evidence based management for students with head lice.

The goals of providing a healthy and safe environment for students with head lice are to:

- Maximize academic performance
- Minimize absence due to unnecessary exclusion of students with head lice

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE
48210-48216 Persons excluded
49451 Physical examinations: parent's refusal to consent

Management Resources:

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS
Lice, Nits, and School Policy, Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, May 2001
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH PUBLICATIONS
Guidelines on Head Lice Prevention and Control for School Districts and Child Care Facilities, 2009
CALIFORNIA SCHOOL NURSES ORGANIZATION
Position Statement: Pediculosis Management, 2005
WEB SITES
California Department of Public Health: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov>
California School Nurses Organization: <http://www.scno.org>
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Parasitic Disease Information, Head Lice:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dpd/parasites/lice>

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To better manage and to limit the spread of head lice infestations, school employees shall report all suspected cases of head lice to the school nurse or designee. The school nurse or designee shall examine the student. An infestation shall be determined by looking closely through the hair and scalp for live lice.

If nits are found but there are no live (crawling) lice on the hair, the school nurse or designee shall reinspect within 7-10 school days.

If live (crawling) lice are found on the hair, the parent/guardian shall be notified *by the end of the day* via phone, email, and/or a note sent home with the student. The parent/guardian shall be provided information on the biology of head lice, methods to eliminate infestation, and directions to examine household contacts for lice and nits.

Parents/guardians will be encouraged to verify treatment as soon as possible after notification. The child may return to school the following day provided no live lice are found.

For more than two cases in a classroom, the school may notify parents/guardians in the affected classroom to encourage them to check their children and to treat, if appropriate, and/or examine other students *most likely to have had direct head to head contact* with the affected student.

Affected students shall be discouraged from direct head to head contact with other students. As needed, the nurse or designee shall provide in-service education to staff regarding how to handle nits and/or lice in the classroom.

Up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice will be distributed to all parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

Staff shall maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice.