

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS (Head Lice in Classroom)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Re: Head Lice in School

Head lice have been found on a student in your child's classroom. Head lice do not carry disease and do not have anything to do with cleanliness. The only harmful effect from head lice is the way children and adults react. Negative reactions to head lice can harm children's self-esteem and result in their isolation from others.

How to check your child's head on a regular basis:

STEP 1: Find a comfortable, well-lit spot

STEP 2: Check the hair from the scalp to the end of the hair strand. First, look at the hair at the back of the neck, behind the ears and above the forehead. Then, check the rest of the head.

STEP 3: You are looking for live lice and/or nits (eggs). Live or viable nits are attached to the hair very close to the scalp, within 6mm or ¼ inch. Nits that are more than 6 mm or ¼ inch away from the scalp are 'empty' egg shells. Nits are white to light brown in colour and may be confused with dandruff. Nits are firmly attached to the hair and do not move unless you pull them off the hair strand.

STEP 4: If you find a louse or viable nit, check all household members. *Treat only those who have lice or viable nits*, with a treatment from the pharmacists. Your child may return to school the next day after the first treatment. Repeat treatment in 7-10 days.

STEP 5: Let the school know if your child has head lice or nits.

Remember:

- Make weekly head checks part of your home routine.
- Scratching and itching of the scalp may be a sign of head lice (but not always).
- If your child has long hair, keep it tied back.

For further information about head lice please contact the school for a copy of the Recommended Head Lice Management document.

Sincerely,

Principal

APPENDIX B: School Newsletter Insert about Head Lice

Head lice are common in school-aged children. Head lice do not cause disease. Itchiness from head lice can be irritating and uncomfortable for children. Head lice spread easily to others, so it is important for families to help prevent and control its spread. Outbreaks are more common following vacations.

If you would like more information on head lice and treatment, a parent information package “Recommended Head Lice Management” is available at your child’s school or from your Public Health Nurse at the Health Unit.

- Be aware of the symptoms of head lice and the treatment procedures.
- Check the heads of all family members every week. Increase this to daily head checks when there is a case of head lice in your child’s classroom, or one of the family members has been in contact with head lice.
- Treat the infested heads.
- Contact your Public Health Nurse for resources and further information when treatment has failed to rid your child’s head lice.
- Teach your children not to share hair accessories, combs or brushes with others.

