



## Health Services Head Lice at Graded

This policy aims to provide information to Graded School on how to deal with Pediculosis among its Community.

According to United States' National Association of School Nurses, Head lice (*pediculosis capitus*) are small parasitic insects that live on the scalp and neck hairs of their human hosts. The presence of lice is most often detected through the presence of adult lice or nits (eggs) attached to the hair shaft of the host, most often at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Complications of infestations are rare and involve secondary bacterial skin infection (Lebwohl, Clark & Levitt, 2007). Pruritis (itching) is the most common symptom of a lice infestation, along with the following additional symptoms:

- a tickling feeling or a sensation of something moving in the hair;
- irritability and sleeplessness; and
- sores on the head caused by scratching. Sores caused by scratching can sometimes become infected with bacteria normally found on a person's skin (CDC, 2010).

Pediculosis can be considered a public health issue that is brought into the school setting. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2010) reports an estimated 6 million to 12 million infestations occur each year in the United States among children 3 to 11 years of age. According to Instituto Oswaldo Cruz the rate of occurrences in Brazil is the same.

There is a lack of evidence showing that routine class or school-wide screening reduces lice infestation rates (Frankowski, 2010). Therefore, class screenings will not be routinely done at Graded. Parents should check their children for lice regularly. If crawling lice are seen on a child at school the parents will be called to pick up the child at school and be given information about head lice and its treatment. At home, all members of the family must be checked for head lice. This policy allows the parent to treat the child overnight. The day following treatment, the child will be re-examined and admitted to class. If the child is still infested, then the parent will be re-contacted.

As head lice are not a risk for carrying communicable disease; are primarily spread through direct head to head contact, and only live 18-24 hours off a host, the subsequent steps will be followed:

1. Students with suspicions of having head lice will be sent to the health clinic for evaluation by the nurse.
2. A thorough inspection for live lice and nits will be completed.
3. If live (crawling) lice or nits are noted, the parents will be notified of the event by a phone call from the nurse. If nits are found, parents will be notified and the child may remain in school for the rest of the school day. If crawling louses are found, parents will be asked to come pick their child up from school.
4. The parents will be provided with information on the biology of head lice.
5. The parents will be instructed to inspect other household members for live lice.
6. The parents will be instructed in methods for elimination of infestation.
7. The parents will be instructed to continue daily combing until no live lice are discovered (7 days).
8. The parents will be instructed to daily wash pillow cases, pajamas and towels.



9. The parents will be instructed not to share combs and brushes of an infested child.

10. Students will not be excluded from school if nits (eggs) are found.

11. The parents of the other students in that classroom will receive a letter by the Lower School Office, notifying that there was a case of head lice in their child's class and that they should inspect their child's head at home.

#### REFERENCES:

- [California Department of Public Health: Guidance on Head Lice](#)
- [Warsaw Community Schools: Lice Procedure](#)
- [National Association of School Nurses: Pediculosis Management in a School Setting](#)
- [Instituto Oswaldo Cruz: Fatos sobre piolho](#)
- [Blog Pediatria: Piolho! e agora o que eu faço?](#)



## **Letter to parent of child with head lice**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Please note that your child was found to have head lice. Head lice occur commonly among school-age children. Head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene and anyone can get them. Lice do not transmit infections and do not pose a risk to a person's health.

Attached you will find "Facts About Head Lice" to assist you in providing prompt treatment for your child.

Lice pass from person to person by direct contact or by sharing personal items with lice on them. Head lice cause itching, commonly at the back of the head and neck or behind the ears. Many effective shampoos are available over the counter or by prescription from your doctor.

We would like to remind you that:

- Any student who has live head lice will be notified by the school and will be sent home in order to have treatment.
- Students will be re-examined by the nurse upon returning to school.

We recommend that you check all members of your household for lice and treat them as necessary. We also recommend that you remind your child not to share personal items such as brushes, combs or hats with other students.

Some of the most common shampoos found over-the-counter in Brazil are:

- Kwell
- Escabin
- Deltacid

If you have any further questions, please consult your healthcare provider or contact the school nurse at (11) 3747-4846.



## **Letter to parents of child in classroom with head lice**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Please note that a student in your child's class has head lice. Head lice occur commonly among school-age children. Head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene and anyone can get them. Lice do not transmit infections and do not endanger a person's health.

We would like to ask you to inspect your child's head in order to check for the existence of nits or louses.

Lice pass from person to person by direct contact or by sharing personal items with lice on them. Head lice cause itching, commonly at the back of the head and neck or behind the ears. Many effective shampoos are available over the counter or by prescription from your doctor. We would also like to remind you that if nothing is found on your child's head, "just in case" treatments are not recommended, because head lice shampoos may be toxic.

We recommend that you remind your child not to share personal items such as brushes, combs or hats with other students.

If you have any further questions, please consult your healthcare provider or contact the school nurse at (11) 3747-4846.

## Scheme for Managing Head Lice (in School)

