

Pediculosis Management Procedure

RATIONALE:

The Niagara Catholic District School Board is committed to ensuring the provision of plans, programs, and/or services that will enable students to attend and participate in school.

All health support services must be administered in a manner that respects, to the degree possible in the circumstances, the student's right to privacy, dignity, and cultural sensitivity.

Niagara Catholic District School Board shares the responsibility for providing such plans, programs, and/or services with families and community agencies/partners.

Head lice are tiny bugs that live only on the scalp of human beings and are the size of a pinhead. They do not have wings so they cannot fly or jump, and they are not found on cats, dogs or any other household pets. The bites from head lice can cause itching and scratching. Scratching may cause sores which can get infected. Anyone can get head lice. School children get lice more than adults. When children play, their heads often touch. Lice crawl from head to head. Head lice are spread by direct head to head contact only.

Additional information can be obtained from:

The Canadian Pediatric Society Head Lice Clinical Update

<https://cps.ca/en/documents/position/head-lice>

Information For Parents

[Head lice | Caring for kids \(cps.ca\)](#)

[Contact Niagara Parents - Talk to a Public Health Nurse - Niagara Region, Ontario](#)

Please note that "excluding children with nits or live lice from school or child care has no rational medical basis and is not recommended" according to the Canadian Paediatric Society. Also, individuals under the age of 24 will have their treatment covered by OHIP.

PROCEDURES:

1.0 Responsibility

1.1 The Principal shall:

- Ensure that all staff and parents/guardians are aware of the characteristics of pediculosis and the school procedures in this regard;
- Ensure that the parents/guardians of students with an infestation are notified of the infestation and the recommended treatment; and
- Ensure that all parents/guardians of students directly concerned in the school where an infestation has been confirmed are notified.
- Contact Niagara Region Public Health (Infectious Disease) in the event of an outbreak .

1.2 The teacher shall:

- Be aware of the symptoms which might indicate an infestation among students;
- Identify and report infestations to the principal;
- Actively promote preventative practices to avoid further infestation.

1.3 The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall:

- Be aware of the symptoms which might indicate an infestation;
- Identify infestation of head lice and inform the school;
- Ensure that proper and full treatment is taken;

2.0 Process

2.1 Parents/guardians of students identified with head lice will be notified by the school of that fact by letter (*Letter of Notification of Head Lice*), and will be required to seek treatment for the child. The parents/guardians will be provided with a treatment information sheet. Please note that individuals under the age of 24 will have treatment costs covered by OHIP.

2.2 Parents/guardians are required to complete the first application of an approved treatment prior to the student returning to school.

2.4 The process for returning and tracking the occurrence and treatment is determined and documented in each school's pediculosis procedures.

2.5 If the Principal has concerns that an individual case of head lice infestation is an indication of a larger concern, the Principal may consult with the school's designated team.

2.6 All parents/guardians of students in a class in which a student or students are found to have head lice will be sent a letter informing them of that fact (*Head Lice Alert Notice*).

2.7 According to the school's pediculosis procedures, the Principal will designate resource person(s), who are available and trained to perform head lice checks in the school.

2.8 A school may designate a specific day or days for screening all students for head lice, using trained resource persons.

3.0 Communication

3.1 In September, the school will communicate with parents the school's pediculosis procedure through the first newsletter of the school year and/or through the student handbook, or other means that the school deems appropriate. This information will include:

3.1.1 The Canadian Pediatric Society Head Lice Clinical Update
(<https://cps.ca/en/documents/position/head-lice>) , *Information For Parents*
(https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/health-conditions-and-treatments/head_lice)

(available at <https://cps.ca/en/>);

3.1.2 A reminder to parents/guardians to take responsibility to check their child's hair frequently and on an ongoing basis;

3.1.3 A request that parents/guardians co-operate by administering an approved treatment recommended by a pharmacist or medical practitioner when needed;

3.1.4 A reminder to parents/guardians to inform the school if their child has head lice;

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Letter of Notification of Suspected Head Lice

Date:

Head Lice Alert!!

Dear Parent/Caregiver:

A student in your child's class has head lice. Please check your child and family carefully. Enclosed you will find some information that will help you to monitor your child for the possible occurrence of Lice. This letter is only precautionary but we felt it necessary to keep you informed as part of our due diligence responsibilities.

Head Lice Information for Parents

Anyone can get head lice. It has nothing to do with clean or dirty hair, or the cleanliness of your home. Head lice do not spread disease but can cause a lot of frustration.

You may notice signs that your child might have head lice such as itching, complaining of a tickling feeling in the hair or sores on the scalp due to scratching.

Or, you may get a call from school letting you know that your child has been checked and has head lice.

How to Check for Head Lice

Lice are tiny grey/brown insects that crawl quickly but cannot jump or fly. Finding them can be difficult, and you might only find eggs glued to the hair shaft.

Use a bright light and look for lice at forehead, crown, around ears, and nape of the neck.

The **best way to check for head lice** is to look for them in hair that has been soaked with conditioner. If there are head lice, the conditioner will slow them down making them easier to find. This is called the [wet combing](#) method.

If you find lice:

- Check all the people that live in your house, including yourself
- Tell those that have been in contact with your child such as relatives and babysitters so that they can be checked for lice
- Inform the school so that classmates can be checked

Treatment Options

Only treat those who have live head lice. Everyone in the home with lice needs to be treated at the same time or the lice will spread back from an untreated person. Please note that individuals under the age of 24 in Ontario will have treatment costs covered by OHIP. Speak to pharmacist for details.

If you have already used a head lice product in the last few days, speak to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about what to do next.

Wet Combing

1. Seat your child near a sink with good lighting. Cover his or her shoulders with a towel.
2. Soak hair in conditioner and use a wide-tooth comb to untangle hair
3. Divide hair into small sections. Use hair clips to keep hair in sections
4. Using a lice comb (available at a pharmacy), place the comb at the scalp and comb through the same section of hair several times
5. Rinse the comb in the sink and repeat until all hair has been combed
6. Repeat the web combing method every four days for two weeks to break the cycle of head lice.

Other Treatment Options

Treatment products **do not prevent lice** and should be used only on those who have head lice. Talk to a health professional about products and methods available, and:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- About asthma or allergies to product ingredients
- If child is under two years
- If a person has a seizure disorder
- If the skin of the scalp is broken
- If head lice return

Cleaning

- Wash clothes, towels, bedding used in the last three days in hot, soapy water. Dry at high temperature for 15 minutes.
- Soak combs and brushes in hot, soapy water for 10-20 minutes
- Clean your home - vacuum carpets, furniture, and car seats. Sprays are not necessary.

How to Prevent Head Lice

- Check for head lice every week
- Remind your children to avoid head to head contact and to not share hats, combs, brushes, scarves and other items used on the head

Look for:



Lice - brown or grey
- on or close to the scalp

Eggs - tiny, oval (darker colored eggs most likely alive)

Nits - the white shells left after bug hatches out - glued to hair shaft (near to the scalp) especially behind ears, back of neck and under bangs

Everyone in your house who you find has lice must be treated on the same day. There are many head lice products available from your pharmacy. Read all instructions carefully and follow them step by step. No lice product kills all of the eggs, so a second treatment 7 to 10 days after the first treatment is needed. This will kill any newly hatched lice. Removing the eggs with a head lice comb, fine-tooth comb or manually helps reduce the number of lice. New products are available that do not contain traditional insecticides. You can also use the wet combing method - call the number below or go to website for instruction sheet.

Follow up with washing clothes, bedding and towels used in the last 3 days. Vacuuming is helpful, but sprays are not needed. Lice live only a short time away from the head.

Children returning to child care following head lice treatment will be checked and will be required to return home if they are not free of head lice.

Once your child is completely free of lice and eggs, it is still important to continue to check regularly for lice. Finding lice and removing them before they multiply makes getting rid of them easier and helps to control spread to others.

For more detailed information contact Niagara Region Public Health at 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074, ext. 7555 www.niagararegion.ca (search: head lice)

Thank you for your co-operation.

Principal

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Letter of Notification of Head Lice

Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child, your child has been identified as having contracted Lice. Enclosed you will find some information that will help you to treat your child's condition so that they may be free of Head Lice. We would appreciate if you could kindly address this concern and look forward to your child presence at school in the near future.

Yours in Education:

Principal

Catholic Elementary School

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