

Pediculosis (Head Lice) Policy

The Milford School Nurses would like to propose the following policy be adopted as it reflects current recommended practice by the National Association of School Nurses and current pediculosis research. Adoption of this policy will require the previously adopted "No Nit Policy" to be rescinded.

I. Head Lice

Definition: Head lice are tiny, wingless, parasitic insects that live and feed on blood from the scalp. They can spread from person to person by direct contact (head to head) or if the head touches an object that has been infested with lice from another person, such as furniture, bedding, or clothing.

Procedure: Any student who is found to have live lice on their scalp is to be excluded from school until such time as they have been treated with a lice removal product. They are to be lice free before returning to school. The school nurse will check each returning student to determine whether he/she is lice free and may remain at school.

II. Nits (eggs)

Definition: Nits are the eggs that are laid by live head lice. The nits are adhered to the hair shaft. A large percentage of nits are killed during head lice treatments. Removal of all nits is considered a part of effective head lice treatment. The nits, as such, are not a cause of the spread of head lice. The second phase of treatment, one week after the initial treatment, is designed to eliminate any additional head lice that may hatch from nits that survive or are not removed from the hair.

Procedure: All nits are to be removed from the hair following head lice treatment. Students will be allowed to return to school following head lice treatment before all nits have been removed, in the absence of live lice. The school nurse will continue to frequently examine those students who have nits in their hair until all nits are removed. If live lice are found during these examinations, students will be excluded from school pending treatment.

III. National Association of School Nurses Position Statement Conclusion

It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses that the management of pediculosis should not disrupt the education process. Children found with live head lice should be referred to parents for treatment. Data does not support school exclusion for nits. Because no disease process is associated with head lice, schools are not advised to exclude students when nits remain after appropriate lice treatment, **although further monitoring for signs of re-infestation is appropriate.** The school nurse, as student advocate and nursing expert, should be included in school district-community planning, implementation and evaluation of vector control programs for the school setting. The school nurse retains an important role in education **all constituencies** about pediculosis and dispelling myths and stigmas regarding lice infestation. (Adopted July 2004)

(See the attached copy of the complete NASN Pediculosis Position Statement for a list of References and Resources)

ADOPTED: 3/21/11