



SAN RAMON VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
699 Old Orchard Drive, Danville, California 94526
Phone: (925) 552-5052 Fax: (925) 837-2605

HEAD LICE PROTOCOL

Head lice continues to be an ongoing nuisance. The San Ramon Valley Unified School District bases its procedures on guidelines from the California Public Health Department (CDPH), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN).

Head lice management goals are:

1. Decrease absenteeism
2. Support families in their efforts to control and eliminate head lice.
3. Maintain student privacy

In working with head lice and student surveillance, it is important to keep the following principles in mind.

1. Implementation of head lice surveillance and control procedures is based on current scientific research and best practices.
2. Selected school staff members are trained by the school nurse in head lice detection and management.
3. Information about head lice infestation is to be shared on a “need to know” basis as deemed appropriate by trained school staff.
4. Maintaining the confidentiality of student information is essential to comply with federal privacy laws.
5. Consideration must be made of the student’s ability to understand whether or not they have head lice and if having this information is developmentally appropriate.

Procedures:

A. When a student is found to have LIVE lice:

- a. The parent is notified by phone and written information is provided – *A Parent’s Guide to Head Lice*.
- b. The student is not immediately sent home from school. However, the parent may pick up the student at his/her discretion.
- c. In the case that a student has either 1) chronic head lice infestation or 2) severe head lice infestation that is disruptive to the learning environment, the school site nurse will be consulted. Student may be sent home before the end of the school day is deemed appropriate.
- d. The parent is instructed that the student may return to school as soon as appropriate lice treated has started.
- e. Parents are encouraged to inform close playmates of the infestation and to check family members for the presence of lice.
- f. Students will be rechecked on the day they return to school.
- g. Parent is instructed to check and comb daily for two weeks.
- h. If continued presence of live lice or an increased number of nits is observed, the school nurse will contact the parent to provide additional education.

B. When a student is found to have NITS only (no live lice detected):

- a. The parent is notified by phone and written information is provided - *A Parent’s Guide to Head Lice*.
- b. The student is not sent home from school. However, the parent may pick up the student at his/her discretion.
- c. The parent is instructed that the student should be treated when and if the infestation appears to be current (live lice) before returning to school. Parents are encouraged to inform close playmates of the infestation and to check family members for the presence of lice.
- d. Students will be rechecked on the day they return to school.
- e. Parent is instructed to check and comb daily for two weeks.



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- f. If continued presence of live lice or an increased number of nits is observed, the school nurse will contact the parent to provide additional education.

C. The Classroom Environment

- a. The classroom is an unlikely location for transmission of head lice. According to the CDC, home environments (friends, sleepovers, camp, etc) are a much more likely source of transmission.
 - i. Custodial staff will be notified.
 - ii. No environmental pesticide treatments are to be used.
 - iii. Students will be encouraged to keep personal items (coats, jackets, etc) separated.
 - iv. Students will be encouraged to avoid sharing hats, combs, pillows, etc., - though transmission through shared objects is rare.
 - v. Full classroom checks will be at the discretion of the school site after consultation with the school nurse.

D. Notification Procedures

- a. The parent of an infested child will be notified.
- b. A classroom notification letter will be sent to parents when a case of head lice is detected in an elementary classroom. Classroom notification at the secondary level is done at the discretion of the school's site nurse.

E. Exclusion Procedures

- a. In the case that a student has either 1) chronic head lice infestation or 2) severe head lice infestation that is disruptive to the learning environment, the schools site nurse will be consulted.
- b. The school nurse may, with consultation with the site administrator, determine if exclusion should be considered.
- c. It may be appropriate, in the judgment of the school nurse, to monitor the progress of lice management over a period of time to support the family in eradication of this pest.

Additional Procedures:

- 1. If live lice or nits are discovered, siblings at the same school site will also be checked. Parents will be encouraged to check all family members.
- 2. Full classroom or school-wide screenings are NOT done. Current research shows school-wide screenings are ineffective at reducing the incidence of head lice.
- 3. If the child with lice is very young, the school nurse may choose to include additional precautions in day care, preschool, or kindergarten.
- 4. If the child with lice attends an on-site after-care program, school staff should notify the after-care program of the infestation.

Additional resources for your information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/>

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/2012SchoolGuidanceonHeadLice.pdf>

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/126/2/392.full>