

# **North Reading Public Schools Head Lice (Pediculosis) Protocol**

North Reading Public School Health Offices follow the school head lice suggestions outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control and the National Association of School Nurses. Research conducted by the above consortium resulted in the following recommendations:

Students exhibiting signs of possible head lice infestation are referred to the health office for assessment. Symptoms prompting a referral may include complaints of an itchy scalp, excessive scratching or sighting of a louse, and can be made by the student or a staff member. The nurse will examine the child for presence of lice or live nits. The child may return to class after being evaluated by the nurse.

If a case of head lice or live nits is confirmed by the school nurse, a parent/guardian will be notified and treatment information will be offered and encouraged. The nurse will check siblings if time permits. No mass screenings will be done. Periodic head lice checks performed by the parent/guardian results in early detection and treatment of lice and nits, and is the most reliable method for controlling pediculosis.

Upon return to school, the student will be checked by the school nurse to ensure effective treatment has begun. Because a child with active head lice infestation likely has had the infestation for one month or more by the time it is discovered and poses little risk to others from the infestation, he or she should remain in class but be discouraged from close head contact with others. Student confidentiality must be maintained. Students may not be excluded from school due to presence of lice or nits.

Individual classroom notification will be sent to parents when more than one case of lice is discovered. Notification will include information regarding the process of checking for head lice and nits, and treatment options recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. This notification may be sent electronically or by hard copy.

## North Reading Public Schools Lice Protocol References

Frankowski, B., & Bocchini, J. (2010). Head lice. *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 126(2), 392-403. doi: 10.1542/peds.2010-1308. Retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/126/2/392.full?sid=e0db2bd1-55fd-4e64-af14-61cb3ba42684>

*Head lice information for schools*. (2013, September 24). Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html)

Pontius, D., & Teskey, C. (2011, January). *Pediculosis management in the school setting position statement*. Retrieved from <http://www.nasn.org/PolicyAdvocacy/PositionPapersandReports/NASNPositionStatementsFullView/tabid/462/ArticleId/40/Pediculosis-Management-in-the-School-Setting-Revised-2011>