

 Policy #: H-7	Effective Date: 5/29/97	Page #: 1 of 2
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COMPONENT: HEALTH

SUBJECT: HEAD LICE

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: To establish a standard procedure for Head Start staff to deal with head lice and use of preventative measures to prevent infestation.

PURPOSE: To prevent exposure and infestation to other children.

PROCEDURE: Staff will screen all children for head lice at least once week, routinely on the first day of class. Gloves must be worn when touching or looking for head lice and nits, and must be changed between each child and exposure.

CENTER CLEANING: Vacuum the carpets, clean children’s cots, wash cot covers as well as other machine-washable items. Other items that cannot be easily washed should be placed in a large bag, and stored for 14 days to kill any live lice.

EQUIPMENT: Disposable gloves, vacuum, and plastic bags.

HANDLING OF HEAD LICE AND NITS

1. Children found to have lice and/or nits (eggs) will be excluded from Head Start. Infestation should be confirmed by another staff member.
2. All Head Start personnel will maintain confidentiality when notifying the parent of the child with head lice as well as the other parents in the classroom.
3. The parent/guardian of the child with head lice should be notified of the infestation. An adult will be expected to pick up the student from school as soon as possible after notification. If personal contact cannot be made with the parent, written notification with instructions for treatment will be placed in a sealed envelope with the parent’s name and given to the person picking up the child. If all efforts to send a student home have been unsuccessful, the child will remain at Head Start, but all efforts will be made to keep the child from infecting others. The child will not be isolated.
4. Educational materials will be sent home with the student. Information will include head lice detection, treatment and prevention methods.
5. Appropriate staff should be informed of students who have been excluded. Appropriate treatment (vacuum) of areas occupied by the child should be completed at that time.

6. The student may return to school the day after treatment, including the removal of all nits from the hair. An adult must accompany the child upon return to school. The child will be checked by Head Start staff, and readmitted if no lice or nits are found. Nits on the hair shaft that are farther than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the scalp are considered to be unviable (dead or already hatched). If the child is found to still be infested with lice or nits, he/she may not return to school until they are lice and nit-free.
7. If a child continues to become infected with head lice, the family service worker may perform a home visit to discuss treatment and prevention with the parent. Child Protective Services may be called if it appears that the child is becoming infested due to parental neglect or abuse.