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UT Elementary School School Health Advisory Council (SHAC):

Recommended lice policy— developed November/December 2013 adopted January 2014

GOAL: To uphold the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [recommendations](#) on the issue of head lice, which state that children should not be restricted from school attendance as a result of transmission; while also providing communication, education, and a school environment that help deter transmission of head lice (or other types of illnesses or diseases).

As indicated by the [AAP](#), “The school can be most helpful by making available accurate information about the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice in an understandable form to the entire school community.”

This policy is written around three tenets: fostering communication, encouraging a health school environment, providing education.

1. Foster communication

- a. When lice is found on a child, the school nurse shall notify the child’s parents that the child should be treated for lice before returning to school the next day. (Sample letter included in the appendices.)
- b. When 3 or more children in a class are known to have lice, the class teacher or school nurse shall communicate (via text or e-mail and/or hard copy) that lice is known to be present in the classroom;
 - Communication shall be shared in an effort to encourage whole-class participation in curbing further transmission; communication to suggest reasonable steps to take that may help.
- c. As with other transmittable health issues/diseases, parents shall notify the school when they find lice on their UTES children.
- d. UTES administration should send out friendly reminders to parents about lice or other health issues several times a year, reminding parents of the issue and how to help prevent transmission (avoid sharing hats, brushes, etc.); notices may be sent:
 - at the beginning of the school year;
 - upon return from Christmas break;
 - around Spring Break

2. Encourage a healthy school environment

- a. Allow for children to have separate hooks or cubbies for their backpacks, coats, and hats;
- b. In accord with [AISD policy](#), “at all times, schools are encouraged to discontinue fabric-covered items, i.e., pillows, blankets used by more than one child. Teachers may request storage bags to separate all coats/sweaters. Teachers, assistants, and monitors should not allow piling of coats.”
- c. Implement the classroom checklist (see appendices)
- d. Remind children not to share brushes, hats, hair accessories, or headphones;
 - Wipe shared headphones down after each student uses them

3. Provide education

- a. The school shall provide information to parents about lice, including what it is, what it looks like, treatment options, combing methods, and prevention measures; these include:
 - Research indicates that pesticide treatments have lost some effectiveness; the school should not advocate for pesticide treatments alone;
 - Good combing methods are essential
 - Checking entire family if one person in the family is found to have it
 - Encouraging reasonable cleaning methods: lint rolling car seats and back packs, etc.; putting combs/brushes in the freezer for an hour or washing them in the dish washer; washing bedding; etc.
 - Re-treat and re-check 7-10 days after first treatment
- b. Encourage prevention
 - Urge parents to routinely check their children's heads rather than wait for a letter from school (weekly checks are advisable)
 1. The goal of lice prevention, control, and treatment in schools is to prevent the spread of lice from one student to another student.
 2. Lice control takes teamwork among home, school, after-school programs, and events in private or public locations, including student visits in each other's homes.
 3. Encourage parents to have children with long hair wear it back.

Checklist for Classroom Lice Control

_____ Play items (hats, wigs, dress up clothes, etc.) cleaned after each child's use

_____ Sweaters, backpacks, and coats hung separately on hooks and not touching. Sweaters, coats, and hats can often be placed in each student's backpack

_____ Children's personal items (combs, brushes, hats, scarves, sweaters, coats etc.) are not shared

_____ Carpet is vacuumed daily

_____ No sharing of cloth or upholstered pillows, mats, etc.

_____ Nap items (pillows, blankets, towels, etc.) are stored separately in a cubby or plastic bag and taken home at least weekly to be washed.

_____ Headphones are wiped with disinfectant after each child's use

_____ Observation of children for:

- Nits/lice in hair (on nape of neck, over ears, and within 1/4 inch of scalp)
- Scratching of head and neck

Informational resources:

AISD:

http://www.austinisd.org/sites/default/files/dept/health-services/docs/health_Lice_Control_Protocol_2013.pdf

Texas Health Services:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm - 1>

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SAMPLE LETTER TO NOTIFY PARENT OF LICE IN THE CLASSROOM

PARENTS:

We have had several cases of lice in our class recently. Please check your child's head for lice, which are small brown to grayish-white insects about 1/16 inch to 1/8 inch in length, and shaped like a football, but are hard to find. The nits (eggs), which look like a small, pearly white drop glued to the hair close to the head, are easier to find.

If you need assistance checking your child's head, let Nurse Hurley know, and she will check their head and notify you if any are found.

Lice cannot hop, jump, or fly. They move from child to child from close body contact. Sharing combs, brushes, hair bands, hats, caps, coats, or even neck scarves can spread them, too. Please take an opportunity to teach and remind your child not to share these items with other children, and not to play with another child's hair.

If you find lice, please treat for it! You can contact your child's doctor, use an over-the-counter approved lice treatment, or contact Nurse Hurley for recommendations.

Thank you for partnering with us in getting rid of this pest! In general, it is a good habit to check your child's head weekly. The sooner lice is identified, the easier it is to get rid of it.

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Padres

Recientemente hemos tenido unos cuantos casos de piojos y liendres en los salones de clase. Le estamos pidiendo que por favor le dé una checada de cabeza a su niños y que busque por unos pequeños insectos de aproximadamente de 1/16 "a 1/8" de largos, y ovalados, estos son difíciles de detectar. Son entre café y gris blanquizco. Los huevos lucen como un diminuto grano de arroz perlado pegados a la hebra del pelo cerca del cuero cabelludo, estos son más fáciles de encontrar.

Si usted necesita ayuda chequeando la cabeza de su niño/a déjele saber a la Sra. Hurley, ella es la enfermera de la escuela y ella le puede dejar saber si su niño/a tiene piojos o no.

Los piojos no pueden brincar, saltar o volar. Ellos se mueven de niño a niño atreves del contacto cercano entre sus cuerpos. También se pueden pasar prestándose los peines, cepillos, chongos, sombreros, abrigos, e inclusive las bandanas del cuello también pueden estar contaminadas. Use esta oportunidad para enseñar y recordarle a su niño que es importante no prestar o compartir esas piezas de ropa con sus amigos. También mencione que no se debe jugar con el cabello de otras personas incluyendo a los amigos.

Si usted encuentra piojos o liendres en su niño/a favor de proceder con el tratamiento! Usted también puede contactar a su médico. Use un medicamento aprobado y que se compra en la tienda. Y si todavía no sabe qué hacer por favor comuníquese con la Sra. Hurley, la enfermera para pedirle alguna recomendación. Gracias por su cooperación para acabar con estos insectos! En general, es bueno checar la cabeza de sus hijos una vez a la semana. Mientras más pronto identifique a los piojos, más pronto los podrá eliminar.

Kerin Hurley, RN

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SAMPLE LETTER TO NOTIFY PARENTS OF LICE ON THEIR OWN CHILD

To the parents/guardians of: _____

In a screening examination at school, your child was found to have head lice/nits. Head lice infestation in school-aged children is common in the United States. All socioeconomic groups are affected. Head lice are not a major health hazard and are not a reflection of personal hygiene. Transmission occurs by direct contact with infested individuals or indirectly by contact with their personal belongings, such as hats, hoods, combs, brushes or pillows.

However, to prevent the further spreading of lice at school, this condition needs to be treated at once. Before returning to school, take the following steps:

- Treat your child with an appropriate shampoo specifically for lice removal. A pharmacist or your child's physician can recommend a product such as Rid, Nix, or even a store generic version of one of these.
- Wash bed linens, stuffed animals, recently worn clothes, and coats in hot water, or seal them in a bag for 14 days.
- Remove all nits (lice eggs) from your child's hair with a nit comb or fingers.
- Talk to your child about how lice are transmitted and how to prevent another infestation.

If you need assistance in obtaining a lice comb or lice treatment products, please talk to Nurse Hurley.

Have your child check in with the office and drop off the bottom portion of this form after it has been completed. Fill out the bottom portion of this letter and indicate which treatment you used.

Continue to check through your child's hair and remove any nits found each night until you can no longer find nits. Keep checking daily for at least 1 week, but preferably two weeks. This is the BEST way to get rid of the problem that frustrates so many parents.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kerin Hurley, RN

Child's name

Date

Parent signature

Name of lice shampoo used

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TREATMENT AND CONTROL OF HEAD LICE AND NITS

- **Use a pediculicide** lice shampoo such as Rid (non-prescription), or R&C (non-prescription). You might want to ask your doctor or pharmacist for recommendations. Follow directions on the bottle **exactly**. Nix, a non-prescription lotion is also effective and does not require a second treatment. **Do NOT use flea shampoo or gasoline. These are very dangerous and not proven to be effective.**
- Repeat pediculicide (lice) shampoo treatment of the hair in 7 to 10 days (depending upon the pediculicide used) to assure that if any nits have hatched, the new lice will be killed before they can lay more eggs.
- **Comb out the nits:** Using a good metal nit comb or your fingernails, comb the hair section by section and remove each nit.
- **Clean environment:** To address this problem household cleaning should be done on the same day as the child's treatment.
- Soak combs and brushes for one hour in a pediculicide lice shampoo or five to ten minutes in hot water (130°), or isopropyl alcohol.
- Change into freshly washed clothes after treatment.
- Change and wash all sheets, pillowcases, and blankets in hot water and machine dry on hot setting.
- Wash all previously worn clothes, coats and hats.
- Vacuum rugs, carpets and upholstered furniture, including the upholstery in the car.
- Pillows, stuffed animals or non-washable items must be either dry cleaned, washed, sealed in a plastic bag for 7 days or placed in a dryer for 20 minutes of hot air.