



San Diego ISD Lice Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and effective plan for preventing and managing lice infestations within the school community, ensuring the health and safety of all students, and complying with the guidelines set forth by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

1. Lice Overview

Head lice (*Pediculus humanus capitis*) are small parasitic insects that infest the scalp and hair. They are most common among young children but can affect people of all ages. Head lice spread primarily through direct head-to-head contact, and less commonly through sharing personal items such as combs, hats, or headphones.

2. Prevention and Education

2.1 Education and Awareness:

- Schools will provide education to students, parents, and staff regarding the prevention of lice. This education will include how lice spread, how to identify them, and how to prevent transmission.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to avoid head-to-head contact during play, sports, and other activities.
- A lice information fact sheet or brochure will be included with the student handbook at the beginning of the year and notification when there is an infestation confined to a specific classroom.
- Parents and guardians will be provided with informational resources on head lice prevention, early detection, and treatment methods.

2.2 Screening:

- The school will not conduct routine head lice screenings for all students. However, if a case of lice is reported or suspected, the school nurse may conduct targeted classroom screenings.
- Parents are encouraged to regularly check their children's hair for lice or eggs (nits) and notify the school if an infestation is detected.

3. Identification and Reporting

3.1 Reporting Cases of Lice:

- If a student is suspected of having head lice, parents will be notified by the school nurse or designated staff member.
- Parents should check their child's head and, if necessary, seek treatment.
- Students with active head lice and/or signs of infestation (pediculosis), will be sent home for treatment.

3.2 Exclusion from School:

- **Live lice:** Students with live lice will be eligible to return to school after treatment.
- **Nits (eggs):** Students will not be excluded from school if only nits are visible, unless there is evidence of active live head lice (pediculosis).

4. Treatment and Return to School

4.1 Treatment:

- Parents will be advised to treat the child's head lice infestation with over-the-counter or prescription treatments, following the manufacturer's instructions or a healthcare provider's recommendations.
- In addition to lice treatments, it is recommended that parents should comb through the child's hair with a fine-toothed comb to remove any remaining nits.
- The school may provide information on safe and effective treatment methods and resources.

4.2 Return to School:

- Students who have been treated for lice may return to school after they have received proper treatment and are free of live lice.
- Students should be rechecked by the school nurse or another designated staff member before returning to class. The student will be allowed to return to class if no live lice are found.
- If live lice are still present upon re-entry, the student may be sent home again until treated successfully.

5. Managing Exposures and Outbreaks

5.1 Notification of Classroom:

- If the school confirms a student has head lice:
 - The parent of the student with head lice will be notified as soon as practicable but not later than 24 hours after the administrator or nurse determines or becomes aware.

- the parent of each student assigned to the same classroom as the student with lice, will be notified not later than the second school day after the date on which the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of the fact.
- The notification will include instructions for parents to check their children for lice, signs and symptoms of head lice, and treatment recommendations.

5.2 Cleanliness and Environmental Control:

- While head lice do not live long away from the human scalp, the school will take steps to minimize transmission by cleaning areas and items that may have come in contact with an infested student (e.g., carpets, headphones and coat racks).
- Students should be reminded not to share personal items such as hats, combs, or hair accessories. Parents should be encouraged to clean areas and items like combs, hats, brushes, and towels at home that may have come in contact with an infested household individual.
- In accordance with guidelines from the CDC and Texas DSHS, students will not be excluded from school for a mere presence of nits (eggs). Head lice infestations should be addressed through proper treatment and monitoring, rather than through unnecessary exclusion from school.

6. Re-entry and Follow-up:

- After treatment, students should be rechecked by the school nurse or designated staff before returning to class.
- If a student continues to show signs of an active infestation, the parent will be contacted and further steps will be taken to ensure the child is appropriately treated before returning.
- Students with evidence of continuous head lice referrals may be referred out to the *Department of State Health Services* so that they may take further action on this matter.

6.2 Ongoing Monitoring:

- The school nurse, along with designated staff, will continue to monitor for any recurring cases of lice, especially if additional reports are made by parents or if other students are found to have lice.

7. Confidentiality

All information regarding head lice infestations will be kept confidential in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student names and medical conditions will not be disclosed without the consent of the parent or guardian, except as necessary for the protection of the health and safety of the school community.

8. Conclusion

This policy is designed to help prevent the spread of head lice while minimizing disruption to the educational process. Parents are encouraged to be proactive in checking for lice and notifying the school of any cases. Cooperation between families and the school is key to managing and controlling lice outbreaks.

For more information on head lice prevention, treatment, or concerns, please contact [District Head Nurse](#), Monica Saenz at 361.279.3382 ext. 2427.

This policy aligns with the guidance from the Texas Education Agency, Texas Department of State Health Services, and the CDC, ensuring a balanced approach that focuses on prevention, education, treatment, and the well-being of the students.