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**NUMBER: 6.11**

**TITLE: Head Lice**

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Head lice is common in school-aged children. Head lice can best be controlled through the cooperation of parents, children, and school and health care providers. Once parents learn how to recognize head lice, regularly checking your own and your child's hair is the best prevention.

Children should be encouraged not to share personal items such as hats, combs, hairbrushes or headphones.

The most common symptom is constant scalp itching. Other symptoms may include scratch marks or small red lesions like a rash. Some children who have head lice may have no symptoms.

Head lice do not cause disease, but are easily spread to others. Head lice are spread through direct head-to-head contact, commonly among children and adults who may stay close together in one place, such as in child care settings and schools. Head lice cannot jump or fly from one person to another, but they can crawl very quickly.

The discovery of head lice can be an embarrassing experience for students. Tell only people that are directly affected by the head lice. Once head lice is confirmed, please inform the parents/guardian of the head lice.

When a case of lice is identified at your school, use the following procedure:

1. When the first case of lice appears in a classroom:
  - a) The principal will notify parents of students in that classroom by letter.
  - b) The principal will advise the parent of the student with lice that the child will be required to remain at home until he/she receives his/her first treatment. Once treated, the child will return to school.

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Date Created: October 1, 2013  
Updated: December 6, 2013

Attached forms: Parent Letter "A"  
Parent Letter "B"  
Head Lice Fact Sheet  
Head Lice – Yukon Health & Social Services  
Head Lice Treatment

2. If another case of lice occurs within the school within two weeks:

- a) The principal will notify the parents of students in that classroom by letter and issue a school wide notification.
- b) Staff will report any lice detected to the principal.
- c) Siblings of students affected will be checked within that school.

## **School Screening Information**

School screenings may be used in cases where it is suspected strongly that a child or their sibling may be affected.

When schools screen individuals or siblings of affected individuals, the following information will be useful:

To check the student's scalp, good lighting is important. Part the hair into small sections going from side to side with your fingers or a special head lice comb. Check the entire head carefully, looking close to the scalp. Live nits or eggs may be easier to find behind the ears and at the bottom of the hairline just above the neck.

- Respect parent or student wishes not to be checked.
- Do not disturb headgear or hair without student consent.

## **Educational and Support Resources**

BC Health Files: Head Lice Number 06 March 2007

<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile06.stm>

Identify Us: Head Lice Information by Dr. Richard Pollack

<http://identify.us.comhead-lice/>

Canadian Pediatric Society Head Lice Parent Handout

<http://www.cps.ca/caringforkids/whensick/headlice.htm>

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