



California School Nurses Organization

Position Statement

PEDICULOSIS MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT

The California School Nurses Organization recognizes that the management of pediculosis should not disrupt the education process. School districts, in consultation with the credentialed school nurse, should develop pediculosis management policies and procedures. In order to be effective, these policies and procedures should include collaboration with and education of students, staff and families. Referrals and resources should include but are not limited to the local health department, health care providers, and community clinics and other agencies.

Pediculosis is a nuisance and not associated with any disease process. CSNO recommends that students not be unnecessarily excluded from school due to the presence of nits once appropriate treatment is initiated and parents educated in appropriate follow up.

RATIONALE

The credentialed school nurse's primary role is educating all involved about pediculosis and dispelling myths and stigmas regarding lice infestation. The goals of treatment are to contain the infestation, to prevent overexposure to potentially hazardous chemicals, to minimize school absence, and to maximize the opportunity for student academic achievement.

Research and the literature do not support school exclusion for pediculosis. No disease process is associated with pediculosis; schools should be advised to follow current public health recommendations and district policy. When lice remain after treatment, further monitoring is appropriate and recommended. Presence of nits does not indicate active infestation and there is no evidence that presence of nits correlates with any disease process. Research suggests that lice are not highly transferable in the school setting and no increase in outbreaks of lice resulted from allowing children with nits to remain in class.

References:

- American Academy of Pediatrics Clinical Report. (2011).
<http://pediatrics.aapublications.org/content/early2010/07/26/peds.2010-1308>
- California Department of Public Health. *Guidelines on head lice prevention and control for school districts and child care facilities.* (2007).
- Hootman, J. (2002). Quality improvement projects related to pediculosis management. *Journal of School Nursing, 18*(2), 80-86.
- National Association of School Nurses Position Statement. *Pediculosis in the school community.* (2004).

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