

Head Lice Management in the School Setting

strategies for the management of head lice in schools.

school policies, allowing children to remain in class and

sponsored activities when live lice or nits (the eggs of head lice) are found on their heads, notifying parents/caregivers at the end of the school day when findings indicate the presence of a head lice infestation, and educating parents/caregivers about evidence based treatment options.

BACKGROUND

child to be free of nits before

costs at \$1 billion (Hansen & O'Hayer,

In the United States, head lice infestations are most common among preschool and elementary school age children and their household members regardless of socioeconomic status and hygienic living conditions

he or she can return to school lack evidence of being effective, result in unnecessary absenteeism, and may violate affected children's civil

Devore et al., 2015). Treatment failures can also result from initial misdiagnosis, non adherence to a treatment protocol, a new infestation acquired after treatment, or the lack of use of an ovicidal product (Devore et al., 2015; Pontius; 2014; Pollack, Kiszewski, & Spielman, 2000; CDC, 2013b).

RATIONALE

Evidence based strategies for the management of head lice in the school setting can reduce the incidence of infestations, the social stigma and caregiver strain experienced by students and families, and the negative impact on students' education. The school nurse can provide leadership within the school community to effectively manage head lice by:

Attaining knowledge and competency that reflect current evidence based school nursing practice related to the management of head lice (American Nurses Association & National Association of School Nurses [ANA & NASN], 2011).

Providing accurate health education to the school community focused on dispelling common myths about head lice (e.g., incidence, life cycle of the head louse, mode of transmission, importance of regular surveillance at home, recommended evidence based treatment options, ~~can~~ community

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