

Appendix 1c

Bed Bugs



The most common bed bugs



Bed bugs on arm and finger



Bed bug nymphs and larvae

Basic Information

In general, school and institutional child care center environments are not conducive to bed bug infestations. Bed bugs prefer an environment where they can hide during the day and come out at night to feed on a sleeping host. Major infestations of schools and child care centers are rare. However, successful pests are adaptable and bed bugs hiding in clothing or backpacks can hitchhike to and from schools and child care centers. Because bed bugs can travel in belongings, it is prudent for schools and child care centers to keep individual children's belongings separate.

There is no association between cleanliness and a bed bug infestation. Anyone can experience an infestation. If bed bugs are found or children are experiencing skin conditions that might be associated with bed bug bites, then it may be necessary to investigate the school or child care settings as well as the child's home setting.

Policy Recommendations

An appropriate response plan would include the following:

- Train staff to identify bed bugs and the signs of bed bugs in the classroom and the children's items. This may include actual insects, cast skins or excessive insect bites on a child.
- Understand the difference between an "introduction" and an "infestation". An infestation can be defined as having virtually all of the life-cycle was present (eggs, nymphs and adults). Finding bed bugs on students will most likely be classified as an introduction into the classroom as opposed to finding bed bugs in the environment (usually classroom), even if the student's jacket or backpack may contain more than one stage of the bed bug life cycle.
- Establish a school Integrated Pest Management Plan with an emphasis on monitoring.
- Any student with bed bugs identified on their person or in their belongings may remain in school until the end of the day, although treating the clothing/belongings or providing a change of clothes before returning to class is advisable.
- Respond promptly to bed bug complaints within the school and through contact and counseling with parents. The longer the bed bug infestations are allowed to persist, the harder they are to eradicate.
- Parents should promptly respond to bed bugs in the home for the health and safety of the family and school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents have the ultimate responsibility for their children. This includes:

- Assisting in the prevention and management of bed bugs through regular checks when bed bugs are found in the class, on the child or in the home, educating themselves and their children, and making immediate arrangements for inspection/treatment when bed bug infestation is suspected or confirmed.

School communities have responsibility for:

- De-cluttering. The most important action school personnel can take is to eliminate clutter that provides harborage for bed bugs and makes inspection, monitoring, simple bed bug removal or any other treatment option difficult.
- Enforcement of school defined procedures for children with evidence of bed bug infestation in the home.
- The classroom where the bed bug was found should be carefully inspected by a trained professional including desks, floors, walls and storage areas for student belongings. A thorough cleaning should be done including vacuuming with special attention to cracks and crevices in furniture, equipment, walls and floors. Materials that can be placed in a dryer should be subject to the the highest heat setting (>120 degrees F) for at least 20 minutes. If a true infestation exists, a licensed pest management professional should treat infested areas and conduct a follow-up inspection.
- Disseminating current information about bed bugs.
- Holding educational sessions for parents and children if necessary.
- Alerting parents when *introductions* or *infestations* have been identified.

PROTOCOL FOR TREATING BED BUGS

Threshold: Zero

Procedures to follow if a bed bug is found:

Bed bugs can crawl onto or off of a person (or their belongings) at any time. If a suspected bed bug is found on a child, a child's belongings or anywhere else in a school, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Discretely remove the child, if the bug was found on a child or a child's belongings. **The Health Director or a Health Staff/Teacher** should inspect the child's clothing and other belongings. Any bugs found should be removed and collected for identification. Try to keep the specimens as intact as possible. It is important to confirm that the bugs found really are bed bugs before proceeding.
2. If the specimen is confirmed to be a bed bug, **the Health Director** should notify the affected class or classes.
3. If a confirmed bed bug was found on a child then the **Health Director/Teacher** should inform the child's parents. Efforts should be made to identify the behavior that contributed to the source of the infestation at the home so that behaviors can be modified to prevent re-infestations at the source. An inspection report should be sent home with the student. Educational materials should accompany the letter.
4. Parents of all children using the room where the bed bug was found should also be notified. They should be provided with basic information about bed bugs and strategies to eliminate infestations in homes.
5. Inspect and monitor classrooms. If specimens are confirmed, inspect crevices in baseboards, pictures furniture, window, and door casings, wallpaper, behind electrical switch plates, in telephones, radios, clocks, behind wall mounted art-work. Look for the insects, their cast skins, bug droppings and eggs near crevices.
6. In most instances students should not be excluded from school due to bed bugs. Schools should not be closed due to the discovery of bed bugs unless there is a widespread infestation. The school may become a source of dispersal to others in the school environment. Bed bugs brought into the school in a child's book bag or on their clothing could drop off in the classroom or in a locker. The bed bugs might then be picked up and taken home by another student or staff member inadvertently.

For children who repeatedly come to school with bed bugs, institute clothing and school item sanitation.

1. In an infested home, parents should store their child's freshly laundered clothing in sealed plastic bags until they are put on in the morning. This prevents bed bugs from hiding in the clothing and being carried to school.
2. Backpacks and other items that travel back and forth to school can also be inspected daily and stored in sealed plastic containers at home to prevent bed bugs from getting into them.
3. After repeated discoveries, students could be provided with plastic bags or bins in which to store their belongings in order to prevent any bed bugs from spreading to other students' belongings.

If it is determined that a site or facility may have a bed bug infestation (presence of eggs, nymphs, and adults) by the IPM Coordinator, a licensed pest management professional will be contacted for assistance.