Action Plan for Bedbugs

Introduction

Bed bug infestations are spreading in the U.S. Children living with bed bugs at home will bring bed bugs to school. We need to accept the fact that bed bugs have the potential to be transported to school every day that school is in session. The first and most important step of any bed bug management plan is to remain calm. It is critical to have two different plans of action: one for a bed bug infestation found on a student's clothing and one for one or more bugs found in a classroom. Both plans should be communicated to all staff and parents. An educational session should be held for all employees and should include identification of bed bugs in all life stages and what actions the employee should take if they find one at school.

Plan A: Single Student

- The nurse or another predetermined person should be called to escort the student and their belongings to the dryer/restroom area.
- Have the student change into temporary clothing and place all of their clothes (including shoes, coat and backpack) in the dryer set on high for 30 minutes. A household dryer set on high will kill all bed bugs in all life stages.
- After the clothes are heat treated, have the student change back into their own clothes and return to class.
- Heat the temporary set of clothing on high for 30 minutes.
- Notify the student's parents and provide resources on how to identify and treat a bed bug infestation in their home.

Plan B: Classroom Infestation

- Have a pest control company who has experience with bed bugs available.
- Identify with a sign the exact location where the bed bugs were found, and isolate that location.
- Call the pest control company immediately. There is no need to vacate the room unless the infested area cannot be avoided.
- Capture at least one bed bug and save it in a plastic bag for positive identification. Crush all others.
- Once positive identification is obtained from the pest control company, follow their instructions for preparing the classroom for treatment.
- Notify parents of a possible infestation. Inform them of the actions the school is taking and provide resources on how to identify and treat a bed bug infestation in their home.

General Proactive Measures

- Limit amount of clutter in classrooms.
- Limit the number of items being transported to and from school. Send materials home in clear plastic baggies when possible. Leave textbooks and backpacks at school if possible.
- Provide clear plastic storage containers for student belongings. The smooth interior makes it difficult for wandering bugs to get out and they will likely fall to the bottom of the container. When the students leave for the day, the containers should be visually inspected for any sign of bed bugs.
- If a bed bug is found in a container, the source of potential infestation is known and the parents should be notified. If the parents are already aware of the presence of bedbugs in their home, the parents and school can work together to make sure that the student's possessions are treated in the school dryer every day before class.