



# KNOW THE FACTS

## *Guidance for Handling Bed Bugs in Schools*

Bed bugs are pests that feed on blood, which in turn can cause itchy bites. They are not known to transmit or spread disease directly but can affect health through allergic reactions, secondary infections, mental health impacts, and economic hardship.

### **If You Think You Have Seen a Bed Bug**

- Collect and keep it intact for proper identification. Use gloves, tweezers, tissue and seal in a bag.
- If it was on a student or their belongings, discretely remove the student from class but do not send them home or exclude them from school.
- Check the student's clothing and belongings for possible bed bugs.
- Inspect the area around where the bug was found.

### **Have a Positive Bed Bug ID?**

- Oversee the case until the problem is resolved.
- Bag and seal any belongings of the student and send home at the end of the day.
- Inform student's guardians about the bed bug finding.
- Provide the student and parents with information on bed bug control.

### **What to Tell Parents**

- Having a bed bug infestation does not mean a home isn't clean.
- A true bed bug infestation is unlikely in the school.
- It is not necessary for the school to close because of bed bugs.
- Students should limit the items they bring to school.
- Students should store school supplies in protective boxes at home and not under or near beds or couches or leave them in the school if possible.

### **Successful Bed Bug Management**

- Uses a combination of strategies such as prevention, inspection, vacuuming, steam/heat treatment, and, if needed, pesticides.
- Recognizes that pesticides alone may not eliminate bed bugs.
- Involves placing clothes in a dryer on high heat for at least 30 minutes to kill any bed bugs.
- May include professional steam or radiant heat treatments.



### **General Guidance**

- Ensure all school faculty and staff are able to identify bed bugs, skins, eggs and feces.
- Ensure addressing bed bugs is included in the Integrated Pest Management Plan.
- Whenever possible, provide space that students are able to keep their belongings separated from those of other students.

### **Bed Bug Hot Spots in Schools**

- Student and staff closets, lockers, coats and backpacks.
- Faculty lounges, classrooms or other areas with upholstered furniture or cots.
- Dormitories or other sleeping areas.

**Finding a confirmed bed bug on a student or their belongings does not necessarily mean their home is infested.**

**If a student has bed bugs, privately and with dignity, follow these guidelines.**

**For more information:** <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs> **or**

SCAN



# School Response Flowchart

Bed bug found on/in:

Student's clothing/belongings

- Discretely bring student to school nurse.
- Examine clothes and belongings.
- Collect specimen to identify.

- Notify student's parents or guardians.
- Provide educational material on bed bugs.

Evidence of infestation at home.

- Encourage family to treat for infestation
- Provide educational assistance

If there are repeat instances, enlist appropriate social agencies.

No evidence of infestation at home.

Investigate for other sources.

Classroom/Environment

Trained pest management professional inspects for bed bugs.

Evidence of infestation.

- Follow IPM plan and treat for infestation
- Notify staff and parents of findings and treatment.

No evidence of infestation.

Monitor and maintain vigilance.

*Information sheet adapted from  
EPA 730-F-16-004 and  
Hamilton County Public Health,  
Cincinnati, OH  
Flowchart adapted from Michigan  
Bed Bug Working Group*