**CAPE-Early Head Start/Head Start**

**Bed Bug Action Plan**

**Home Visiting**

Protect your own home, the center, and other families. Wear simple, light-colored clothing that gives bed bugs few places to hide. Only wear clothing and shoes that can be put in a hot dryer. Only bring necessary items inside the house. If bed bugs or signs of bed bugs (such as fecal spots, hatched skins, or eggs) are seen, remain calm. Staff may tactfully discuss the infestation with the family and offer helpful information. Avoid sitting on beds or upholstered furniture. After the visit, inspect yourself for bed bugs. Clothing and shoes can be treated by putting them in a clothes dryer on hot heat for 30 minutes. Record your home visit notes in ChildPlus. Notify the Coordinator of Health Services.

**At the Center**

If a live bed bug is found on a child, discreetly remove the child from the classroom. Examine the child’s clothing and other belongings. Call parents to pick up the child. If parents are unable to pick up the child, assist the child to change into clean clothes and shoes if available. The child’s possessions may be placed in a tightly tied plastic bag to be sent home, or placed in the clothes dryer on hot heat if a clothes dryer is available. The child may ride the bus home at the end of the day.

Record notes in ChildPlus, notify the Coordinator of Health Services, and provide bed bug educational materials for parents. Staff and parents may contact the Health Manager if they have questions or need assistance. Check the center for any signs of bed bugs and report findings to the Coordinator of Health Services. No chemical treatment is to be used by staff.

If the family reports that they have a bed bug infestation at home, the child may still attend Head Start. Explain the “No Live Bug” policy. Provide educational materials. Encourage the family to seek professional help and to have the infestation treated. Explain what they can do to help their child avoid bringing the bed bugs to the center:

1. Laundering items worn outside the home first with dry heat for 30 minutes followed by washing in hot water and drying again in high heat.
2. Storing freshly washed clothing and other items taken daily to Head Start in a sealed plastic bin or garbage bag until the child needs to take them to Head Start (these items should be inspected for the presence of bed bugs daily).
3. Routine cleaning of all hard surfaces with normal cleaning solutions.

Staff may take the following precautions to protect the center:

1. Ask parents to use only a folder, not a backpack, for the child to transport paperwork to and from the center.
2. Staff may have the child change into clean clothes daily upon arrival to the center. Clothing and other possessions from home may be placed in a tightly sealed plastic bag for storage, or laundered at the center if laundry facilities are available. The child may be changed back into his/her own clothes at the end of the day to return home.

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