

## **WHAT IF I FIND A BEDBUG ON A STUDENT?**

If a bedbug is found on a student, it may indicate that the student has bedbugs at home. However, bedbugs can crawl onto or off of a person (or their belongings) at any time, so it is also possible that the bedbug was brought to school by someone else. If a suspected bedbug is found on a student or a student's belongings, the following procedures should be followed:

- The student should be discreetly removed from the classroom so that the school nurse or a qualified individual can examine the student's clothing and other belongings. Any bugs found should be removed and collected for identification. Try to keep the specimens as intact as possible.
- If a confirmed bedbug was found on a student, then the school principal or nurse should contact the student's parents or guardian to inform them of the bedbug presence on their child. Consider sending a bedbug inspection form home, a sample is provided at the end of this document. Educational materials, such as those available at [www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/PDFs/fs\\_BedBugs.pdf](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/PDFs/fs_BedBugs.pdf) should also be provided to the family.
- The school principal or nurse should consider notifying the affected class or classes. A sample notification letter is provided at the end of this document.
- Students should not be excluded from school due to bedbugs unless repeated efforts have been made to remedy an infestation. Schools should not be closed due to bedbug presence, if pest management is necessary it will normally be targeted to certain areas of the school.
- Ongoing pest management that includes the use of pesticides indoors should be overseen by the school principal or designee and must conform to the school's integrated pest management plan,

## **WHAT CAN I DO TO ELIMINATE BEDBUGS FROM MY CLASSROOM?**

- DO NOT allow untrained staff to apply pesticides on school property. By law, only IPM trained applicators can apply pesticides (even ready-to-use products like sprays) in schools, and in compliance with the school's IPM plan.
- Backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school can also be inspected daily and sealed in plastic containers to prevent bedbugs from getting into them at home.
- Hard surfaces can be cleaned with standard cleaning products.
- If bedbugs have been found repeatedly in a particular classroom, have the room inspected by a pest management professional or other trained staff.

## **WHAT IF ONE OF MY STUDENTS HAS AN INFESTATION AT HOME?**

When a student is dealing with an infestation at home, it is important to be sensitive to their problem. Although bedbugs have nothing to do with cleanliness or socioeconomic status, there is still a stigma that can come with having bedbugs. As a result, parents may be hesitant to admit to having bedbugs, and students may not want others to know they have an infestation at home. Students living in an infested home may also feel anxious or tired during the school day.

Schools should work with the parents of any student living in an infested home to develop strategies for preventing the further spread of bedbugs.

- Determine if the infested home is being treated. Home remedies and do-it-yourself treatments are usually insufficient and could cause negative health effects or produce potential hazards in the home.
- If a parent lacks the financial resources to hire a pest management professional, they can be referred to call State of Alaska Pesticide Program at 1-800-478-2577 for advice.
- 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 bedbugs from hiding in the clothing and being carried to school.
- Backpacks, lunchboxes, 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 bedbugs from getting into them.
- At school, the student could be provided with plastic bags or bins in which to store their belongings in order to prevent any bedbugs from spreading to other students' belongings.
- If bedbugs are finding their way into the school, consider notifying the affected classes. A sample notification letter is provided at the end of this document.
- Continue to use these measures until successful treatment of the home has been verified.