Ms. Deborah Altschuler
Parents Against Lice
P.O. Box 149
Newton, Massachusetts  02161

Dear Ms. Altschuler:

The reasons I discourage the environmental use of insecticides for head louse control are three-fold: 1) there is no evidence that the use of such preparations brings a head louse problem in an institution or home under control faster than not using them; 2) it is my opinion that unsupervised use of insecticides in an institution or home can create potential health hazards themselves that are far greater than the health hazards posed by lice; and 3) the short survival time of head lice away from the human body insures that environmental surfaces would be free of any lice that were accidentally deposited there in about 48 hours. Moreover, our epidemiologic studies indicate that most transmission of head lice occurs by the direct person-to-person route rather than the person-environment-person route.

Sincerely yours,

Assistant Chief
Protozoal Diseases Branch
Division of Parasitic Diseases
Center for Infectious Diseases