

Dear Parents,

The safety and wellness of our students is a top priority. Head lice are a nuisance, not a danger. Infestation is common, easily treated, not a health hazard nor a sign of poor hygiene, and never a legitimate reason for immediate exclusion. Head lice do not spread disease. No healthy child should miss school because of head lice, and the “no-nit (lice egg) policy” for return to school is an unnecessary and unproductive vestige of the past.

GENERAL HEAD LICE MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- » School staff should understand head lice signs, symptoms, treatment and prevention.
- » Families should understand head lice signs, symptoms, treatment and prevention. Hair inspection happens primarily at-home.
- » Students with a suspected infestation may receive a confidential, discreet scalp inspection by a school nurse or an informed, principal-designated school staff member.
 - » Active infestation is defined as the presence of live mobile lice and/or the presence of nits (lice eggs) within $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the scalp. This situation requires treatment.
 - » Nits further than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the scalp may also require treatment. See a health care professional for specific, individual advice.
- » Families of students with head lice diagnosed at school should receive a call from the school and a handout on appropriate methods for treating head lice.
- » Students with active head lice identified at school should be allowed to remain in the classroom until the end of the school day. To the extent possible, limit activities that involve head-to-head contact or sharing of hats, head coverings or scarves.
- » Wide-scale head lice screening within schools is unwarranted.
- » The most common, “first-line” pediculicides (medicines that kill lice) are topical and over-the-counter. Prescription pediculicides may be required if first-line treatments fail.
- » Within a household, all infested persons should be treated simultaneously to avoid re-infestations.
- » Infested clothing and bedding should be washed in hot water and dried in hot air. Lice cannot survive temperatures in excess of 128.3 degrees for more than 5 minutes. Items that cannot be laundered may be sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks in order to kill lice.
- » “No Nit” policies that mandate a student be free of all nits before return to school are ineffective and not recommended.
- » Students diagnosed with head lice infestation should present to school nurse/staff a note from parent/guardian that verifies the student was treated upon return.
- » More Information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/>

<https://www.nasn.org/programs/educational-initiatives/lice-lessons>