

Head Lice

Unfortunately, each school year all schools deal with head lice, especially elementary schools. Head lice are not a health hazard, however, they can be quite a problem for families to get rid of at home. The presence of head lice is in no way indicative of a lack of cleanliness. They are nothing to panic or be embarrassed about. Should you suspect that your child has been exposed to lice, the following steps can help control the spread of this problem.

- Examine your child's scalp and hair very carefully for any sign of eggs (nits) and/or lice. Nits are very tiny and difficult to see. They vary in color from yellowish-brown to pearly white and are teardrop shaped. Nits are firmly attached to the hair shaft close to the scalp, at the back of the head, and behind the ears with a waterproof glue-like substance. It is so strong that the nits cannot be washed or flicked off with the fingernail.

- Remind your child not to share combs, barrettes, hats, scarves, helmets, or coats. Encourage your child to put their coat, hats/gloves, etc. in their bookbag to prevent the spread of lice.

- **If nits and/or lice are found:**

- Treat hair with a lice-killing product. Ask the pharmacist if you need help in choosing or locating a product. Remove all lice and nits from the hair. Check hair every day for at least 14 days for any missed lice and/or nits.
- Repeat treatment in 7-10 days.
- Wash clothing, pillows, bed sheets, and stuffed animals in hot water, and then place them in a dryer for 20 minutes on the warmest setting.
- Soak all combs and hairbrushes in hot water for 20 minutes.
- Vacuum all rugs, furniture, car seats, cars, and mattresses.

Lastly, if you suspect or know that your child has lice, **PLEASE** contact the school nurse.