

Head Lice (Pediculosis):

Periodically there are reported or identified instances of head lice. A procedure for informing parents has been established in order to provide consistency in all of the District's elementary schools. This procedure includes a newsletter article in the fall and spring of each year to provide parents with general information on this topic. As a case is reported or identified, a letter will be sent home to the parents of all pupils in that class. It is hoped that this procedure will provide parents with the needed information. More in-depth information about head lice is always available from our school nurse.

An infestation of head lice (pediculosis) in the hair of children can cause much concern. Lice may be commonly equated with filth, but in reality these tiny insects do not discriminate according to the level of personal hygiene. When a case is reported or identified, the nurse examines the student. If the student is affected, the parents of the affected student are notified of the situation. Any identified student is removed from the school setting to receive treatment.

Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects, such as hats, combs, towels, barrettes, headphones, etc. Parents should encourage their child to keep these items to him or herself. Early identification and immediate treatment are essential in reducing transmission. Some common clues to look for include:

- Excessive itching of scalp with persistent scratching.
- Areas of skin irritation of the scalp, especially around the region of the ear and the back of the neck.
- Close observation for nits (the eggs of lice) that resemble opaque oval-shaped particles that clung to the hairs near the scalp and cannot be easily dislodged.
- Close inspection for lice by separating the hair and carefully looking on the scalp or individual hairs for movement of tiny, grey-brown flat insects less than 1/4-inch long.

If you do find head lice, follow the steps below to easily take care of the problem.

- Call your doctor for advice.
- Check every member of the family.
- Use an effective head lice treatment.
- Remove all nits.
- Wash clothes, bed linens and towels.
- Soak combs, brushes, et cetera, in hot water.
- Vacuum everywhere.

Parents are urged to periodically check their child's hair and scalp. Call the school nurse if there are any questions or suspicions. There will be periodic surveillance for this condition at school.