Head Lice Guidance for Families

Head lice infestations are a common community issue, often brought into schools by children who don't yet know they are affected. While peak cases occur in the summertime lice are present year-round in every community.
Because lice are tiny, symptoms like itching may take weeks to appear. Often the only way to detect them early is through close and regular head checks at home. We encourage parents to make weekly head checks part of their routine. If you find lice or nits, consult your child's healthcare provider and notify the school nurse.

Head lice are a nuisance, but they are treatable and not life-threatening. Working together, families and schools can manage and prevent infestations.

How to Check Your Child at Home

1) Wet your child's hair
2) Using a fine-tooth (louse or nit) comb, work through the hair in small sections
3) After each pass, wipe the comb on a damp paper towel and check the scalp, comb, and towel closely
4) Continue combing and wiping until you have gone through all your child's hair

What to Look for

1) Lice appearance: Adult lice are about the size of a sesame seed, wingless and live close to the scalp. They do not jump or fly.
2) Color: Usually light brown or gray, blending in with hair.
3) Movement: They move quickly and avoid light, making them hard to see.
4) Nits(eggs): Tiny, yellowish, silver or white ovals firmly attached to the hair shaft near the scalp. Unlike dandruff, they do not wash or blow away.
5) Itching: Persistent scratching- especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears-often signals lice. Itching can be worse at night.

What to do if You Find Lice

1) Check out all family members and close contacts.
2) Treat anyone with an active infestation at the same time.
3) Use the head lice medicine recommended by your child's healthcare provider.
4) Carefully comb out nits with a nit comb after each treatment, continue checking every 2-3 days for 2-3 weeks.
5) Wash recently used bed linens, clothing, hats, and towels in very hot water and dry on high heat.
6) Non-washable items can be dry cleaned or sealed in plastic bags for 2 weeks.
7) Clean combs, brushes and hair accessories in very hot water. Vacuum carpets, furniture, pillows and mattresses.