

Dear Parents,

Head lice season has begun. This letter is to provide you with the most current evidenced based information on head lice. We hope this letter will help to dispel some of the common myths associated with lice. We have also provided both the school nurse's responsibilities along with parent responsibilities to minimize and control the spread of head lice in school.

- Only 1 in 10 transmissions occur at school.
- The most common outbreaks are seen at the start of the school year, after winter break, and after spring break...all times when the students are out of school for extended periods.
- At the time live lice are found, the student has probably had the infestation for a while.
- Transmission occurs most often during play dates and sleep overs.
- Transmission can occur from shared hair care items, hats, etc. but is less likely.
- Lice do not jump and do not have wings so they cannot fly.

The National Association of School Nurses, American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC all agree that classroom and/or school wide head lice screening programs have not had a significant effect on the incidence of head lice in the school setting over time and have not proven to be cost effective and therefore no longer recommend this practice. Doing these screenings also makes it impossible to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the students.

Role of the school nurse:

- When live lice are found, we will have the child sent home and advise parent to follow up with pediatrician for recommended treatment.
- We will require written proof from parent that child has been treated and will reinspect for live lice upon the students return to school.
- The respective grade will be notified via instant alert.

Parent responsibilities:

- Be familiar with how to detect head lice and how to treat it. For information read the attached 'Head Lice Detection Map' and 'Effective Treatment for Head Lice'
- Check your children routinely for head lice.
- Inform the school nurse if lice are found.
- Ensure that proper treatment has been completed and no live lice are present before your child returns to school.

For more information go to: www.state.nj.us/health/cd/documents/faq/headlice_faq.pdf

Thank you for your cooperation,
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