

HEAD LICE

Lice are spread by direct contact with an infected head. **It is not associated with poor hygiene** and lice, in fact, prefer clean hair! If your child has long hair it may help for you to keep your child's hair tied up to prevent it blowing around another child's head. Children should not share hats, combs, helmets, or anything that is in contact with the head and shoulders.

It is impossible to completely remove the lice from a neighborhood. Lice can not live away from the host for more than 2 days, however, eggs can live for up to one month. Please ensure that you treat linen and clothes as recommended in the instructions that accompany the treatment shampoos.

Check your child's hair carefully and see if there are any live lice or egg cases (nits). This is a time consuming exercise and should be done with a good light and a very fine comb. If you find any lice or eggs please treat with a lotion or shampoo and notify the school. **Inform your child's playmates and check all family members. All close "head to head" contacts of the previous 4-6 weeks should be contacted.**

If your child has lice or nits please keep him/her at home until all live lice have been killed and all nits have been removed.

Your doctor's office or other dispensaries will be able to supply recommended products for treatment. **Pregnant women, children under 2 years and those with asthma or allergies please seek medical advice** before using products for removing lice and nits..

We ALL need to check our children's hair regularly. Head Lice will not harm your child, but they are a bother to everyone concerned. **A daily nit check with a lice comb is advisable for 2 to 3 weeks following treatment.** Comb the hair thoroughly with a fine-toothed comb, preferably one designed for this purpose. You may have to retreat in 7-10 days if there is evidence of new nits or newly hatched lice.

Please be diligent to check your child's hair and report any cases found to the Kennedy School nurse office.

Detection Combing

Wet Hair Method

This will take 5-15 minutes to check each head, depending on hair length and thickness.

- Wash the hair in the normal way with ordinary shampoo.
- Rinse out the shampoo and put on lots of ordinary conditioner.
- Comb the hair with a normal comb to get rid of tangles.
- When the hair is untangled switch to a detection comb.
- Slot the teeth of the detection comb into the hair at the roots so it is touching the scalp
- Draw the detection comb through to the tips of the hair.
- Make sure that all parts of the hair are combed by working around the head.
- Check the comb for lice after each stroke. A magnifying glass may help.
- If you see any lice, clean the comb by wiping it on a tissue or rinse it before the next stroke.
- After the whole head has been combed, rinse out the conditioner.
- Repeat the combing procedure in the wet hair to check for any lice that might have been missed the first time.

Dry Hair Method

This will take 3-5 minutes to check each head, depending on hair length and thickness.

- Straighten and untangle the dry hair using an ordinary comb.
- Once the comb moves freely through the hair without dragging, switch to a detection comb.
- Starting from the base or the side of the scalp, comb the hair from the scalp down to the end of the hair. Comb each section of hair 3-4 times before moving to an adjacent section.
Look for lice as the comb is drawn through the hair.
- If a possible louse is seen, trap it against the face of the comb using the thumb. This avoids the risk of the louse being repelled by static electricity as the comb is withdrawn from the hair.
- Continue combing the hair section by section until the whole head of hair is combed through.

Weekly detection combing is recommended as being very effective in detecting head lice at an early stage and consequently preventing spread to others.