

Sample Communication:

Head Lice Information for Parents

You should examine your child's head, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck, for crawling lice and nits if your child exhibits symptoms of a head lice infestation. If crawling lice or nits are found, all household members should be examined for crawling lice and nits every 2-3 days. Persons with live (crawling) lice or nits within ¼ inch or less of the scalp should be treated.

To eliminate head lice successfully, it is very important that all treatment instructions and steps be carefully followed and completed. Both over-the-counter and prescription products are available. You may wish to contact your doctor, pharmacist, or health department for additional information about which product they recommend. Local pharmacies have products available beginning at \$10.

Head lice do not survive long if they fall off a person and cannot feed. Follow these steps to help avoid re-infestation by lice that have recently fallen off the hair or crawled onto clothing or furniture.

- Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that the infested person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment using the hot water (130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle.
- Clothing and items that are not washable can be dry-cleaned OR sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.
- Soak combs and brushes in hot water (at least 130°F) for 5-10 minutes.
- Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the infested person sat or lay. However, the risk of getting infested by a louse that has fallen onto a rug or carpet or furniture is very small. Head lice survive less than 1-2 days if they fall off a person and cannot feed; nits cannot hatch and usually die within a week if they are not kept at the same temperature as that found close to the human scalp.
- Do not use fumigant sprays; they can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.

For more information regarding the position statement(s) see the school's assigned School Nurse or contact the Office of Diverse Learner Supports and Services: Clinical and Related Services at 773-553-1800.

For educational resources addressing the management of head lice visit the National Association of School Nurses' Educational Campaign at:

<https://www.nasn.org/ToolsResources/HeadLicePediculosisCapitis>.