

# Lice (Pediculosis) Notification Letter

Grade/Classroom:

Dates:

We have a confirmed case of lice in your child's classroom. Lice are programmed for survival and getting rid of them requires diligence and persistence. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. There is no shame in having head lice. Please help control the spread of head lice by doing the following:

- **Check your child's head for nits (lice eggs) or live lice, every 2-3 days for the next four weeks.** You will need to inspect the entire scalp and base of the hair shaft, especially behind the ears and at the base of their neck.



**See District 220 Website for research based lice information and a video clip on how to conduct a head lice check:**

**<http://www.barrington220.org/page/231>**

- Diagnosis of a head lice infestation is best made by finding a live nymph or adult louse on the scalp or hair of a person.
- Because lice are very small, move quickly, and avoid light, they can be difficult to find. Use of a magnifying lens and a fine-toothed or lice comb may be helpful to find live lice.
- Finding nits firmly attached within a 1/4 inch of base of the hair shafts strongly suggests, but does not confirm, that a person is infested and should be treated. Nits that are attached more than 1/4 inch from the base of the hair shaft are almost always dead or already hatched.
- Nits are often confused with other things found in the hair such as dandruff, hair spray droplets, and dirt particles.
- If no live nymphs or adult lice are seen, and the only nits found are more than 1/4-inch from the scalp, the infestation is probably old and no longer active and does not need to be treated.



***Please ask for assistance if you find something suspicious or are unsure what to look for.***

# Please Help Us to Stop the Lice Life Cycle

Grade/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We continue to have intermittent cases of head lice in your child's class and/or grade level. Lice are programmed for survival and getting rid of them requires diligence and persistence. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. As such:

**Continue to monitor your child's head for nits (lice eggs) or live lice, every 2-3 days, for the next four weeks.  
You will need to inspect the entire scalp, base of the hair shaft, behind the ears and at the base of their neck.**



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*Please ask for assistance if you find something suspicious or are unsure what to look for.*

- The primary mode of transmission is from direct head to head contact (a live louse crawls from one head to another).
  - We ask you refrain from activities such as sleepovers with friends or extended family members for the next four weeks until all cases have been resolved.
  - Also, discourage head to head contact in your child's play with others (such as hugging or wrestling).
- Reinforce prevention strategies such as not sharing hair items (combs, brushes, hair accessories, towels) or hats. Avoid stacking coats and outdoor accessories at extracurricular events such as scouting, gymnastics, or other.
- Inform the school nurse if you suspect your child may have, or has head lice. Treatment guidelines and assistance with prevention of re-infestation will be reviewed.

Pediculosis (head lice) are an ongoing problem throughout the United States. Although head lice are not a serious medical condition, they are a nuisance and can cause an interruption in a child's education. Therefore, it is important that our parents know the facts about lice and what to look for.

Most cases of head lice are from close head to head contact with an infested person. Often this may occur during an activity such as a sleep over, overnight camp, or close contact with infested family members. You may suspect lice if you observe severe itching of your child's scalp. Lice and dandruff are often confused. Dandruff is flaky and easy to remove. Nits (lice eggs) are very small, can be yellow- white or grayish white in color, and are firmly attached at the base of the hair shaft and hard to remove. The nits are usually found 1/8 inch from the scalp. They can most often be found behind the ears and at the nape of the neck. Lice are insects with legs (not wings). Adult lice are small, about the size of a sesame seed, and grayish- white or brown in color. There is a short video clip on how to do a thorough head check on our website, at the link noted above.

If your child is found to have nits (eggs) or head lice please notify the school nurse for assistance with treatment guidelines. The child must be treated with shampoo that is especially formulated to treat lice, and the home environment must also be cleaned. Retreatment in 7-10 days, according to the product directions is recommended, as eggs may hatch after the first treatment. After treatment, some environmental measures need to be completed: washing and drying all bedding, coats, towels, and other cloth items your child has had contact with; thorough vacuuming of the carpeting and areas where your child has laid their head such as on upholstered furniture in the home or automobile and car seats. Please do not treat your child if no signs of lice or nits are present! These shampoos contain chemicals which can be toxic if overused.

The school nurse has additional information regarding head lice identification, treatment, and management. Please feel free to call the health office with any questions or if require assistance.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your assistance in regards to this matter.

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