

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Periodically throughout the school year, we will provide information to parents on pertinent health topics. In this message you will find information on head lice. While head lice are bothersome and embarrassing to the child as well as family, they do not carry disease and are not a sign of uncleanliness. The Currituck County School System's procedure for dealing with this condition follows Center for Disease Control and American Academy of Pediatrics' guidelines. Your child can not get head lice by just sitting next someone in the classroom, lunch room or on the bus. There are many myths that add to the social stigma and hysteria when a case of head lice is discovered. Please read the facts as well as what to look for if you suspect head lice. For more information please feel free to call your schools nurse.

Myth	Fact
Lice spread disease.	Head lice are not harmful and not capable of spreading disease.
Lice jump or fly from head to head.	Lice can not fly or jump. They are spread by the sharing of personal items such hair brushes, hats and bedding or by direct head to head contact.
Lice live in carpets, beds, clothes, and sofas.	Lice can only live up to 24-48 hours away from a human host. They thrive solely on human hair and can not live on pets.
Lice die immediately after treatment.	Lice may take several hours to die following treatment.
Permethrin (Nix) based products are 100% effective against Nits and their eggs	Permethrin (Nix) kills 70% of eggs with one treatment.
One treatment is enough.	Due to loss of residual activity of pediculicides, two treatments are recommended to kill newly hatched nymphs. (Alternate non-chemical treatments are available and can be effective as a second treatment.)
Everyone in the family should be treated.	Only those with a proven infestation should be treated, although everyone should be checked daily to weekly.
Head lice prefer long or dirty hair.	The likelihood of infestation is not affected by hair length or cleanliness. Lice are attracted to blood not poor hygiene.

**Signs to Look For:**

- Frequent, unexplained scratching of the head.
- Redness around the hairline, especially around the ears and back of the neck.
- An adult head louse is about the size of a sesame seed, has 6 legs, and is usually tan to grayish white in color.
- Eggs (nits) attach firmly to the base of the to the hair shaft with a glue-like substance. These can take on the appearance similar to that of the shell of a popcorn kernel. Nits may be confused with dandruff in the hair. However, nits attach firmly to the hair and do not “blow away”.

If you suspect or are concerned that your child may have head lice or nits, please contact your school's nurse. A screening can be done by the nurse or designated school staff upon request.