



Dimensions of Learning Academy

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School Office Hours: 7:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Kenosha Unified School District

Dear Parents or Guardians:

The following information has been provided to us to share with you from the Kenosha County Health department as helpful information on head lice.

In order to prevent head lice, all parents or guardians should routinely check their child for head lice infestation. Head lice are very common among school age children. Children have increased physical contact with each other and frequently share objects (hats, helmets, combs, hair jewelry, bedding, pillows, etc.) that have contact with human hair. Please emphasize to your children the importance of **not** sharing objects that touch the head.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Nits (the egg of a head louse) are yellowish-shite; oval shaped eggs that are about the size of a knot in thread, that are “glued” to the hair shaft. They are difficult to remove and do not fall off. Nits must be laid by live lice. You cannot “catch nits.”
- Nymph: The nit hatches into a baby louse called a nymph. It looks like an adult but is smaller. Nymphs mature into adults about 7 days after hatching.
- Head lice are about the size of a sesame seed. They are brownish-grey in color. They are crawling insects. They cannot hop, jump or fly. Head lice do not live in carpets or on animals.

Having head lice is not a serious medical condition. Anyone can get head lice by head to head contact or by sharing hats, hair brushes or sleeping pillows. The first clue that your child has head lice is frequent scratching of the scalp. To check to see if your child may be affected, carefully look at the hair around the back of the neck and behind the ears. It is a good idea to check all family members for lice or their eggs (nits) periodically or if a case is suspected. Lice are hard to spot. Their eggs are easier to see so look for those. Be sure not to confuse nits (eggs) with dandruff. Nits are grayish-white, oval shaped, and are *glued* to the side of the hair shaft. They are difficult to remove and will *cling* to the hair shaft.

If you discover lice, buy an over-the-counter lice treatment and apply according to package directions. **Your next vital step-to find and remove every nit from your child’s head-is the most important.** Separate hair in sections and remove all attached nits with a lice comb, baby safety scissors, or your fingernails. Mechanical removal is more certain than chemical killing. Repeat this ritual every night for two to three weeks, to make sure that you have found every nit, including new ones laid by any live lice that you cannot see. There are products that you can buy, as well as dilute vinegar, which help by loosening the nit glue. They do not, however, make combing unnecessary.

To prevent the lice from coming back, clean or vacuum anything your child’s head may have contacted within the previous few days. Washing, soaking, or drying items at temperatures above 130 degrees will kill lice and their nits. Placing stuffed animals, etc. in a plastic bag for two weeks will also kill them.

For more information see web site: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov

I hope you find this information helpful and that your questions on this topic have been answered. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Diana Pearson, Principal

Below you will find information on definitions that may be helpful to you and a list of “myths” and “truths” provided by: Pershing County School District.

Lice 101: Everything you Really Didn't Want to Know About Lice!

Definitions

Infestation - having an insect present, in this case, in your head

Lice - more than one louse

Louse - small insect that lives on the scalp

Nits - eggs, dead or alive, of a louse

Myths/Truths

Myth: Lice are easy to get.

Truth: Lice are spread only by head-to-head contact. They are much harder to get than a cold, flu, ear infection, pink eye, strep throat, food poisoning, or impetigo.

Myth: You can get lice from your dog, guinea pig, or other animal.

Truth: Lice are species specific. You can get human lice only from another human. You cannot get another animal's lice.

Myth: Lice are often passed via hats and helmets.

Truth: Rare, but possible. Hairbrushes, pillows, and sheets are much more common modes of transmission.

Myth: School is a common place for lice transmission.

Truth: School is a VERY RARE source of transmission. Much more common are family members, overnight guests, and playmates who spent a large amount of time together.

Myth: Poor hygiene contributes to lice.

Truth: Hygiene makes absolutely no difference. Lice actually like clean hair more than dirty. You get lice by close personal contact with someone else who has lice, not by being dirty.

Myth: Lice can jump or fly from one person to another.

Truth: Lice can only crawl. They can neither fly nor jump. They must crawl from one person to another.

Myth: Any nits left in the hair can cause lice to come back.

Truth: Any nits farther away than one quarter inch to half an inch on the hair shaft are ALREADY HATCHED and pose no risk to others.

Myth: Eggs or nits can fall out of the hair, hatch, and cause lice in another person.

Truth: Nits are cemented to the hair and very hard to remove. They cannot fall off. Newly hatched larvae must find a head quickly or will die.

Myth: Lice can live a long time.

Truth: Lice live only 1 to 2 days off the head.

Myth: All members of a family should be treated if one person has lice.

Truth: Only the person with lice should be treated. Lice shampoos are INSECTICIDES and can be dangerous if used incorrectly or too frequently. Household members and close contacts should be checked, but only treat those who actually have lice. The house should NOT be sprayed with insecticide, nor should insecticide be used on clothing or other items.

Myth: Checking a classroom when one student has lice can prevent lice from spreading.

Truth: Classroom transmission is EXCEEDINGLY RARE and a waste of valuable teaching time. Checking family members and close playmates is much more appropriate.

Myth: Avoiding lice is important as they spread disease.

Truth: Lice do not spread any known disease. They are annoying and icky but cause no disease.