**Staying on top of Head Lice**

**Time Required**: 10 minutes a week

**Here’s How**:

1. Encourage your kids to avoid sharing things that have been on or near another child’s head, including hairbrushes, combs, hats, scarves, towels, helmets, pillows, sleeping bags, tec.
2. Teach your kids to hang up their coats and hat on an individual hook, or some other separate area, when they get to school, instead of just throwing them in a pile with other classmates’ clothing
3. Regularly clean things that your child’s head has direct contact with, such as car seats, pillows, head phones, etc., if you are sharing these items with other children.
4. Review some head lice pictures to help you understand what you are looking for in your child’s hair, including live lice and nits (lice eggs).
5. Check your child for nits and live head lice at least once a week, keeping in mind that although you may find head lice anywhere, they are often found at the back of your child’s head, near his neck and behind his ears.
6. Recognize the symptoms of head lice, which include an itchy scalp and small red bumps or sores on the back of your child’s neck and scalp. Don’t panic, though, if your child must be treated for head lice.

**Tips:**

1. Be extra vigilant for head lice if there have been frequent reports if head lice at your child’s school or in your child’s classroom.
2. Review the head lice preventing steps before and after sleepovers, school field trips or when your child goes to camp.
3. Wash your child’s hair with a regular shampoo and hair conditioner and then check your child’s hair after you rinse and dry it, but while it is still damp. The hair conditioner can make it easier to comb through your child’s hair.
4. Remove ALL of the nits on your child’s head when your child has lice, since missing some nits (lice eggs) is a common way for kids to have a persistent infection, as lice keep hatching and keep the infestation going.

**If your child has head lice – he/she must be NIT FREE before returning to school. The nurse must recheck your child, WITH YOU in case they need to return home prior to being admitted back to class. Please help us keep this challenge under control.**

**If you see critters**:

* Wash all bed linens and clothing that were recently worn by anyone in your home who's infested in very hot (130° F [54.4° C]), then put them in the hot cycle of the dryer for at least 20 minutes.
* Have bed linens, clothing, and stuffed animals and plush toys that can't be washed put in airtight bags for a minimum of three days.
* Dry-clean anything that can't be washed (like stuffed animals). Or put them in airtight bags for at least three weeks.
* Vacuum carpets and any upholstered furniture (in your home or car), then throw away the vacuum cleaner bag.
* Soak hair-care items like combs, barrettes, hair ties or bands, headbands, and brushes in rubbing alcohol or medicated shampoo for one hour. You also can clean them in hot water for 10 minutes or just throw them away.
* Do not let your child go to bed with wet hair. Wash and dry hair with a hair drier before bed. Lice loves to reproduce in wet hair.

**Lice facts**:

* The nits (eggs) are oval, yellowish-white and hatch into lice in about 12 days.
* Nits are sticky and difficult to remove from the hair shaft.
* Off the scalp, nits cannot survive over one day.
* A louse is the size of a sesame seed and is pale to grey.
* Adult lice survive three weeks on the scalp and can produce 10 eggs per day.
* Live lice can transmit to another child. Transmission is from direct head-to-head contact. Lice cannot jump or fly to another person's hair.
* If not treated, the entire process will repeat.

*(Source:* [*American Academy of Pediatrics, September 2014*](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/from-insects-animals/Pages/Signs-of-Lice.aspx)*)*

* **SPS has a NO NIT policy. When your child returns to school after home treatment the SCHOOL NURSE MUST recheck your childs’ head prior to going back to class to maintain a NO NIT/ NO LIVE LICE policy. Thank you!**