

"Tis the Season for Sharing! That's what we do best at school.

One of the things that we share, usually inadvertently, is Head Lice (Pediculosis).

Below are some facts & suggestions on being proactive towards this common malady:

Head Lice are insect parasites that feed several times a day on human blood (feeding triggers itching) & lay their eggs (nits) on human scalp hair. The louse cannot jump or fly but is capable of crawling incredibly fast.

The female louse lives about 30 days & deposits more than 100 nits during her lifetime. The nits hatch in 7-10 days & the louse becomes mature in 1-2 weeks.

Head Lice cannot survive a weekend without a human host. Every Monday the school building is clear of any lice until infested people return.

Anyone is a potential candidate for lice. Lice can be "caught" when we put our heads together or share hats, combs, hair ties, clothing, earphones. Consider braiding your child's hair or keeping their hair in a ponytail to minimize potential exposure.

Nit-picking (the act of manually removing eggs) is important and a critical step toward making sure all the nits are removed from the hair.

If head lice reappear, it is unlikely the child has been re-infected from another student but rather it is highly likely some nits survived the initial treatment and combings, and then hatched into live lice, creating a new village.

Parents are encouraged to have their own hair checked by a friend. Adults tend to be less likely to be sensitive to the saliva of the lice (thus not feeling as much scalp itchiness) and often do not realize they may also be affected.

Other venues of "catching" lice are sleepovers, daycare, afterschool programs, movie theaters and any other place where students gather are likely places.

If head lice are identified, treatment & combing must occur. Your child needs to come to my office the following morning for me to clear them to return to the classroom. If I find any live lice during that screening, your child will be sent home for further combing. If all I find are nits, they may remain at school but the expectation is that the parent will continue combing their hair until all nits are removed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (907) 260-5105.

Nurse Tammy

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nurse Tammy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single blue line.