



HEAD LICE INFORMATION FOR BACK TO SCHOOL PACKETS

Head lice can impact children and their families throughout our community. Head lice are primarily spread by head to head or hair to hair contact. These insects are reluctant to leave their source of survival (the head) so are typically not found crawling around on inanimate objects such as furniture, clothing or bedding unless they are at the end of their life span and no longer able to reproduce.

The best way to control head lice in our community is for all parents to check their children's heads on a weekly basis, over the weekend. When cases are identified early on, picking and combing out the lice and eggs can save families much time and expense.

Missed school days, over use of insecticide shampoos and lengthy combing and picking sessions will be avoided by weekly checking at home. If you do find live lice or eggs, pick and comb them out and check daily for 7-10 days to make sure an egg or louse was not missed. We appreciate when parents report cases to the school office.

The reason that schools typically no longer do routine head lice screening checks is because the recent research indicates that such screening is not as effective as once thought. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics is concerned about the millions of unnecessary school days that are missed due to head lice and the current overuse of insecticide shampoos. Please note that students with eggs only and no evidence of live head lice, do not need to miss school but need continued head checks at home.

How do schools help with this community concern?

- **A Head Lice Resource Notebook, based on recent research, is available at every elementary school.**
- **Schools are encouraged to keep a log sheet for each classroom so cases and follow up efforts are noted. This provides accurate information for parents and staff.**
- **Periodic parent notification of classroom with reported case of lice.**
- **Parent notification when their child has a suspected case of live lice +/- or eggs.**
- **Discouraging over use of insecticide treatments.**
- **Keeping available, up-to-date educational materials for parents and staff.**
- **Encouraging a speedy return to school after treatment to minimize missed instructional time.**

PARENT AND STAFF RESOURCES:

<http://www.srhd.org/topics/lice.asp>

<http://www.spokaneschools.org/StudentSupport/HealthServices/Resources.stm>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

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