

ITASCA SCHOOL DISTRICT 10

ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER
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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Itasca School District 10 follows Best Practice for dealing with cases of head lice in school. These practices are recommended by DuPage County Health Department (dupagehealth.org), Center for disease Control (cdc.gov), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP.org) and National Association of School Nurses (NASN.org). These agencies provide the following information and recommendations:

Head lice (Pediculosis) are a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease and are not considered a health risk. Personal hygiene or cleanliness is unrelated to contracting head lice. No healthy child should be excluded from school or sent home early solely because of observed or suspected head lice or nits. If a child is found with evidence of **active** head lice, a school health professional should notify a parent/caregiver by the end of the day of the infestation. **The child can return to school after evidence of treatment or manual removal of live lice (even if nits remain). Progress in the removal of nits and treatment can be checked by the nurse upon entry to school the next day and over the next weeks as deemed necessary to help ensure reduction in the potential of transmission in the school setting.**

Letters to parents **may be** warranted under certain conditions such as when the number of school lice cases is excessive or clustered in one classroom. Due to privacy issues and lack of evidence that mass notification curtails the course of an infestation, letters are not sent home for isolated cases. Within the school environment, the type of contact among students makes transmission unlikely. Lice do not fly or jump. Unhatched nits (lice eggs) are firmly attached to the hair shaft and will not be transmitted to others. Treatment with anti-lice shampoo ensures that any nits that hatch, yielding immature lice, will not be transmitted to others. Read labels carefully when using these products and use only as directed. Some treatments have a limited degree of toxicity. Current recommendations regard restricting use of headphones or athletic gear as an unjustified response to head lice as lice are unable to attach to smooth, hard plastic surfaces. In the school setting, many items need to be shared for educational purposes and for resource allocation. It is important to make the distinction that head lice are usually spread by close personal contact among family members and by sharing of personal items in the home, such as towels, bedding, hairbrushes, hats, upholstered furniture, etc.

School-wide or classroom-wide screenings are **not** recommended as they can lead to false assurance that children are lice or nit free. These screenings also disrupt classrooms and the educational process. If the District 10 Nurse discovers or is informed of a case of head lice, she will provide information and guidance to the family regarding treatment and prevention. If your child has a suspected case of head lice, please notify the school nurse as soon as possible for assistance. As is the case with any health information, school staff will maintain confidentiality.

Sources: *DuPage County Health Department Position on Pediculosis in School Setting*
The Center for Disease Control and Prevention Fact Sheet: Treating head lice
American Academy of Pediatrics Updated Guidance on Treating Head Lice
National Association of School Nurses Position Statement on Pediculosis in the School Community

Sincerely,

Itasca District 10 Health Offices

Reviewed/Updated as of 2/20/20

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