



*Building Excellence*  
Health Services

Parents – This is the time of the year for colds, flu and other childhood illnesses. A common childhood nuisance that is often seen is head lice. Anyone can get head lice. It has nothing to do with cleanliness. Head lice live on human heads only. Head lice do not fly or jump. Direct, physical, hair to hair contact is the usual method of transmission along with sharing personal items such as hats, combs, brushes, headbands, clips, clothes and bedding. Avoid sleepovers and slumber parties during lice outbreaks.

If lice are found in your child hair your child should be treated immediately. Please contact your healthcare provider or pharmacy for advice. Recommended treatment includes using either a prescription or store-bought lice killing product. Carefully follow the directions included with the product.

It is the policy of the Baldwin County Board of Education that no child will be allowed to attend school until after he or she has been properly treated with an appropriate lice killing product, and no lice or nits are seen. Mature lice are the size of a sesame seed and are usually found close to the scalp. The lice/nits are yellowish-white, tear drop shaped, and are firmly attached at an angle to the hair shaft close to the scalp, behind the ears and on the back of the neck. Lice avoid light and are therefore hard to see. A fine-tooth comb maybe helpful with removal, but many nits must be stripped from the hair shaft. Grasp nits between the fingers and slide them off the hair shaft. Please read the attached "Parent Information Sheet". You may also contact your school nurse for further instructions. For directions on how to control the spread of lice at home, use the following link: [www.cdc.gov/lice/head/treatment.html](http://www.cdc.gov/lice/head/treatment.html).

Students who are properly treated and are free of lice and nits are permitted to return to school within 24 hours. Students are allowed a maximum of 3 consecutive days for treatment and removal of nits. All other absences due to head lice are unexcused.

Per BCBE policy, no child can attend class until the school nurse has cleared them to return. A doctor or health department excuse does not preempt these requirements. Head lice are not a medical condition, but if left untreated head sores may develop from constant scratching of the head. **These sores may become infected with bacteria normally found on a person's skin.** It is our goal to keep our students healthy and attending school.

## Treatment Head Lice Tip Sheet

### 1. KILL THE LICE

- If you do not understand the instructions, or if you have problems providing the necessary treatment, please contact the School Nurse.
- Carefully read and follow product information exactly. Do not use too much or too little of the product.
- Treat the infested persons(s). Do not treat family members or contacts who do not have head lice, unless instructed to do so by a health professional.
- Call your doctor for advice on selecting a lice killing product if your child is allergic to ragweed or chrysanthemums.
- Do not treat pets. Head lice cannot survive on pets.
- Apply some lice killing products to dry hair, others to damp hair. Please read the **directions carefully! Apply the product as** the child leans over the sink.
- Avoid exposing the rest of the child's body to the lice killing products. Do not apply while the child is in the shower or bathtub.
- Provide a towel to cover the eyes. Do not use lice killing products near the eyes.

### 2. REMOVE THE NITS

- Although it takes time, and is usually difficult, remove all nits for complete treatment. Dead nits cling to the hair and cause uncertainty about new lice.
- Most products do not kill all the nits. Survivors will hatch within 7-10 days, as a new cycle.
- Settle your child in a chair to read a book or to watch a video when removing the nits.
- Work near a window or other good light source.
- A fine-tooth comb is helpful, but many nits will have to be stripped from the hair shaft by hand.
- Grasp the nits between the thumb and finger and slide them off the hair shaft.
- Nits and hairs that have been removed may be placed in a garbage can or flushed down the toilet.
- Nits can be removed from individual hairs using blunt scissors or tweezers. However, it is not necessary to cut a child's hair.
- **All nits must be removed before the student can return to school.**

### 3. CLEAN THE ENVIRONMENT

- Machine wash all washable clothing (coats, scarves, hats, etc.) and bed linens which have been in contact with the infested person during the last three days.
- Articles should be washed in HOT water and dried in a HOT dryer. Non-washables should be dry cleaned.
- Articles that cannot be washed or dry cleaned can be sealed in plastic bags for 14 days, then removed and dusted for any dead nits/lice.
- Lice and their eggs will die if kept away from people for 2 weeks.
- Combs and brushes should be soaked in a lice killing shampoo for one hour and then rinsed with hot water.
- Rugs, upholstered furniture, and mattresses (and any other personal items that cannot be washed) should be carefully vacuumed to pick up any living lice or nits attached to fallen hairs. Dispose of the vacuum cleaner bag once all areas have been vacuumed.
- Insecticide sprays should not be used because they may be harmful to family members and pets, and are of questionable benefits'