TOTOWA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
Washington Park School
10 Crews Street, Totowa, NJ 07512
Phone: 973-956-0010

Patricia Capitelli — Superintendent

Lori Johnson — *School Nurse*

We have taken all precautions to limit the spread of head lice, which includes checking all children and educating parents.

Please read the following and be aware that **THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR THE REMOVAL OF HEAD LICE IS USING LICE SHAMPOO FOLLOWED BY DAILY, METICULOUS COMBING OF HAIR WITH A METAL LICE COMB TO REMOVE REMAINING NITS. CHECK YOU CHILD'S SCALP EACH DAY FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS.**

WHAT ARE LICE?: Head lice are small (about the size of a sesame seed) and are grey or tan in color. They cannot fly or jump, but do move quickly and are, therefore, very difficult to find on the scalp. When children come in close contact with each other, head lice can be passed along. Sharing hats, helmets, clothing, brushes, pillows, bandanas, hair ornaments, etc. are perfect vehicles for transferring lice from one person to another. Head lice feed off of human blood and cannot survive more than 48 hours without the host. However, the unhatched eggs, called nits, hatch within 10 to 14 days and begin a new life cycle. Nits are sticky egg casings that attach to the shaft of the hair.

HOW DO I REMOVE LICE?: Live lice are killed by using a chemical shampoo which can be obtained at any pharmacy. Shampoos are effective in removing live lice. Shampoos should be used as directed on the package. Although shampoos are effective, you MUST use a metal lice comb to remove the remaining nits. Examining the hair and scalp and using the lice comb daily for 10 to 14 days will remove the nits and resolve the infestation. Be sure to use a bright light during nit removal and discard nits in a plastic garbage bag which, should be disposed of each time you complete nit removal.

Please note that pregnant or lactating women, or immunocompromised persons, and those with asthma or severe skin allergies should not use these shampoos without consulting their physician.

CAN I PREVENT MY CHILD FROM GETTING LICE?: Although lice are not caused by poor hygiene, regular hair washing does help to reduce the occurrence. Instruct your child not to share any hair ornaments, hats, helmets, or clothing at any time. When attending activities with large numbers of children, make sure your child does not put his/her clothing in a pile with the others. Preferably, place jackets alone and off of the floor.

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Superintendent

During a lice infestation at school, instruct your child to keep his/her belongings in a plastic bag, keep long hair off of the neck, **tied back and/or braided**, and avoid bandanas and other hair accessories. Also avoid scarves.

WHAT CONTROL MEARSURES ARE BEING TAKEN AT SCHOOL?: We have checked each child in your child's class and have sent home every child identified as having live lice or nits. Children with lice or nits and their siblings, may not return to class until they are re-checked and found to be nit and lice free. I will support our families with individualized instruction on nit removal and ask for a cooperative effort between home and school to eradicate any infestations.

WHAT CONTROL MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN AT HOME?: If your child has lice/nits, place pillows, stuffed animals, and other non-washable cloth items in a plastic bag for at 2 weeks. Vacuum upholstery, carpets, car seats, couches, etc. to remove any live lice and nits. Discard the vacuum cleaner bag after using the vacuum. A chemical spray is also available which can be sprayed on non-washable items. Consult your physician if you or a family member has asthma or is immuno-compromised in any way or if your child is less than 1 year old. Wash bedding, towels, and clothing in hot water and dry them on high in a dryer. This should be done daily for two weeks.