



Dear Parent/Guardians:

Your child displayed symptoms of lice during class today. If a child scratches his head more than normal or seems in discomfort, the teachers check the child to determine what is causing it. We have checked your child and lice has been detected on your child's head. Head Start teachers are very careful and make every attempt to limit exposure to lice.

**How did my child get lice?** Lice is common in children. Lice could come from anywhere; a neighbor, a classmate, another child's clothing, hats, combs or brushes. Lice do not jump or fly, they spread mostly from direct head-to-head contact. Head lice have strong claws and swing from hair-to-hair. Teach your child not to share combs, brushes, hats or anything that comes in contact with the head.

**But I'm not dirty...** Head lice affect all socioeconomic groups and are not caused by poor hygiene. Anyone can get head lice, which live on all hair colors, all hair types and all ages.

**What do lice look like?** The head louse is small and grayish-white and avoids the light. The easiest way to find head lice is to look for the nits (eggs). Looking closely at your child's hair and scalp is needed to find head lice or nits. Nits are normally found near the base of the neck and around the ears. Lice can spread as long as they are alive on a person or on clothing/bedding.

**Where else can lice live?** Clothing, sheets, pillows and any other item that has come in close contact with your child should be cleaned.

- Washable items- wash in hot water and dry on the hottest drying cycle.
- Non-washable items- dry clean or place in a black plastic garbage bag and seal for 7-10 days.
- Combs, brushes, etc.- soak them in very hot water for 10 minutes.

**What do I do now?**

- Contact your Head Start teachers immediately- they will give you a packet of what to do
- Talk to your pharmacist about the most effective lice shampoo/comb
- Your child must complete the first treatment and be nit-free before returning to class
- Carefully check your child's head each night for 10 days
- Carefully check your family's heads for the next 10 days
- Complete the second treatment 7-10 days after the first treatment
- Occasionally check your child's head for re-infestation of lice

Special fine-toothed combs are usually in the shampoo kits.

**ALL EGGS MUST BE COMBED OUT!** Your child must be nit-free before returning to school.

Lice is very contagious. With your help we can lower the number of children exposed to lice.

Sincerely,

Cindy Seipert  
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SUU Head Start  
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