

This e-mail letter is to inform you that an individual in our school has head lice. Though bothersome, head lice will not harm children and adults, nor cause illness. Having head lice does not mean a person is unclean or that the environment is dirty. Head lice are almost always transmitted from one person to another by head-to-head contact or direct contact with combs, brushes or hats.

Head lice are tiny insects that live **only** on the human head. Lice hatch from eggs, otherwise known as nits. Nit color ranges between white to brown. Nits are typically found around the ears and along the nape of the neck. Nits are approximately the size of the period at the end of this sentence and are firmly attached to the hair shaft like a drop of wax. Nits will hatch after seven days. Once hatched, the nits are known as nymphs and within ten days, become adults. Nymphs and adult lice can be found on the head and feed on human blood to live. An adult female louse can live up to 30 days and lay 5 eggs a day.

Examine your child's head and everyone else in the household for lice and nits, especially if they complain of itching on the head or neck. Start examining the head by beginning around the ears and at the nape of the neck and then the rest of the head. If your child does have lice, begin treatment.

Treatment consists of over-the-counter products and combing. Please check with your pharmacist for the product that will best suit your family's needs. Lice combs can be purchased at pharmacies or are sometimes included in the kits. The preferred lice combs have close, long metal teeth that pass through hair easily. Using both treatment methods together is essential in removal of lice and eggs from the head and to prevent a recurrence.

Continue to check your child's head and members in the household daily for one week after lice treatment. Comb out any eggs that may have been missed. Wash dirty clothes, coats, hats, bedding, couch pillows and blankets, and towels in hot soapy water or place into a hot dryer for 10-15 minutes. Furniture should be thoroughly vacuumed and then the vacuum bag disposed of. There are numerous web sites available with tips on cleaning your home environment. It is very important to remind your child to never share clothing or hair brushes, combs, hair accessories.

Please contact the HUHS's Health Technician to notify the school if your child or family members have head lice, 262-670-3203. This information is **confidential** and is only needed to know how many students may be affected. If you have further questions concerning head lice, please consult with your health care provider.