

## South Central C.U.S.D. #401

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Date\_\_\_\_\_ Student\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent or Guardian,

During head checks today, we found live nits or live bugs on your child's head. It is school policy to send your child home if they have head lice.

Students must be treated or have live nits (eggs) and live bugs removed to return to school. Students must be brought back to school by a parent or guardian to have their head check before they may return. The bus will not pick up or drop off your child unless they have rechecked by the nurse.

I realize controlling this problem creates a great deal of time, effort and expense. On the back side of this paper is information regarding head lice and some helpful instructions to control head lice. Please review and follow these instructions.

The school is a mandated reporter for neglect of children. Continual school absences' and unresolved, chronic head lice cases are required to be reported to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and the Department of Health and Human Services (Public Aid Office).

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Nurse Michelle

Head lice is not an epidemic but can spread through households quickly from furniture, bedding, stuffed animals, coats and other clothing items. To ensure you are doing everything you can, please read the information about head lice and follow the treatment instructions.

Over the counter shampoo medications are recommended for treatment but research has shown that these medications don't always kill every bug. This is why they recommend retreating.

Lice can reproduce every 10 days but only have a 30 day life span. If a live louse moves from the host's head, they often die within 24 hours. Live nits are found very close to the scalp, often  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch from the scalp. Any other nits found more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch away from the scalp, can be presumed dead or an egg casing. Once the egg hatches, the shell or casing is left. This casing can be there for days or weeks until the "cement-like" glue is removed from the hair. This is often the hardest part of removing nits because of the cement-like glue. But you can be assured that most of these nits away from the scalp are only egg casings and are not going to reproduce. Dawn dishwashing liquid or vinegar can help to loosen the glue and remove the casings. Continued hair washing will eventually pull the other nits out but it will take several washings. Mayonnaise does not kill live bugs or nits.

Heat from a blow dryer will also kill the eggs so I always encourage parents to blow dry their child's hair as often as possible. I have seen girls in the past with dead nits or egg casings, and never had a full blown case of head lice or live bugs. I think it has a lot to do with blow drying.

Spraying pesticides throughout the house only works if it lands directly on live bug. It is not a necessary step to eliminate head lice in your home.

### **Checklist for Treating Headlice**

- ✓ Treat or check every person in the house.
- ✓ Treat hair with appropriate lice killing product, especially if live nits are found. Follow package instructions.
- ✓ Retreat hair in 7-10 days and use a different lice treating shampoo.
- ✓ Remove all nits. **This is the only way to prevent reoccurrence!**
- ✓ Remove bedding and any other stuffed animals, pillows, clothing and dry in dryer for 20-30 minutes to kill live bugs.
- ✓ Clean all brushes, combs, or hair care items with hot water.
- ✓ Thoroughly vacuum every side of mattresses, floor, and furniture.
- ✓ Notify other families you have been in contact with.
- ✓ Blow drying hair will continue to kill nits.