

HEAD LICE

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures for schools and parents to follow in the treatment of head lice.

PROCEDURES: When a staff member suspects a child has head lice the following guidelines should be followed.

- ~~1. The Principal must contact the parent immediately and the child removed from the school.~~ Call the school nurse to check.
- ~~2. The Principal must provide parents an information sheet on head lice infestation.~~ The school nurse will inform the parent/guardian of positive findings and provide an information sheet.
- ~~3. A signed statement from a physician, Mitchell County Health Department, or Parent verifying treatment has begun before student can return.~~ A note from the parent verifying treatment is required before the student returns to school.
- ~~4. Parents of children in a room of lice infestation should be notified and asked to check their children for lice.~~ It is not necessary to send a letter home to the parents or other children in the room.

**MITCHELL COUNTY SCHOOLS
GUIDELINES FOR REMOVING HEAD LICE
INFORMATION SHEET**

1. **The important thing to remember is even the cleanest of households and families can get head lice.** The next most important thing to remember when removing head lice is not to panic.
2. **Purchase an over-the-counter lice shampoo. Use as directed on the package.** Mitchell County Health Department can assist with obtaining the shampoo, but they must check the child before issuing a prescription for free shampoo.
3. **The key to getting rid of a lice infestation is mechanical removal,** or removing the nits (lice eggs).
 - Sit with the child in a well-lit area, sunlight or bright lamp. Divide the hair into small sections. No more than ½ to 1 inch per section.
 - Go through each section of hair and remove the nits. Use the special comb that comes with the shampoo or your fingernails. Nits are found on the hair shaft usually close to the scalp. After treatment the nits may be anywhere on the hair shaft.
 - This process should be followed each day and continue until no nits are found. This could take 10 to 14 days, so **HANG IN THERE.** Using a solution of equal parts water and white vinegar wet the hair and wrap the wet hair and scalp in a towel for 15 minutes. This will aid in the removal of the nits.
4. **Check the rest of the family for lice.** Unless live lice or nits are found, there is no need to treat. Treatment *will not* prevent a family from getting lice.
5. **Wash bed linens, towels and clothes in hot water and dry in a dryer or have dry-cleaned.**
6. **Retreat based on recommendations on the product you use.**

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

It is normal to find nits in your child's hair after you shampoo. Remember it takes several days of persistence and dedication to manually remove the nits.

Avoid "home remedies" such as olive oil, tea-tree oil, margarine, mayonnaise, petroleum jelly and kerosene. They don't work and waste your time and money.

Some parents resort to head shaving or extreme haircuts. This is upsetting to the child and not necessary as lice live on the scalp not the hair.

