

## Miami-Dade County Health Department – School Health Program

### A Guide for the Prevention & Treatment of Head Lice\* “Check your child’s homework; check your child’s hair”

Anyone – child or adult – can get head lice. Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact, or by sharing objects (combs, towels, headphone, hats, etc.). Getting lice has nothing to do with cleanliness and having lice does not reflect poorly on you as a parent. The problem can be easily managed. Just follow the directions below:



#### 1. WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

Head lice are small grayish-tan crawling insects about the size of a sesame seed. Look for tiny eggs (nits) on hair shafts, near the scalp, and especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Any family member with lice or nits must be treated.



#### 2. HEAD LICE TREATMENT...

Several products are available without a prescription; most require a second application 7-10 days after the first. Read and follow the product information carefully. Consult with your physician or pharmacist for more information.



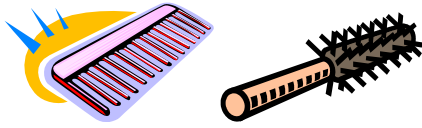
#### 3. HEAD LICE – DEAD LICE

Remove all lice and nits (eggs) using a special nit comb, or your fingernails. Look at the hair outdoors in sunlight (a magnifying glass may be helpful). Research shows that you must comb and check hair for nits **EVERYDAY UP TO 14 DAYS TO STOP THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE LOUSE**. Miami-Dade County Public Schools has a **no nit** policy. Even if you have treated your child’s head with shampoo, but nits are found in their hair when returning to school, the child will be excluded from school. **REMEMBER:** If your child gets lice over and over, you probably haven’t removed all the eggs. Remaining eggs can hatch and cause a re-infestation. The best treatment is the **COMPLETE** removal of lice and nits.



#### 4. WASH & DRY...

Use hot water and dry on hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items that are not washable should be vacuumed (stuffed animals, helmets, headsets, etc.)



### 5. SOAK ...

Combs, brushes, etc. the hotter the better, but at least 130 degrees F. for at least 10 minutes.



### 6. VACUUM EVERYWHERE...

To make sure the rest of your home is lice free, you should vacuum carpets, pillows, mattresses, upholstered furniture and even car seats. **Avoid the use of lice sprays.**



### 7. FACTS & TIPS TO REMEMBER...

Lice prefer to stay in the hair, not the environment.

Lice cannot stay alive in schools or school buses on the weekends, because they cannot live without human contact for more than 48 hours.

Kids might get head lice at sleepovers, while at group or club activities, family gatherings, babysitting, playing sports, watching TV or playing video games together.

According to national research, lice appear more prevalent after school breaks because lice are a community problem, and children have more close contact with each other during breaks.

Head lice are spread if two heads are together.

Lice cannot jump or fly.

The color of the louse depends on when it had its last blood meal.

Pets do not get head lice.

Head lice can happen to anyone.

**REMEMBER: SCHOOLS DON'T GET LICE, PEOPLE DO.**

#### FOR MORE HELP:

1. Comprehensive School Health Program 305-995-1235
2. National Pediculosis Association [www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org)
3. Center for Disease Control (CDC) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

\*Pasco County School District "Nice People Get Lice"