

## HEAD LICE ALERT

Dear Parent/Guardian,

There has been a case of head lice in your child's classroom. Please check your child's hair and scalp carefully.

- Step 1:** Find a comfortable well-lit spot.
- Step 2:** Check the hair from the scalp to the end of the hair strand. First look at the hair at the back of the neck, behind the ears and above the forehead. Then, check the rest of the head.
- Step 3:** You are looking for live lice and /or nits. Nits (eggs) are attached to the hair close to the scalp. Nits are white to light brown in color and may be confused with dandruff. Nits are firmly attached to the hair and do not move unless you slide them down the hair strand. Adult lice are difficult to see as they move quickly. They are the size of a sesame seed and are tan to greyish white.
- Step 4:** If you find a louse or nit, check all household members. Treat only those who have head lice or nits, following Option A -Head Lice shampoo or Option B -Wet Combing. (see attached).
- Step 5:** Let the school know if your child has head lice or nits.

To find head lice early, it is a good idea to check your child/children once a week for head lice. It is no longer recommended that children with head lice be sent home or kept home from school.

For further information, please contact a community health nurse at your local health office/center.

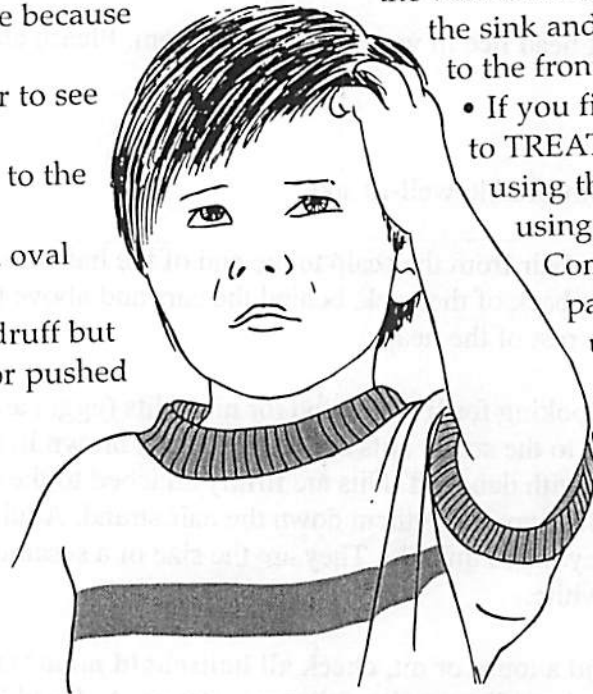
## How to Find Out if Your Child Has Head Lice

### Where to Look

- close to the scalp
- behind the ears
- the back of the neck
- top of the head

### What to Look For

- One of the first signs is itching and scratching the head
- Adult lice are hard to see because they are very small
- The eggs (nits) are easier to see than the lice
- Nits are firmly attached to the hair, close to the scalp
- Nits are gray-white and oval like an egg
- Nits may look like dandruff but they cannot be flicked or pushed off with a finger



### How to Check

- Shampoo the hair. Rinse. Put on enough conditioner to cover the whole scalp. Use a wide-tooth comb to untangle the hair. Then use a fine-tooth comb to comb through the hair close to the scalp.
- After each stroke, wipe the comb on a paper towel and look for lice. Make sure you comb the whole head. Have your child lean over the sink and comb from back of the head to the front.
- If you find ANY lice, you will need to TREAT. You can treat head lice by using the "wet-combing" method using hair conditioner. Ask your Community Health Nurse for a pamphlet that explains how to use the "wet-combing" method.

### Things Parents Can Do

- If another child has head lice, check your child's hair for nits immediately. Then check again in one week, and in two weeks.
- If one person in the family has head lice, everyone in the family must be checked at the same time. Check adults and children.
- If anyone in your family has head lice it helps to do the following things **on the same day that you give the treatment:**
  - **Clean brushes and combs with very hot water.** Everyone should use their own brush and comb.
  - **Wash hats and pillow cases in hot water.** Use a hot dryer if possible.
- It is not necessary to do a lot of housecleaning.

If you have any questions call your local Community Health Office/Centre.