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STATE COLLEGE AREA  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**STUDENT SERVICES**

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### **Just a friendly reminder about LICE**

Every year, most schools and other public places are confronted with pediculosis, **commonly known as head lice**. It is a very common occurrence. Children are involved with sports teams, overnights, camps and other places in close head/hair contact where the spreading of lice can occur. It is very important that you know that pediculosis is not medically associated with cleanliness. Even children from very clean homes contract head lice, just as children who eat properly and take vitamins catch colds and the flu. Please help us by embracing this information so that common misconceptions and stigma are dispelled. It is also important that you discuss with your child the increased chances for spreading lice by sharing combs, brushes, hats, hair restraints, etc. When these objects are shared, it increases a child's chances of getting lice.

**We believe that enlisting the proactive support of parents in preventing lice will help what often becomes a time consuming and frustrating process for those families affected by this common childhood nuisance.**

**Screening at home helps to preserve the learning environment and your family's privacy.** Your assistance with this matter will be much appreciated. Below, you will find a list of instructions for how to check your child for head lice, what to do if your child has lice and what we do here at school to assist families. **DO NOT** send your child to class if you suspect they have live lice; instead, use the following procedure to ensure the lice are gone before returning to school. Please also contact the school nurse to inform them you found live lice on your child.

**What to look for:**

- Intense itching and scratching of the scalp are main indicators of head lice.
- The presence of lice can be confirmed by close visual inspection under bright light of the hair and scalp.
- Using a tongue depressor or other type of stick, separate the hair into small sections for examination purposes.
- "Nits", the lice eggs, are whitish or brownish and oval in shape. They are very small— each about the size of a pinhead—and resemble dandruff. Unlike dandruff, they are sticky and not flakey.
- Lice are small grayish bugs adhering to the hair shafts about 1/4 inch from the scalp. They are often found near the warmer areas of the scalp, such as near the ears or the nape of the neck.

**What to do if nits or lice are found:**

- Check every member of the family.
- Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that an infested person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment using hot water (130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle. Clothing and items that are not washable can be dry-cleaned OR sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks. (Nits will not typically hatch if they are not on a human host, and a mature louse can only survive about 24 hours off of a human host).
- Disinfest combs and brushes used by an infested person by soaking them in hot water (at least 130°F) for at least 10 minutes.
- All carpets, furniture, mattresses, car upholstery, and car seats should be thoroughly vacuumed. (Remember to seal and dispose of all used vacuum bags.)
- **Children should receive treatment for lice.** There are a number of over the counter treatments available. (Check with your physician for suggestions).
- **Remove all nits with the special nit removal comb or pull them out with your fingers. Nits need to be removed to break the life cycle of the lice.**
- Additional resources:
  - [CDC.gov HEAD LICE](#)
  - [SCASD Head Lice Policy Guidelines](#)
  - [SCASD Health Webpage](#)