Health Centre News

Nits Blitz 2015

Over the next 2 weeks I am focusing my attention on a whole school approach to head lice checking. I endeavour to check all consented children to identify head lice.

However, my checking is not enough! All families at our school need to be vigilant in checking their children’s hair. We trust that parents will take appropriate steps to treat children prior to returning to school.

As a parent/ carer, you will be expected to collect and treat your child if head lice or egg infestation is identified.

HEAD LICE FACTS

- Nits (eggs) are oval shaped and can vary in colour
- Eggs hatch after about a week
- Female lice lay 3-8 eggs a day
- Once hatched, it takes about 2 weeks before lice become adults
- Live lice are attracted to human blood
- Lice do not jump or fly, instead they crawl
- Live lice cannot survive long without blood meals
- Live lice have a life span of appx. 30 days
- Head lice are spread via direct head to head contact
- Not everyone scratches when they have head lice
- Lice are most active in the dark

CHECKING FOR HEADLICE

- A good time to check is when listening to your child read
- Use a good light source
- Inspect weekly

TREATMENT TIPS

- Lice/ Nit store bought treatments are only 30% effective as today’s strains of head lice have built up a resistance to them
- The Department of Education and local government council encourage the use of manual removal of nits using the nit comb and conditioner technique. This is especially useful as insecticides fail to break down the glue that binds eggs to hair
- Normal brushing and shampooing will not get rid of lice and their eggs
- Wash bedding and recently used clothing and soft toys in hot water and dry in a hot dryer for 30 minutes
- Vacuuming is the safest removal of eggs that have fallen on to upholstered furniture and car seats

USING shop bought treatments

- Untangle your child’s hair
- Read the instructions carefully
- Make sure the entire scalp is covered
- After the removal of the product, use a fine tooth comb to manually remove any head lice or eggs that may still be in the hair
- Repeat after 3-7 days
- It may take 8-12 hours for a louse to die after treatment

COMBING METHOD (combing is the most important weapon you have to get rid of head lice)

- Metal head lice combs (can be purchased at any pharmacy) have shown to be the most effective
- Comb any type of conditioner onto dry detangled hair
- Comb sections of the hair with the lice comb and wipe onto a paper towel or tissue
- Look for lice or eggs
- Repeat the combing of different sections of the head at least 4-5 times
- Repeat this process after 3 days

I am available for advice Monday to Friday 1030 to 3.00