



Health Services Reminder: Head Lice

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Please be aware of a “pesky” situation that impacts schools around the country throughout the entire school year. **Pediculosis, or head lice**, is a condition that can affect student(s) each year. Head lice are parasites that are generally found on the scalp, around the ears, and at the back of the neck. The adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed, and may be the color of your child’s hair. Eggs, or nits, are smaller and silver in color.

Head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene and they do not transmit disease. Lice do not hop, jump, or fly, and the only way they get from person-to-person is by direct contact with infested hair (most common) or by sharing personal items such as combs, brushes, or caps (less common). Please remind your student to maintain his/her personal space to avoid any potential cross-contamination and to not share items with his/her friends or peers.

The most common symptom of head lice is itching and head scratching, particularly at night. Red bite marks or sores may also be noticed on the scalp. If you suspect that your child has head lice, please contact your health care provider. Safe and effective products to treat head lice are available both over the counter and by doctor’s prescription. It is important to follow the directions carefully. In addition, use a fine-tooth comb or special metal nit comb to help remove the eggs (nits) from the hair. You can also check your child’s scalp weekly when the hair is wet to see if there are any new head lice. Parents should also wash all recently worn clothing, hats, used bedding, and towels in hot water or dry-clean. Personal care items such as combs, brushes and hair clips should also be washed in hot water. Toys, such as stuffed animals, can be put into a tightly closed plastic bag for 14 days or placed in a hot dryer for 30 minutes to kill the lice.

Western Placer Unified School District has recently adopted a “No Nit” policy. If a student is found to have active head lice AND/OR nits, he/she shall be sent home to begin treatment.

Thank you for ensuring that this potential “pesky” situation is under control!

Sincerely,
WPUSD Health Services