

## **Lice Communication**

Head lice are a common community problem. It is estimated that 6 to 12 million infestations occur each year in the US, primarily in children 3 to 11 years of age. Head lice are not dangerous and do not transmit disease.

Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp. An adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed. Lice eggs are tiny teardrop-shaped objects that resemble dandruff but are attached firmly to the hair shaft and cannot be easily removed.

Head lice cannot jump or fly and are transmitted primarily by direct head-to-head contact and more rarely through items that have been in contact with a person's head such as bed linens and hats. Head lice can infest anyone regardless of cleanliness or grooming.

Signs and symptoms of head lice include a tickling sensation on the scalp and/or itching. Parents are advised to check their children's heads regularly and notify their school nurse if evidence of head lice is found. If you suspect your child may have lice, it is important to talk to a school nurse, pediatrician or family physician for confirmation and treatment recommendations.

Albemarle County Public Schools develops procedures for managing communicable conditions, including head lice, based on guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, our local health department and other appropriate experts.

Students who are reported or discovered to have lice will be evaluated by the school nurse, who will contact parents and provide information about appropriate treatment. The student will be evaluated by the nurse again after treatment and will be excluded from school if live lice are present. Close contacts such as siblings may be checked. The school nurse may notify other parents, maintaining confidentiality, if more than one student in a class or grouping has been found to have lice.

Please contact your school nurse if you have any concerns about head lice, suspect your child may have a case or would like to know more about lice and management strategies.

More information about head lice can be found at:

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

<http://www.cdc.gov/lice/>

### **IdentifyUS**

<http://identify.us.com/>

### **HealthyChildren.org**

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/symptom-checker/Pages/symptomviewer.aspx?symptom=Lice+-+Head>

### **ACPS School Health Services: Information for Parents**

<https://www.k12albemarle.org/dept/osp/health/Pages/Information-for-Parents.aspx>