

HEAD LICE ADVICE:

Research indicates that the normal classroom environment is not high risk for the spread of lice.

However, school-mates are in close contact with one another and lice may spread from one child to another if there is head to head contact.

Head to Head contact is the most common way for lice to spread.

Any activity in which children are allowing their heads to touch is a risk for the spread of lice. Sleepovers are a time when lice can be spread from one child to another.

It is possible, but less likely, that lice can be spread by way of shared hats, combs, brushes or hair ornaments.

Lice do not jump or fly. They do not live on pets and may only survive off of the human head for a short time.

The best way to prevent head lice infestation is to teach children to avoid head-to-head contact with others, to avoid shared sleeping arrangements, and to avoid sharing hair ornaments, brushes, combs, hats, etc.

Parents are advised to check their children's hair on a regular basis, looking for lice or their eggs (nits). The lice range from tiny, tan insects in the newly hatched stage, to larger brownish insects in the mature stage. Nits are very tiny white ovals that are firmly glued on to the hair shaft. Nits are different from dandruff or other debris, in that they are firmly stuck to the hair and must be pulled off, unlike dandruff which can be brushed off.

Please do inspect your child's hair frequently, and treat head lice promptly with a commercial head lice removal product before sending the child to school or allowing the child to have close contact with others. If you are not sure if your child has lice, please ask the school nurse or another health professional to examine the child.

Please do not expose your child unnecessarily to pesticide products without clear evidence that lice are present. Consult your school nurse if you are not sure.

For more information call the Head Lice Hotline at 766-6641, or call the Philomath School Nurse:
Cindy Ertle RN
Philomath School Nurse
929-3167 ext 2318

Go to the following link for public health recommendations regarding lice management for schools and home:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice/flow.html>

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice/flow2.html>