November 17, 2014

Dear LILA Parents:

This letter is to let you know that a case of lice was reported in your child’s grade today. Please check your child’s hair for lice tonight and repeatedly through the week. Let’s make sure we get rid of this nuisance as soon as possible.

According to guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics, lice are often a fact of life for kids. Since they don’t spread disease, the AAP recommends that schools do little more than educate parents to check their child’s hair before and after such activities as sleepovers or camp participation, where the most head-to-head contact can occur.

While we know that lice do not spread disease, we also know that having lice is not a comfortable thing for kids to go through. The itching can be very distracting and irritating, and we know that getting rid of them once they have spread through the whole family can be not only time consuming but costly as well.

A note about lice at LILA: At LILA, we have chosen to inform parents when a case of lice has been discovered in their child’s classroom. Many schools choose not to inform the parents and families of the potential contact with lice since it is not a health hazard. Other schools choose to send letters only if “a high percentage” of children in the school are affected. Our choice to send a letter with each reported case may give the mistaken impression that LILA has a higher incidence of lice, but rest assured, our school has no more cases of lice than other schools. In fact, we believe that since we inform parents and ask them to check their kids with each occurrence, we may see fewer cases within our school than those who do nothing.

Thank you for your help in this effort!

Jill Rosenthal RN
Student Health Office

**Instructions for checking for lice are on the reverse side of this paper. Students who do contract lice may return to school after they have been treated with special lice-killing shampoo.**
Our mission is to prepare tomorrow’s critical thinkers and global citizens through language immersion and inquiry-driven study.

Step 1
Be sure there is adequate lighting when checking your child’s head for lice. A brightly lit bathroom or a flashlight will help you spot any lice or eggs.

Step 2
Begin at the nape (bottom) of the neck and work your way up. Lice and eggs can be anywhere on the head but they do prefer warmer places to hide. The lower hairline is a good place to start.

Step 3
Using either your fingers or a tail comb, slowly part the hair down the middle, from the crown to the nape of the neck. Check the part for eggs on the hair shaft (small white specks attached to the hair shaft) or adult lice. The eggs will be well attached and should only be able to be removed by scraping off the hair with your fingernail.

Step 4
Once the first section is checked, part the hair either to the left or right of your original part in very small sections. Check this new parting for eggs and adult lice.

Step 5
Repeat this process throughout the entire back of the head, paying extra attention to the warmer spots at the nape, hairline and close to the ears.

Step 6
When the entire back portion of the head is complete, part your child’s hair from the crown to the front hairline and repeat the process for the front of the hair.

Step 7
If lice are found on your child’s head treatment must be given immediately. While lice are not dangerous, they are a time-consuming nuisance for families and school personnel, and we need to eradicate them. To that end, please use a specially formulated lice shampoo available at most drugstores. Mayonnaise, olive oil, and other home remedies are known to be ineffective.

Step 8
YOUR HOUSE: Remove your child’s clothing that they are wearing and all bedding on your child’s bed. Wash immediately or your child will risk another exposure. All materials such as jackets, hats, scarves, pillow or blanket that your child may have come in contact with may be infested and must be washed at a high temperature. It’s also helpful to vacuum anything that can’t be washed.

Step 9
Wash your hands thoroughly once the clothes are in the washer.

Step 10
Go to the drug store and purchase a lice shampoo and nit comb. Follow the directions given with the product. Both live lice and all nits must be removed from the hair.

Step 11
If you have other children in the house check them for lice as well. If you suspect you may be infected have someone check you or use the lice shampoo just to be safe.

Step 12
Be persistent. The treatment may have to be repeated before the lice or eggs are completely killed. Removing ALL nits is the only way to decrease the chance.