

MEDIA RELEASE

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Head Lice Not Cause for Panic

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Dare County Department of Public Health's School Health Program strives to improve health and promote school attendance, thereby aiding in student's academic success. In order to reduce absenteeism due to head lice, the DCDPH is making efforts to educate Dare County residents regarding head lice.

Head lice are not associated with uncleanliness, poor hygiene or parental neglect. They are rarely a medical problem, do not spread disease, and do not pose a public health threat. Head lice can create panic among parents, and parents also find themselves feeling blamed. An infestation of head lice is generally a minor and temporary annoyance to the child and family.

Head lice cling to the hair shaft; opposing popular myths that claim they can jump or fly. They are transmitted by direct head to head contact and by sharing items that have contact with heads such as, combs, brushes and hats. School-wide screenings are discouraged as they have not reduced the incidence of head lice and impose on confidentiality. Parents are a resource to assist with the prevention of head lice and encouraged to focus on education, identification, and treatment.

To better manage and limit the spread of head lice, DCDPH school nurses offer education about detection, treatment and prevention of head lice for teachers and school staff as well as parents or guardians. It is important for parents to notify the school nurse of any students who have been sent home and/or have been treated for head lice, in order to manage appropriate follow-up needs.

For more information about head lice, identification, treatment and prevention please contact your child's school nurse or the Dare County Department of Public Health at 252-475-5003..

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DARE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
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