

AUDUBON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Haviland Avenue Elementary School
240 S. Haviland Avenue
Audubon NJ 08106
Phone: 856-546-4922 Fax: 856-547-1248

In partnership with our students, families and communities, the Audubon Public Schools will educate all students by providing motivating and challenging learning experiences that prepare them to achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels, in a safe setting of mutual respect in order to develop ethical, productive citizens who will contribute to the local and global community.

Dr. Carleene Slowik
Principal
(856) 546-4922
cslowik@audubonschools.org

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Head lice impact schools around the country and have no specific seasonal incidence. As your child's school nurse, I would like to convey that it is only through cooperation, reporting, and understanding of head lice that we can control their spread.

Pediculosis, or head lice, affects approximately 6 to 12 million children between the ages of 3 and 12 years of age, and about 1 in every 100 elementary school children. 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 can be the color of your child's hair. Eggs, or nits, are smaller and silver in color. Head lice spread from one child to another during direct head to head contact, sleepovers, or by sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes, caps or helmets.

Parents, school staff, and the community can become unduly anxious when a case of head lice occurs within a classroom, and this anxiety is multiplied if more than one case is identified. However, head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene and they do not transmit disease. False perceptions and beliefs not based on facts or research lead to social stigmatizing of children and families that is not in anyone's best interest.

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, he or she should be examined by 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 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, in hot water or dry-clean, all recently worn clothing, hats, used bedding, and towels. 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.

My goal as school nurse is to provide you with the information you need to safeguard your child's health, and ensure that his or her education is not disrupted, but remains the most positive experience possible. Please, contact me with any questions or if you suspect your child has head lice, need assistance in identifying head lice, or have concerns regarding treatment.

Sincerely,

Ann Alston, R.N., B.S.N., Haviland Avenue School Nurse