



# Holly Area Schools

*Excellence in Action!*

October 24, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are sending this letter to all parents to increase head lice awareness so that you may take steps at home to help prevent your child from becoming infested with head lice. It is estimated that between 6 - 12 million people get head lice each year, most commonly among children ages 3 - 11 years old.

It is most common among our youth because lice can spread anytime a child's head comes into contact with another child's head especially following group settings like Girl/Cub Scouts, Little League, dance groups, the playground, sleepovers, etc. Getting lice can be inconvenient, but lice are not dangerous nor do they spread disease. Recent studies show that head lice are seldom spread in the school setting.

Direct, physical, head-to-head contact is the usual method of transmission. Lice do not jump or fly. They survive only for a short time away from the human head and have difficulty crawling or clinging to smooth surfaces. Check your child's head weekly for lice and/or nits (eggs). Mature lice, which are no bigger than a sesame seed, avoid light and are hard to see. Lice eggs or "nits" are usually found close to the scalp – usually within one quarter inch. They appear as tiny whitish ovals that are "glued" to the hair shaft. Head lice do not transmit disease and are not a serious medical condition.

If you find head lice on your child, please notify the school and begin treatment. Using a lice shampoo and a fine-toothed lice comb to manually remove lice and nits is necessary to resolve the infestation. Continue to repeat the treatment process until no nits or lice are found. It is very important to treat head lice as they will not go away without treatment.

## **Check Regularly – Treat Quickly Help Keep Head Lice Off Your Child**

- Check your child's head weekly for signs of head lice.
- Teach your child not to share or trade personal items such as hats, combs, brushes, headbands, and barrettes.
- Contain long hair in braids or ponytails, especially in younger children.
- Teach children to avoid head-to-head contact.
- You should also spend time ridding lice from the home.
  - Soak hairbrushes, combs, barrettes, and other items for 10 minutes in hot water [at least 130°F (54.4°C)].
  - Vacuum carpets, mattresses, couches, and other upholstered furniture including car upholstery.
  - Machine-wash clothes, bedding, towels, and hats in hot water [at least 130°F (54.4°C)]. Dry them in a hot dryer. If you don't have access to a washing machine, instead you can store these items in a sealed plastic bag for 14 days.

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### **Administration Office**

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**Scott M. Roper**, Superintendent  
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**Michelle Flessa**, Director of Special Education

A case of head lice can sometimes create fear or even anger among some in a community. Our district does not believe any child should face embarrassment or ridicule. It is our desire to handle each case with respect to student confidentiality. Holly Area Schools follows the guidelines from the Michigan Department of Community Health.

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Oakland County Health Department clearly state that the immediate removal of a child with head lice is not necessary. The child can be sent home at the end of the day. With that said, parents will be contacted anytime a student is identified with lice and encouraged to pick up their child from school, if possible, so that information can be shared directly with the parent regarding treatment and steps to follow before the student returns to school. A parent or guardian must accompany their student to the school office with confirmation of treatment. Designated school personnel will re-examine the student's hair and if no live lice or nits less than one-quarter (1/4) inch from the scalp are found, the student will be readmitted to school.

Holly Area Schools has compiled information for parents to help them take the right steps to check, diagnose, treat, and prevent the spread of lice. Go to the following link <http://bit.ly/31AvErG> under the Community/Parents Tab to see the Head Lice Toolbox at our district website, [www.hask12.org](http://www.hask12.org).

Thank you for your help and support.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Roper, Superintendent  
Holly Area Schools