

**Dear Parent,**

### **Methodist Preschool Has a No Nit Policy**

Having the No Nit policy in place makes head lice management more realistic and less subjective. As an administrative policy, it helps parents understand and assume their responsibility for head lice control. Families are encouraged and enabled to respond by carrying out the most effective prevention measures at all times and the safest most thorough control measures possible. The reward is an environment of mutual assurance that the child enters a group setting that supports a head lice control program.

### **Advantages of the No Nit Policy**

- Prevents continuing infestations caused by the surviving and hatching of nits.
- Maximizes the opportunity to eliminate repeated chemical treatments aimed at killing head lice that hatch from remaining viable nits.
- Eliminates confusion – Were these eggs here before or do they represent a new infestation?
- Enhances uninterrupted group time for the majority of the children and prevents lost days at work that can be costly for parents.

### **Parent Responsibilities in the No Nit Policy**

- Please Check Your Child For:
  - Active adult lice. They are about the size of a sesame seed and can be brown, grey, or tan. Check the scalp, behind the ears, and around the nape of the neck
  - Excessive scratching of the head, especially at the back of the head just above the neck
  - Small red bumps from scratching. Irritation from scratching may lead to scabs, blood spots, or red marks on the scalp, behind the ears, or on the back of the neck
  - Nits on the hair. These are usually pearly-grey in color and are attached to the hair shaft near the scalp
  - Nits are distinguished from dandruff because they stick to the hair shaft
- Treatment For Nits/Lice:
  - Treat your child and all household members with a lice shampoo recommended by your pharmacist. Follow all instructions carefully!
  - Use a nit comb after treatment to remove lice and nits from the hair shafts. A diluted vinegar rinse helps to loosen the nits from the hair shaft.
  - Wash all bed linens, towels, blankets, and washable clothing in hot water.
  - Place all non-washable items, such as stuffed toys and throw pillows, in a sealed plastic bag for 21 days.
  - Thoroughly vacuum all furniture, rugs, and floors
  - Remove your child's car seat cover and wash in hot water. Vacuum all seat head rests.
- When Can Your Child Return To School
  - Children with head lice must be kept out of school until treated and **NIT FREE**. Before your child's return to the classroom, the school staff will assist in re-checking him/her before allowing return to the classroom.

### **Preschool Responsibilities in the No Nit Policy**

- Coats and hats should be hung separately and spaced so they do not touch. Lice do not hop, jump or fly.
- Children should not share clothing or headgear.
- Dress-up is a valuable play activity, but it can also be risky for head lice outbreaks. We will discontinue the use of shared dress-up clothing during outbreaks and for 21 days afterward.
- Children's blankets and nap items will be sent home to be washed. School provided blankets will be laundered and sealed in an airtight bag for 21 days.
- Carpeted areas will be vacuumed as often as possible.
- Infested children must be prepared for pick-up with a minimum of fuss. When the parent arrives, he/she will be given another copy of the Dear Parent Letter and your guidelines explaining that the child may return as soon as she or he is free of lice and nits
- Notify all parents that lice have been found within the school and arrange for everyone to be screened as soon as possible. Screenings may be conducted close to dismissal time in order to minimize disruption. We will remind parents to check all their children carefully each day for the next few weeks and to continue checking as part of their routine hygiene.
- Reassure parents that head lice do not necessarily reflect unsanitary households or neglected children.
- Director and staff will be prepared to answer parent questions without judgment.
- Use a quality lice removal comb to examine children returning after an infestation to confirm successful elimination of lice and nits before the child re-enters the school. The comb will detect even what could be missed during visual inspection to ensure the child is lice and nit free.
- Review procedures with staff and consider steps that many not have been regularly adhered to - separating sleeping mats coats and hats.
- Remind children of the importance of not sharing headgear or personal articles.
- Remind parents of the importance of screening often, detecting head lice and nits as early as possible, removing them safely and effectively and continuing to screen as part of their routine hygiene.
- Encourage the children and help them feel comfortable about speaking up if they feel itchy.