



Facing head lice:

IN SCHOOL & IN THE COMMUNITY

It's time to break the stigma—and separate fact from myth so you can face head lice at school and in the neighborhood.

NOT TO WORRY—YOU'RE NOT ALONE.



6-12 million cases per year in 1986¹.

Since then, the population has grown 25% and likely so has the head lice problem.

YOU CAN'T BLAME IT ON YOUR PETS.



It's a human parasite.

Dogs, cats and other pets don't contribute to the spread of head lice³.

MYTHS ABOUT HEAD LICE RUN IN THE FAMILY.



A story well told...

Parents can socialize their children to have the same beliefs and misperceptions about head lice as they do⁵.

HEAD LICE DON'T DISCRIMINATE (AND NEITHER SHOULD YOU).



Equal opportunity insects.

They have nothing to do with socioeconomic status, cleanliness or hygiene².

THE STIGMA IS AS PERVERSIVE AS THE CONDITION.



It traces back to the 1700s.

Said a poet: "...lice are disgusting, the well-to-do should be protected from them, and the poor deserved them..."⁴

References:

1. Atkinson L, Clore ER, Kisel BE, et al. Internal and external parasites. *Pediatrics*. 1986; 1: 1-7. 2. US Census Bureau, 2017.
2. Devore C, Schutze G. Head lice. *Pediatrics*. 2015;135(5):e1355-e1365.; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Parasites - Lice - Head Lice: Epidemiology & Risk
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Parasites - Lice - Head Lice - FAQs. https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/gen_info/faqs.html.
4. Ibarra J, Hall DM. Head lice in schoolchildren. *Arch Dis Child* 1996;75: 471-473.
5. Paladino; 2014 - The infestation of stigma: an ecological system approach to the stigmatization of head lice.



Facing head lice:

AT HOME

Let's debunk the myths, break the stigmas and help you get back to focusing on everyday activities.

YOU'RE NOT A 'LOUSY' PARENT!



Stop beating yourself up.

A child having head lice has no correlation or relevance to parenting skills or abilities¹.

THEY DON'T STALK CHILDREN AT SCHOOL.



Think sleepovers and camps³.

They typically get passed where there is prolonged head-to-head contact.

THEY WON'T SURVIVE A DAY OR TWO AWAY.



Rest in peace, head lice.

A louse can live ~30 days on a person's head, but dies within 24 - 48 hours away from the body².

HEAD LICE CAN'T HOP, JUMP, OR FLY.



They're wingless—they crawl.

In most cases, they can only be spread by head-to-head contact lasting >30 seconds².

THEY WON'T LIVE IN YOUR CLOTHES, SHEETS OR HAIRBRUSH.



They only live on hair.

Nits (eggs) can only survive in moist surroundings and attached to the hair shaft near the scalp⁴.

References:

1. Gordon S.C. Shared vulnerability: a theory of caring for children with persistent head lice. J School Nursing. 2007;23(5): 283-291.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Parasites -Lice -Head Lice -FAQs. http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/gen_info/faqs.html.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Parasites - Lice - Head Lice: Epidemiology & Risk Factors. www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/epi.html.
4. Head lice infestations: A clinical update. Paediatr Child Health. 2008 Oct; 13(8): 692-696