

# Lice 101: How to Prevent It and What to Do if Your Kids Get It

Don't panic! We've got everything you need to win this battle.



It may be the most dreaded note that a child can bring home from school. No, we're not talking about a low grade on a test — we're talking about lice. While many schools have eased their policies (based on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics) so they no longer immediately send a child home when lice is detected, most do immediately contact parents to make them aware of that lice has been observed at the school. And if you have a school-age child, it's likely that at some point you will get one of those dreaded notes.

The good news — and the reason schools no longer rush to send a child home — is that a lot of what we used to believe about lice is untrue. For one thing, they don't spread easily. Lice can't jump or fly so the only way they travel from one child to the next is through direct head-to-head contact. Less commonly, lice can be transmitted via shared hats, hairbrushes, towels, earphones, etc. They also can't survive more than 24 hours off a human scalp (and no they can't live on your dog or cat — pet lice is a different thing altogether).

If you are the parent of child with lice, take a deep breath. It is not a reflection on you or your child's personal hygiene. In fact, lice thrive in clean hair! Lice affects people from all socioeconomic classes and all parts of the country. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that more than six million infestations occur each year in the United States among children ages three to 11. We've rounded up some of the essential products, first for prevention (because the ultimate goal is to keep the little pests away!) and then to get rid of lice if they do find their way onto your child's head.

## 1. The prevention shampoo



Fairy Tales Rosemary Repel shampoo is a cult-status product among moms in some communities. They swear by its proprietary blend of natural ingredients such as rosemary, citronella, and tea tree and geranium oils to keep those pesky lice away. Did we mention it also smells nice?!