

# **BUG OFF!**

## **Bed Bug Guidelines for Parents**

As bed bugs find their way into more and public places, they will may find their way into your home. Here are a few guidelines to follow to be proactive. Infestations are difficult and costly to control.

**What are Bedbugs?** They are small, brownish, flattened insects that feed on the blood of people while they sleep. A mature bug is about the size of an apple seed. They cause itchy welts similar to mosquito bites. The bites are usually your first clue that they have made their way into your house. The bites usually appear in rows of 3 or more welts. They do not have a red center in them like flea bites do. Bedbugs usually feed at night and hide during the day. However, they can hitch hike from one place to another in backpacks, clothing, luggage, books and other items.

**What if I find a Bedbug on a family member?** Remove the bug with scotch tape. Try to keep it intact in order to show a pest controller for proper identification. If a bedbug is found on a student at school, the bedbug will be caught in tape for identification. The parent will be contacted to bring a clean change of clothes for the student. Be sure to inspect the seams of clothing and around the buttons.

### **What do I check in my Home?**

- Mattresses, especially at the head of the bed
- Bed headboards and frames
- Cracked wall plaster, behind pictures
- Cracks in wood floors
- Seams of furniture and under furniture and cushions
- Baseboards
- Electrical outlets

### **What do I do First?**

- Get the bugs identified by a pest control person. Home remedies and do-it-yourself treatments are usually insufficient and could cause negative health consequences or lead to potential hazards in the home such as fire.
- Get rid of mattresses and box springs. Some say to place both in sealed plastic bags to smother bedbugs. They can live for over 1 year, so you will need to keep the mattress and box springs sealed in plastic for approximately 2 years.
- Wash linens, blankets, clothes in hot water and dry in hot dryer for 20 minutes. Shoes can also be placed in hot dryer for 20 minutes.
- Remove the clutter in your house such as pictures, books
- Caulk cracks interiorly and exteriorly, repair screens and any openings where birds, rodents, or bats can get in.
- Check your pets.

- Vacuum all furniture, cracks in walls and floors, etc. Vacuum bed frames and boards, baseboards. Check used furniture, luggage, etc. closely before you bring it into your home.
- Wash and dry any new clothing you bring in the house.
- Keep all freshly laundered clothes in sealed plastic bags until they are put on.
- **Inspect your students' lunch bags, backpacks and other items carried back and forth daily when they get home and before they leave. Store in a sealed plastic bag or sealed plastic bins overnight or over the weekend.**
- When you travel, check the head of the mattress and head board, electrical outlets. If you see any bugs or rust stains, ask for another room. Do not lay your suitcase on the floor. Hang up all clothes. When you return home put your luggage in sealed plastic and leave outside. Wash and dry in hot water and hot dryer all clothes.

Bedbugs infest airplanes, buses, trains, hotels/motels, dorms, shelters, apartment complexes, prisons, and any place with many people. They are fast-moving. They most like to hide in fabric, wood and paper.

These are only a few suggestions. It is important to call a professional pest control person if you think you have or know you have an infestation.