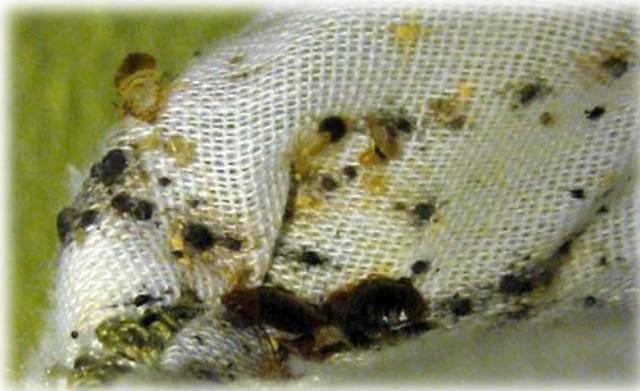


## Bed bug tips for parents

By Faith Oi

It finally happened to me! I checked into my hotel room and was in a rush to meet friends for dinner, so I did not do my check for bed bugs right away. I got back late and was thinking about skipping the bed check, but I caught something move from the corner of my eye. I smashed it, and it had the characteristic pungent bed bug smell.



Look what I found under the bed skirts!

This picture is what you can see with a bed bug infestation I found large adults and immatures and fecal smears. Needless to say, my lesson about “vigilance” and inspection, inspection, inspection was learned!

Schools and parents need to make sure bed bug introductions do not become infestations.

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## Learn to identify bed bugs

The first step in IPM is to identify the insect you are working with and to determine if it is in fact a pest. With bed bugs this is not an issue; if you find one you know it is a pest.

Please see our website (<http://schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/>) for identification tips.

You can scan the QR code on the right with your smart phone or tablet to get there faster. You will need a QR Code reader!



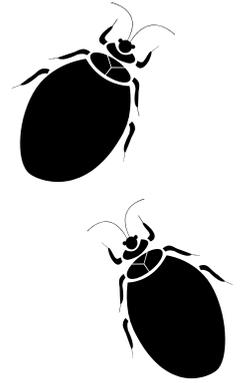
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## Know the facts, parents: How you can help

- Vigilance against bed bugs is our first line of defense.
- If the school contacts you with news that your child was found with bed bugs in his/her belongings, take it seriously and inspect your home.



- It is a parent's responsibility to eliminate bed bugs from the home so as not to cause reintroductions into the school, which could put other families at risk of infestation.
- Identify the behavior that started the introduction or infestation and change it. If the behavior is not modified, infestations will occur again.
- While bed bugs have never been proven to transmit diseases, their bites can cause annoying itching in most people and will leave bite marks.



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## Emphasis on inspection

Inspecting is pest management. At home these are some of the places you should look for bed bugs:



- Make sure you have good lighting. Use a flashlight whose light beam can be seen even when the lights are on.
- Look on bedding or in areas where people sleep the most (sofas and other nap areas should be checked as well).
- Look for bed bugs in areas where items brought home from school and sleepovers may coningle.

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