

2.16 HEAD LICE

Purpose Statement

Head lice or nits are small, wingless insects that live, breed and feed on the human scalp. Direct contact is required for transmission from person to person. Head lice are very common and can affect anyone, regardless of hair cleanliness, colour or type.

Children enrolled in education and care settings are very susceptible to head lice because they are in physical contact with each other whilst engaged in services.

Effective head lice control is based on a high standard of education, prevention and accountability for both parents and educators.

Scope

This policy applies to staff, educators, contractors, children and families.

Policy Statement

TO WORK IN A COOPERATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE MANNER WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS TO MANAGE HEAD LICE EFFECTIVELY.

Procedures

General

Whilst families have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, educators are committed to working cooperatively and collaboratively with parents and/or guardians to assist with managing head lice effectively.

Parents and guardians of children attending Family Day Care are responsible for:

1. The detection and treatment of head lice
2. Regularly checking their own children and other family members for head lice
3. Informing their educator if they have detected and treated their child for head lice
4. Keeping their child at home if they have detected head lice but not yet treated the infestation
5. Collecting their child/ren from the education and care service if head lice or nits are detected (i.e. by the educator)
6. Maintaining a sympathetic attitude to families who are experiencing difficulties with control measures

Staff and educators are responsible for:

1. Respectfully discuss head lice prevention, detection and treatment with families accessing care
2. Making information available to families on head lice treatment option and control measures (see Fact Sheet attached).



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3. Notifying parents or guardians if they suspect that a child has head lice.
4. Ringing families to immediately collect children from care if head lice are detected. This needs to be done sensitively. Do not isolate a child from the group if he/she is known to have head lice as this can be humiliating. NOTE: exclusion from the education and care service is not necessary if treatment has commenced.
5. Informing families of the need for extra care when an outbreak of head lice is detected.
6. Modifying activities to reduce close physical contact between children where head lice has been detected.

Relevant Standards/Legislation

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
 - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
 - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Related Policies & Links

- Treating and Controlling Headlice Fact Sheet (Department of Health, 2010)