

HEAD LICE POLICY



Related Quality Area	QA2: Health and Safety
Related Policies	Control of Infectious Diseases Policy Administration of Medication Policy

This policy is intended to outline roles, responsibilities and expectations of Nightcliff Family Centre (the Centre) to assist with early identification, treatment and control of head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner. Whilst families have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, our Centre will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

PURPOSE

To ensure parents and staff are well informed about the early identification of head lice and managing infestations through effective treatment and communication with families. Our Service aims to

- Outline the roles and responsibilities of families, educators and management who are involved in early detection, treatment, and control of head lice.
- Provide information and support for families.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Centre,

HEAD LICE

Pediculus Capitis or head lice are insects that live in hair and suck blood from the scalp, usually causing itching of the scalp. Female head lice lay their eggs and glue them to the base of hair shafts. The eggs (nits) are pale cream to yellowish brown in colour and hatch after 7–10 days. The immature lice grow into adults over 6–10 days and start biting the scalp to feed on blood. Adult lice mate, the females lay more eggs, and the cycle continues.

People get head lice from direct head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice. This can happen when people play, cuddle, or work closely together. Head lice can only crawl; they can be difficult to see and resemble dandruff.

Head lice do not live or breed on animals, bedding, furniture, carpets, clothes, or soft toys. They cannot spread by sharing hats.

Head lice can be controlled through a consistent, systematic community approach.

IMPLEMENTATION

Responsibilities of Management, Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Persons and Educators:

- If a child at the Centre has head lice, it is likely that several others also have them.
- The child or children with head lice are not to be isolated or excluded from learning.
- Reduce head-to-head contact between all children when the Centre is aware that someone has head lice.
- The Director or nominated supervisor will confidentially notify the parent/caregiver of a child who is suspected of having live head lice and request that the child is treated before returning to the Centre the following day.
- Keep families informed if there is someone at the Centre with head lice.

- Support parents and children who have head lice by providing factual information, reducing parental anxiety and not singling out individual children with head lice.
- Provide families with suggestions of effective treatment for head lice.
- Encourage parents to tie back children’s hair when attending the Centre.
- Record all cases confidentially so an outbreak can be avoided or minimised.

Responsibilities of families

- Notify the Centre immediately if head lice are found on your child’s head.
- Ensure your child does not attend the Centre with untreated head lice. If you find any live lice or eggs, begin treatment immediately and notify the Centre if your child is affected so the Centre can monitor the number of cases and act responsibly.
- Check for effectiveness of the treatment every 2 days until no live lice are found for 10 consecutive days. Remove eggs from your child’s hair using the conditioner method and head lice comb.
- Once treatment has started, your child can attend the Centre.
- Children with long hair will attend the Centre with their hair tied back.
- Families will maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid defaming/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.

TREATMENT

- Conditioner and Combing Technique
 1. Untangle dry hair with an ordinary comb.
 2. Apply hair lice shampoo to dry hair (white conditioner makes it easier to see the eggs). Use enough conditioner to cover the whole scalp and all the hair from roots to tips.
 3. Use an ordinary comb to evenly distribute the conditioner and divide the hair into four or more sections using hair clips.
 4. Starting with a section at the back of the head, place the teeth of a head lice comb flat against the scalp. Comb the hair from the roots through to the tips.
 5. Wipe the comb clean on a tissue after each stroke and check for head lice or eggs on the tissue.
 6. Comb each section twice until you have combed the whole head. If the comb becomes clogged, use an old toothbrush, dental floss or a safety pin to remove the head lice or eggs.

Resources

<https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/health-conditions-treatments/parasites/head-lice>

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Head Lice Policy* will be reviewed on a three-year basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	February 2023
POLICY REVIEWED	February 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2026
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No modifications 		

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	
POLICY REVIEWED	Feb 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	Feb 2029
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sources checked for currency and updated as required 		