

POLICY TITLE: HEAD LICE
PUBLISHED: December 2003
IDENTIFIER: HLP200312
CONTACT: Injury Prevention and Management Section
RELATED DOCUMENT: *ACT Health Head Lice Fact Sheet*

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide procedures for schools to follow during outbreaks of head lice.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 Outbreaks of head lice are a common and difficult problem in schools.

2.2 Schools are not always the source of outbreaks. Students can be infested during out of school social and sporting activities.

2.3 Parents have responsibility for assisting in the prevention and management of outbreaks of head lice through regular checks of the children's hair and commencing immediate treatment when head lice are detected.

2.4 Routine mass head checks are no longer considered necessary. In conflict situations the student's parents should be advised to arrange for an individual consultation with a doctor to discuss issues and treatment procedures.

2.5 Procedures are attached to this policy to assist schools in the management of outbreaks of head lice. It is recognised that not all the procedures will be possible or feasible on every occasion. Schools not able to adhere to the procedure on every occasion should be able to reassure parents/carers that every step possible is taken to restrict the spread of head lice infestation.

3. POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Central Office will:

- Ensure that schools have up to date information developed by health authorities about head lice.

3.2 Principals will:

- Inform the school community about outbreaks, including passing on information supplied by Central Office.
- Manage a process for head lice outbreaks, guided by the procedures that accompany this policy.

3.3 Classroom teachers will:

- Be alert to possible outbreaks in their classrooms and follow the established procedures.

3.4 Parents will:

- Check their children's hair for head lice on a regular basis
- Collect their children from school and commence immediate treatment if head lice are found.
- Support schools in their efforts to minimise and manage outbreaks of head lice.

Head Lice Policy

HLP200312 is the unique identifier of this document. It is the responsibility of the user to verify that this is the current and complete document, located at <http://www.det.act.gov.au/policies>

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 When a member of staff suspects a child is infested with head lice, the following procedures should be followed:

- The child should be restricted from activities involving close contact with other children.
- The principal must be notified, and the parents contacted immediately and requested to collect their child from school as soon as possible. The *Public Health Regulations 2000* require that children be excluded from school until effective treatment against head lice has begun.
- A letter must be sent home within a day notifying parents of other students in the class that infestation is suspected and asking them to check all their children for head lice. The principal must also provide parents with a copy of the attached information sheet on head lice infestation and treatment.
- If a student is not treated for head lice and appears to remain infected, the above procedures should be repeated.

4.2 Further information is available from the Head Lice Information Sheet produced by ACT Health which is available at the following website:

<http://www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=sendfile&ft=p&fid=1112590396&sid=>