

The Bay Kids, LLC

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MSDE-OCC License No. 250638



Head Lice Policy

Adopted at The Bay Kids, LLC Childcare and Early Learning Center

February 2023

David C Houghton



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ORIGINAL



Introduction

One word, guaranteed to strike fear into the heart of every parent... lice.

Also known as head lice, these tiny, parasitic insects are no bigger than sesame seeds. They live and breed in human hair and feed by sucking blood from one's scalp.

Although wingless, lice spread quickly by running and swinging from one head of hair to another, meaning that outbreaks are common among children, who play and associate with each other in close proximity.

Despite a common misconception that lice breed only in dirty, unkempt environments, lice do not discriminate. They infest people of all ages, demographics and socio-economic groups. Lice have actually been infesting human hair for thousands of years.

Although lice are not dangerous and do not spread disease, their bites cause itching and skin irritation. They are also difficult to get rid of, especially if left untreated for an extended period.

If your child is in our childcare facility or their school, an outbreak of lice is stressful. You may not know if or what the school will do to combat the problem, or what you should do as a parent to prevent lice, such as regular hair checking.

Through this policy, The Bay Kids, LLC takes a look at childcare and school lice policies and protocols, what you can do as a parent, as well as the various treatment options.

Head lice policy & protocol in daycare

What The Bay Kids, LLC Will Do/What the Schools Should Do

First and foremost – communication is key. The Bay Kids, LLC uses the following policy and your child's school should have a head lice policy and protocol in place, so staff at each location know what to do during an outbreak.

This policy will outline what The Bay Kids, LLC will do and how the implemented protocols are communicated to our staff and our parents.

- A clear understanding of the aesthetics of lice and lice eggs (known as nits) including color, shape and size.
- How to identify head lice and nits through a physical examination of the head, neck, and hair.
- How the outbreak will be communicated within the facility to staff and to parents, including any written material required.
- Privacy information, and how to be discreet to avoid embarrassment or potential self-esteem issues among children and families.
- An outline of the steps this facility will take if a parent detects lice in their child's hair and reports it to us, and their child's school.
- A clear, concise outline regarding dismissal protocols during an outbreak.
- Details of any regular screening processes or other protocols designed to prevent an outbreak of lice, and how this information is communicated to parents and other caregivers.



Lice outbreak in classroom. What to do?

Parents

It's important for parents to understand that a head lice outbreak in the classroom can strike at any time. Along with children, head lice can potentially affect teenagers, teachers, parents, and anyone associated with an infected person at any time, and at any age.

If your childcare center or classroom informs you there has been an outbreak, you can take steps to help prevent your child from contacting lice. These are detailed below.

- Stay calm! There is no need to cause unnecessary worry or panic with your child or family. Lice are not harmful, but rather are irritating and uncomfortable.
- Check your child's hair and scalp for signs of lice or eggs.
- Understand that if your child does have lice because of the outbreak, it is no fault of theirs, or yours, or the fault of the care facility or school.
- Ask about our Center's head lice policy and protocol, especially regarding a dismissal or exclusion policy, as you may need to take your child home and keep them home for a time if they have lice.
- Take the required steps to prevent your child getting lice if they are not affected by the outbreak.
- Talk to your child about the outbreak, and if they are old enough to understand, explain why you will have to check their hair closely every day.

Honesty is the best policy when it comes to dealing with lice. Be honest with your children to help them understand the situation, and with your school or childcare facility. You could help avoid further outbreaks from the outset.

Staying healthy at The Bay Kids, LLC with a head lice outbreak

What to do to protect yourself, rather than your child

If you discover that our childcare center is in the midst of a head lice outbreak, there are steps you should take to protect yourself and stay healthy. These are detailed below.

- Get a family member or friend to check your hair immediately for signs of lice or eggs: even if you don't have an itchy scalp, you may have lice yourself!
- Educate yourself about what to look for in your hair and in your children's hair during an outbreak of lice.
- Treat infected family members, including yourself, immediately if you find lice.
- Understand that an outbreak of lice is NOT related to cleanliness in the home and that lice only survive in hair, so don't bother to spend hours cleaning the house or getting anxious about lice overtaking your home.
- Wash and clean any bedding or clothing that has been at childcare, especially hats and headwear.
- Contact other facilities and people your child has been in contact with to inform them of the outbreak. These may include schools, playgroups, mothers' groups and family and friends.



The Bay Kids, LLC Specifics

How to prevent lice?

As a parent, would you know how to prevent lice?

Prevention is a key part in protecting your child from lice and breaking the cycle of lice.

Although prevention does not guarantee complete protection, the steps you take will minimize the life cycle of nits and keep them away from your family for longer.

Prevention involves regular checking and screening, so you will need to know what the lice and eggs look like.

Head lice eggs are tiny, oval shaped and around the same size as a pinhead. You will typically find them closest to the scalp, rather than the end of the hair. They cannot be easily flicked off the hair.

Lice are equally tiny, wingless, dark in color and around the size of a sesame seed.

Once you know what to look for, you can use the following methods to prevent an outbreak of lice.

- Check your child's hair, along with other family members, regularly for signs of lice or nits by using a fine comb.
- Consider incorporating this regular checking into your daily routine, such as after bath time.
- Take note if they are suddenly scratching around their head and neck, or complain they have an itchy head (but note this is not always a symptom of lice.)
- If you do notice lice, treat immediately to stop the cycle in its tracks.
- Tie long hair back.
- Avoid using other children's brushes, combs, hats or other headwear.
- Give permission for your child to take part in periodic screening procedures at their daycare or school.
- Talk to your children about avoiding head contact with others, and why this is important in preventing lice (if they are old enough to understand.)

Lice checking/screening – how to inspect for lice

The best way to check and screen for lice is to inspect the hair thoroughly. You can do this using hair conditioner (preferably white) plus a fine comb and white paper towel. We have outlined a detailed process below.

- To start, brush your child's hair thoroughly and detangle before you begin. When the hair dries, apply the hair conditioner to the scalp.
- Run the comb through small sections of hair. This will result in remnants of conditioner left on the comb.
- Wipe the conditioner on the white paper towel after each stroke.
- Check the tissue for signs of lice or nits.
- Repeat this process several times, or until you see evidence of lice or nits.
- If you find lice or nits, start an appropriate treatment immediately.



If your child is prone to fidgeting, offer them a book to read, movie to watch or game to play while you complete the screening.

Head Lice Eggs

Lice are sometimes colloquially known as nits, with people referring to lice and nits as the same thing. Nits, however, are the head lice eggs, rather than the insect which lays the egg. Female head lice lay eggs on the scalp, and these hatch after 5-7 days.

Once hatched, the lice take around 7-8 days to grow full sized. Once grown, it takes another 7 days to start breeding. This short breeding cycle makes immediate treatment vital in controlling and stopping the life cycle of lice and head lice eggs.

Head lice treatment for kids

There are several chemical treatments on the market. They are generally dry lotions applied to dry hair, or shampoos applied to wet hair.

The active ingredients in head lice treatment are:

- Pyrethrins
- Synthetic pyrethroids (permethrin, bioallethrin)
- Organophosphates (maldison, malathion)
- Herbal, with or without natural (non-chemical) pyrethrins

Anyone who is pregnant, under 12 months old, or has allergies, open scalp wounds or asthma should check with their primary care physician or pharmacist before starting a treatment.

The treatments work by killing the live lice and the eggs. Once you have applied the treatment and followed the specific instructions, comb the hair with a lice comb to remove the lice and eggs, wiping the comb on white paper towel.

The chemical treatments usually instruct you to repeat the application after seven days. This is because the chemicals do not kill the lice and eggs with the first treatment.

Finding live lice on the paper towel could also mean insecticide resistance. If one chemical treatment does not work, you may need to try another, or try the condition and comb method.

In Summary

We hope this information gives you an insight into head lice, eggs, prevention, and treatment.

You child may go their entire school life without catching lice, or they may be infected several times and there is no way to predict a lice outbreak.

While it's not always possible to protect your child from getting head lice, there are plenty of things you can do to minimize your chances of them coming home with these unwanted parasites.



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So don't panic, learn what to look for, communicate with your childcare facility and seek immediate treatment. Remember that while irritating for you and your child, lice are ultimately harmless and simply need time and patience to get rid of.

Our "Head Lice" Policy at The Bay Kids, LLC

Children who have lice will need to be treated with OTC (over-the-counter) treatment or by a doctor. If they return with sightings of nits-even 1, they will be sent home until resolved.

It doesn't have to come to this:

For parents or guardians that knowingly drop off their child with head lice present, The Bay Kids, LLC may take legal action to recover lost wages, revenues, and general loss of community trust should your child's condition contribute other children or staff being affected.

This penalty could include lost wages for each family and staff affected, that make them unable to attend our Center.

We take the physical health and safety of our kids and staff very seriously.

Please do not "Drop and Run", please do the right thing here.

The Bay Kids, LLC staff makes a point to take the time to greet you at drop off and pick up. It is there you have the chance to let us know of any conditions which may require attention. If we know ahead of time, we might be able to accommodate.

If your child exhibits a head lice issue, i.e., scratching, itching and visible signs of infestation, we have the right to refuse drop-off at that moment.



PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SIGNATURE PAGE
 INDICATING YOU HAVE READ THIS ADDENDUM

ORIGINAL



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Signature Page – Parent/Center Acknowledgement

(YEP, WE READ IT...)

I/We have read this policy and understand it will be amended to the next year’s Parent Handbook.

The Bay Kids, LLC Head Lice Policy February 2023.

SIGNATURE PAGE ORIGINAL - TO BE FILED IN FAMILY FOLDER

COPY - TO CUSTOMER (PARENT)

Parent

(Please print) _____

Date of Signature _____

Signature _____

Parent of: _____

Thank you,

 Shannon N. O’Steen, Director

 David C Houghton, Owner

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