



## Letter to parents/carers concerning *Nitbusters: Head lice in schools program*

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Nitbusters Day \_\_\_\_\_

Date for return of consent form \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Carer

Nitbusters aims to educate schools, children and parents about head lice and how to remove them.

I am writing to request your permission for your child to participate in Nitbusters Day which will be held at school on the date shown above. Nitbusters Day is a day when parents may help to screen and treat all children for head lice.

Each child is encouraged to participate. No child can participate without a signed consent form, nor will they be penalised in any way for not participating. Parents/carers and/or children can withdraw from the screening at any time. Those children not participating can learn to identify lice and eggs and how to remove them.

On Nitbusters Day each participating child will have their hair inspected to determine if there is an active infestation. Parent helpers will wear disposable rubber or latex gloves for both the screening and the treatment process. If nits (the eggs) or lice are found, then regular hair conditioner will be applied to the hair and combed through. After the tangles are removed with a large comb, a fine lice comb will be used to remove the lice and nits. Gloves will be changed between treatments for each individual child. If a child's head shows signs of an infection or evidence of lesions or psoriasis, the child will not be screened or treated.

On completion the child's hair will be combed and tidied. The conditioner will not be rinsed off as this is hard to do at school. The conditioner will not damage the hair and can be rinsed off when the child returns home.

All combs are cleaned between each treatment in hot soapy water and rinsed in running hot water as head lice die at 60 degrees Celsius.

A note will be sent home after the screening to inform you if nits, lice or both nits and lice were found on your child. All parents will be given an information sheet on how to treat head lice even if their child didn't participate in the program.

For Nitbusters to be successful in our school, every child should be involved. It takes just one infested head to infest a whole class. An important message is that anyone can catch head lice regardless of age, sex or background. Treatment needs to be community based and ongoing.

The program involves the entire school community working together to coordinate and run a Nitbusters Day on the school premises, in an effort to treat the entire student body for head lice all at one time. The school's parent body organises the day by providing helpers to screen and treat all children for head lice. The screening is done by parent/carer volunteers on a class by class basis, with the youngest children treated early in the school day. The program uses the comb and conditioner method for treating head lice which is a safe, non-chemical treatment, involving the removal of head lice through combing.

If you agree to the participation of your child in Nitbusters Day, please complete the consent form in English and return it to the school by the date shown above. A separate consent form must be signed for each child.

This information is based on information provided on the NSW Health Nitbusters website.