



HAY MOBILE CHILDREN'S SERVICE

INFORMATION BOOKLET 2018

- Coleambally
- Hay/Maude
- Goolgowi
- Carrathool
- Clare
- Booligal

Po Box 258

Hay NSW 2711

Tel 02 6993 3059

Mobile Vehicle 042 993 3059

350 Church Street

Hay NSW 2711

office@hmcs.org.au

Farm Base Care Vehicle 042 893 3059

www.hmcs.org.au

Welcome to the Hay Mobile Children's Service.

HMCS is a community based non-profit organisation funded principally by grants from the NSW Department of Education and Communities; Early Childhood Education and Care, fees paid for services provided, and membership.

The Mobile vehicle provides Venue Based childcare programs for children aged 0 to 6 years. The Farm Based Care (FBC) vehicle provides childcare on farm to children 0 to 8 years of age. The two vehicles travel to venues up to 200kms from Hay. Both vehicles provide Farm Base Care during school holidays for children aged 0 to 8 years old. Our early childhood service is dedicated to providing isolated families with education and quality childcare for children aged 0 to 6 years of age. We have staff travelling to rural families in two vehicles.

We currently visit 6 local communities; Booligal, Carrathool, Clare, Coleambally, Goolgowi and Hay/Maude. The largest session can have up to twenty children enrolled and the smallest just two families.

This handbook contains information about our service and is updated on an annual basis. It explains the aims and philosophy for the experiences we at Hay Mobile Children's Service hope to share with you, your children and your family.

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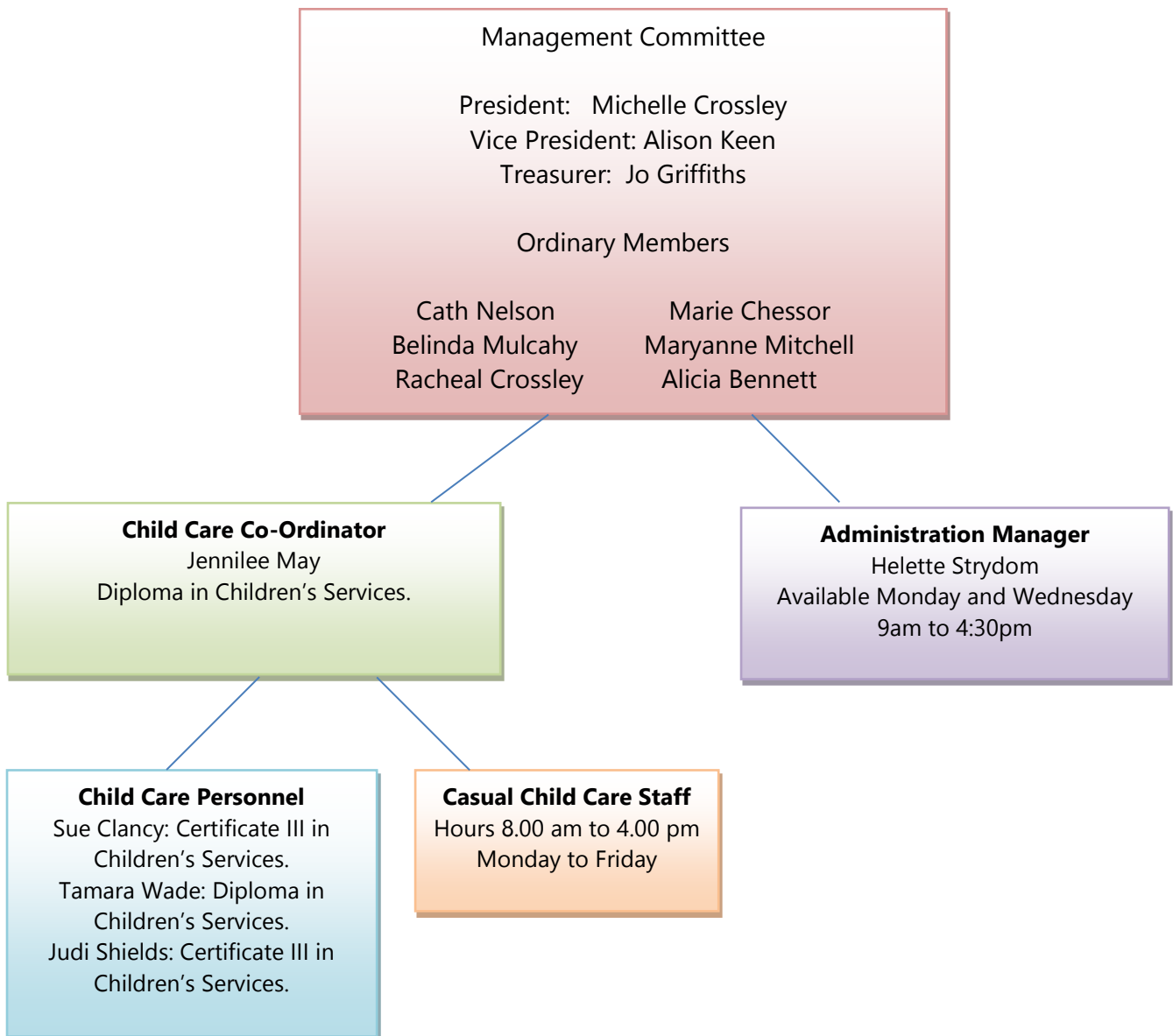
### **How is Hay Mobile Children's Service Operated**

A parent based management committee is responsible for the management of the service. Members elect the committee each August at the Annual General Meeting. The committee is responsible for the administration, financial management and employment of staff for the Hay Mobile Children's Service.

If you would like to become a member of the committee you can contact the office for a nomination form and return it to the office seven days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

There are three executive positions: president, vice president, and treasurer plus at least three ordinary members' positions.

### Management Committee



### Staff

The Childcare Co-ordinator and Childcare workers are employed by the management committee to provide early childhood services to the children and families using the Hay Mobile Children's Service.

The qualifications required by the senior childcare staff are either an Associate Diploma in Social Science (Early Childhood), Diploma in Children's Services, Degree in Early Childhood Education or equivalent.

We also have an Administration Manager who deals with fees, appointments, wages, banking and all administrative duties.

All staff working with children must hold current first aid certificates and complete working with children checks.

Staff members attend regular in-services to keep up to date with early childhood issues.

Occasionally the service will be closed to allow all staff to attend.

## **Philosophy**

Hay Mobile Children's Service is dedicated to supporting isolated, rural and remote children and their families. We believe that all children and their families have a right to access good quality; affordable child care and that children have a right to a secure, safe, happy and stimulating environment.

We believe that our service is not just for the children but also the parents. We provide learning sessions, which allow isolated parents to leave their children at the various venues or Farm Based Care knowing they will enjoy quality activities in a safe environment.

Hay Mobile Children's Service will provide children's services in any community up to 200km from Hay who have no or limited access to other services. We will work with a community to assess the needs of the community, how best we can meet these needs, and develop ways of providing child care that will enhance the lives of both children and their families.

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Aims

- ◆ To provide extensive early childhood services to isolated, rural and remote families living up to 200kms from Hay. These services are to be provided by way of venue child care and farm based child care, toy library and general parental support.
- ◆ To provide a service and program that is appropriate to the needs of isolated children and their families living in our area.
- ◆ To be aware of the special skills, talents and individual needs of each child attending any service we provide.

- ◆ To work together with other rural services to assist in promoting a unified community.
- ◆ To provide opportunities for parents to get together and develop informal networks that help reduce some of their feelings of isolation.
- ◆ To provide opportunities for children and parents to mix with other families allowing development of social skills and improving school readiness.
- ◆ To provide information about parenting skills, health and safety issues to families using our services.
- ◆ To provide high quality services to all users at all times.

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### **Licensed Early Childhood Service**

Hay Mobile Children's Service Incorporated is regulated by the **Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW); and Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Regulation 2004** under the Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Act 2011.

The Act and its regulations ensure that your child is educated and cared for in a safe, secure environment by qualified and experienced staff. The regulations cover safety at mobile locations, staff qualifications, and staff to child ratios, issues related to health, safety and nutrition, and developmentally appropriate education programs for the children using our service.

Hay Mobile Children's Service is licensed to offer childcare services for children aged 0 to 6 years at any session as long as the venue has been assessed and meets regulatory requirements. It also needs to be registered with the NSW Department of Education & Communities as a venue in which we provide services.

## **Encouraging new families to take advantage of our services**

If you become aware of new families in your area that may not be aware of the services we provide, please contact the co-ordinator who will arrange for an information pack to be sent out.

## **Changing needs of your community**

If your community needs change feel free to contact the Childcare Co-ordinator and discuss your concerns. Please do not be afraid to ask and we will do our best to mould the service to meet your needs.

## **Priorities for allocating the service to local communities**

Services are allocated using the following basic guidelines:

1. Social, geographic, cultural isolation;
2. Lack of access to early childhood, health, and education services (farm based families must live at least 35kms from nearest centre providing child care 0- 6); living on farm.
3. The community must have a minimum of two families who will attend regularly for care sessions.

Each community is looked at on its own merits and what type of service they wish to access.

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Services Provided by Hay Mobile Children's Service Inc

Venue Based Child Care

Hay Mobile Children's Service can provide child care for children aged 0 to 6 years. This service is available to communities on a regular or one off basis where the public venue meets child safety regulations. Our staff will supervise children while providing a quality early childhood program.

You and your child should bring: *(Please ensure all items bought to sessions i.e.; hats, bags, lunch boxes etc, are clearly marked with your child's name)*

Broad Rimmed Hat

Morning tea and Lunch

Drink

Sleep/rest gear: pillow, blanket, etc, pram for under 2's.

Change of clothes and Nappies; minimum 3 changes for both.

Bottle (milk or formula if needed)

Dummy or comforter for sleep/rest (if needed)

Venue Care Fees

Holders of current health care concession cards \$10 per session

Children aged 4 or 5, in the year before school, at preschool funded venues (Goolgowi, Coleambally and Hay) \$15 per session

All other enrolments \$20 per session

Late fees: Parents who collect children late from the sessions will be charged a \$1.00 per minute late fee.

Non Cancellation Fee: If parents fail to cancel their child/rens attendance they will be charged a non-cancellation fee equal to the fee payable on the day.

(If families have not turned up to venue care an hour after commencement staff will phone families to verify their intention. If the family is not attending they will be charged the non cancellation fee (the venue care fee) and staff will be able to phone families on the waiting list).

Sample Program outline – Venue Child Care includes:

- Indoor play – construction, puzzles, baby toys, dress ups, play dough, home corner, cooking, painting, craft.
- Morning Tea
- Outdoor play - sand and water, gross motor activities, games, climbing, running, balls etc.
- Group Time - story time, group discussion, singing & dancing.
- Lunch

- Rest Time
- Outdoor Play and Games

Booking Procedure for Venue Care

From the commencement of 2017, once HMCS has received your completed enrolment form, and copies of immunisation history statement and birth certificate your child will automatically be enrolled into venue care for the year. This is to ensure sufficient staff are allocated. It is your responsibility to advise HMCS if your child will not be at venue care please refer to cancellations (next section).

Cancellations

Cancellations must be made by 5pm, 2 days prior to the scheduled day, unless an emergency occurs. Cancellations received after, or a “no show” will be charged at the normal rate.

Payment of fees

Payment can be made as follows;

1. Payment can be made by direct deposit into the HMCS bank account, details as follows:

BSB: 062554 Account No: 00800375 Account Name: Hay Mobile Children’s Service

Please quote your name or invoice number as reference

2. Or by cheque made payable to HMCS posted to PO Box 258, Hay, 2711

Accounts will be issued and will be billed for all future attendance for the term. All accounts must be settled by the end of week 4 of the term. If you have not paid your account by the end of each term your child will not be permitted to use the service. If you are unable to pay your fees please contact the administration manager to discuss payment options. Your family’s participation in mobile sessions is important to us, and we want to make the service accessible to you.

If a credit is issued regarding a Cancellation, this will be credited against the following terms account. Please contact Helette if you require a Cash Refund.

Operating times

Hay Mobile Children's Service operates venue care for 40 weeks of the year. These sessions coincide with the normal school terms.

Venue Care sessions are from 9.00/9.30 am to 3.00 pm (depending on your location).

Labeling of Items

Please ensure all items bought to sessions i.e.; hats, drink bottles, bags, lunch boxes etc, are clearly marked with your child's name.

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## **Newsletters / Information / Facebook**

Please Like our Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/www.hmcs.org.au/](http://www.facebook.com/www.hmcs.org.au/) where we will be posting updates and relevant information regarding the Service.

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Farm Based Child Care (Policy available on request)

Hay Mobile Children's Service will provide safe, professional farm based care for families in rural areas who reside 35kms or more from the nearest registered childcare service. Farm base care is provided as occasional care for rural families, and is not an alternative to regular care. It is at a HMCS member's home within a 200km radius of Hay. Farm Base Care is available for 50 weeks of the year with the service closing for two weeks over the Christmas break.

1 FBC booking per term can be made anytime in advance.

Demand for FBC days is always high and must be shared equally between the members of the service. Each family will be allocated a FBC category at the time of enrolment. All on farm families may have access to 3 FBC days per term, (depending on availability).

Priority will be given to families as follows:

Category 1 – If the family lives over 35kms from the nearest childcare service and has no access to Hay Mobile Children’s Service venue care or any other registered care.

Category 2 – If parent lives over 35kms from the nearest childcare service and has access to Hay Mobile Children’s Service venue care.

Please note:

- Maps need to be supplied to Hay Mobile Children’s Service and updated when necessary, together with an emergency evacuation plan and alternate route to any farm base venue. (for example wet weather road).
- A Bush Fire Survival Plan **MUST** be provided to HMCS prior to FBC being available. The template can be downloaded @ <http://www.myfireplan.com.au/pdf/BushFireSurvivalPlan.pdf>
- Parents must leave morning tea and lunch for children.
- Bookings can be made no more than 3 weeks in advance with the exception of 1 FBC booking per term which can be made anytime in advance.
- All bookings are to be made through the office between 8.00 and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday. If the office is unattended please leave a message on the phone and someone will call you back.
- Parents can request one long day care per term. This day is not to be for longer than 10 hours including travelling time. Long days are at the discretion of staff.
- In the event that Farm Base Care needs to be cancelled, parents must cancel **before** 8.00 am on the day of care or a cancellation fee of \$30.00 will apply.
- In the event of bad weather or illness, Hay Mobile Children’s Service may cancel with no charge being made to the parent. Care is limited to 4 children per staff member. If more than one staff member is required additional fees will be charged @ \$5.00 per hour for each staff member. Home schooled children, with parents working on farm, can have Farm Base Care but this care must have prior approval from Childcare Co-ordinator and meet the criteria of Hay Mobile Children’s Service.
- Primary age children (under the age of 8) can be cared for during school holidays. Parents will need to complete an enrolment form for all school age children. Any child who is signed in for day is under the charge of staff.

- It is the parents responsibility to advise staff about road conditions to and from the venue and to assist staff should the need arise e.g. wet weather.
- Venue must be approved for safety by Hay Mobile Children’s Service staff.

Farm Base Care staff are experienced in childcare and the operations of the Hay Mobile Children’s Service and are primarily responsible for the delivery of Farm Base Care. The staff carry a developmentally appropriate program.

Please note Staff depart the Hay office at 8.00 am and need to return by 4.00 pm.

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### **Special Needs**

If your child has special needs, discuss your child’s situation with the co-ordinator or venue supervisor. They can adjust programs to help your child get the most out of each Mobile session. Our present library may also have information you may find useful.

At your request, our co-ordinator can talk with other support services to assist you and your child.

You can also book respite care with our Hay Farm Based Child Care service.

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Session Information

Arrival and departure procedure (Policy available on request)

We are required by law to sign your children in and out of all sessions. Attendance sheets with your child’s name will be placed close to the entry point at each session. Please sign your child in on arrival and sign them out on departure.

Please do not arrive with your child before starting time as this time is used by staff for setting up and ensuring the venue is clean and safe.

Settling In

We feel that children, parents and staff work together by encouraging the child to work and play at their own pace. Each child adapts to new situations and people differently. Feel free to speak to the co-ordinator or venue supervisor if you are concerned that your child is not settling into sessions.

It is important that parents and staff work as a team to be able to program for each child's needs. If your child is experiencing any difficulties that may affect their behaviour at sessions, please talk with the co-ordinator or venue supervisor. This will allow us to program sessions to meet their needs and to understand any change in their behaviour.

Clothing

Please have children wear 'everyday' clothes as paint, glue, and other craft activities are a very important part of each session. Please ensure your child/children are dressed in clothes suitable for playing in the sun (no singlet style tops). Children should also bring along a hat in both summer and winter and wear shoes with covered in toes or sandals (no thongs, plus no gumboots; they are not suitable when children climb or run and they provide no traction.)

Morning tea & Lunch

Parents should provide a nutritionally balanced lunchbox (fruit, cheese, sandwich, crackers, vegetable sticks, natural popcorn, yogurt etc) and a suitable drink (i.e. water, sweet sugary drinks are not encouraged) for their child/children. Nutritionally sound foods are essential for good health and growth of young children. Hay Mobile Children's Service staff are aware of food allergies and sharing food amongst children will not be encouraged. HMCS strives to be a **nut free** service.

A fridge is available at all care venues where we can keep the children's lunches and drinks cold. Most venues have facilities to heat up food in winter, but check if your venue has a microwave. Please mention to staff if your child's food needs heating for lunch, this will allow them sufficient time for heating and cooling before the children sit down to eat.

Sun sense (Policy available on request)

Outdoor play is best before 11am and after 3pm during daylight saving. Please bring hats that protect the face, ears and back of the neck to Mobile sessions for outdoor play. Long sleeved shirts are helpful if your venue has little shade.

HMCS has a Factor 50+ sunscreen that will be applied to children before outdoor play. If your child has an allergic reaction to some sunscreens, can you please provide an appropriate protective cream. Please apply sunscreen prior to arrival at sessions during the summer months, as sunblock should be applied 30 minutes before going outside to give the best protection.

We encourage children to play out of direct sunlight; planned outdoor activities are intended for shaded areas where possible.

Children's Birthdays and Other Celebrations

Birthdays are special events. We are happy for parents to bring a birthday cake to sessions. Hay Mobile Children's Service also likes to participate in other events such as Easter and Christmas. If your family has any special events they would like celebrated at our sessions, why not contact our staff to discuss your ideas. (Telephone the office on 02-69933059)

Toys from home

Please do not bring toys from home to sessions. They may get broken or lost and this will be upsetting for your child or not be appropriate for our age range.

Paint removal from clothing

Wet paint can be washed out immediately in cold water. If paint has dried, soak overnight in cold soapy water then hand wash in lukewarm water and use ordinary soap. Do not use hot water, laundry detergents or spray-on stain remover.

Recycling

You may like to donate clean recyclable materials such as cereal boxes, bottles, ice cream containers, cardboard tubes etc. for use in craft activities.

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## **Emergencies**

### **Evacuation procedure**

Evacuation procedures are kept in a highly visible area at all venues. Emergency plans for each venue mark emergency exits, fire extinguishers, route to be used when vacating venue and the meeting area. An extra copy of this plan and procedure is kept in our sign in folder. Staff will practice fire drills with the children on a regular basis to make them familiar with the procedure to follow in case of an emergency. We are also happy on a periodic basis and with the support of the parents, to organise visits from emergency services to talk with the children about their role in the community.

This is another reason it is very important that you sign the attendance book on arrival and again on departure from each session held at a venue to enable staff to be able to account for children present.

### **Accidents**

Should an accident occur whilst your child is at a mobile session, the Co-ordinator, Venue Supervisor or Educator will administer first aid, and complete an accident report. As a parent or guardian you will need to sign this accident report and keep a copy to take home. A first aid kit will be available at all sessions and farm based child care visits.

In an emergency at Farm Base Care, staff will assess the injury or illness, the severity and degree of urgency, administer first aid or CPR as appropriate and call for an ambulance. As soon as practical staff will notify the parents or in their absence the emergency contact nominated on the enrolment form. The child will be kept under adult supervision until the ambulance, parents or emergency contact arrives.

### **Illness**

If your child is sick, or you suspect they are developing an illness please keep your child at home or cancel your Farm Base Care booking. In the event of an infectious disease, children should be kept at home until symptoms heal or a doctor's certificate has been obtained.

Infectious diseases include: Chicken Pox, Cold Sores, Vomiting/Diarrhoea (exclusion period 48 hrs), Rubella, Hepatitis A, Influenza, Measles, Mumps, Whooping Cough, Conjunctivitis, Ring Worm, Impetigo (School Sores), scabies and Strep Throat.

Staff carry a reference book which lists all diseases and symptoms if you have any queries or want to check symptoms.

### **Immunisation**

Hay Mobile Children's Service encourages all parents to immunise their children and to ensure their Immunisation schedules are up to date. Immunisation protects your child and others from life threatening diseases.

In the event of a notifiable disease outbreak, children whose Immunisation schedules are not up to date will be excluded from sessions until health authorities have informed our service that the outbreak is over.

### **Head Lice** (Policy available on request)

In accordance with Hay Mobile Children's Service policy on our Parent-Managed Head Lice Program (Head Lice Policy) we are to regularly distribute up to date and accurate information to parents on the detection, treatment and control of head lice. Please find information for treatment at the back of this booklet.

Parents should sign the consent on the enrolment form that allows staff to check children for head lice on a regular basis.

### ***It is the expectation of parents/carers and families attending venue care that:***

- Children's hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method;
- That your child does not attend HMCS with untreated head lice (in accordance with Department of Health 2009);
- Regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary;
- Parents/Carers will notify the service if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced (in accordance with Department of Health, Nov 2010);

- Children with long hair will attend care with hair tied back;
- Use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice;
- Notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary;
- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures;
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice;

### **Supervision**

**At Venue Care Staff** are responsible for the supervision of your children at all times after you have signed them in on the attendance records. Hay Mobile Children's Service ensures we have a minimum of two staff members responsible for the children at all times.

### **Behaviour Guidance by staff** (Policy available on request)

Staff believe that with positive management, children will learn the limits that are set for their safety. Unsettled behaviour such as hitting, pushing, biting or temper tantrums often result from frustration. This often occurs as children learn about themselves and others and try to become more independent.

The role of the staff is to help children work through their feelings and handle the frustration in an acceptable way. The staff will use the following ways to help children:

**Setting limits** – staff set clear limits and let the child know these in a positive way. For example "we walk inside and run outside/lets use a quiet voice inside".

**Redirection** – if a child is unsettled at an activity or unable to work constructively, staff will assist them to start a new activity.

**Positive feedback** – staff will draw attention to the ways in which the child is keeping to the limits and being helpful to others and ignore the behaviour that is not acceptable. (As long as the behaviour does not hurt others.)



**Role modeling** – staff will role model positive behaviours in all areas, to set an example for children on acceptable ways of problem solving, interacting together and encouraging healthy eating habits.

At **no** time will the following occur at any HMCS session: smacking of children, yelling at children, rough handling of children, child left to cry without comfort, force feeding, negative statements about children, sarcastic comments directed at children.

Your child will be cared for in a caring, positive and well-organised environment at all times.

**Smoking and Alcohol** (Policy available on request)

Hay Mobile Children's service sessions are drug, alcohol and smoke free at all times.

**Care for children under 2 years of age**

You will need to bring a port-a-cot/ pram, nappies, bottles or drinking cup, appropriate food and change of clothes. You will need to inform staff of your child's routine i.e. sleep, feeding etc. to enable us to meet their individual needs.

Please ensure that your nappy bag does not contain any Panadol or other baby medication, if you do carry these things in your babies' bag it is important that you inform staff so the bag can be kept out of reach.

**Excursions** (Policy available on request)

If staff have an excursion planned (e.g. playground) for the day, they will ask all parents to sign an excursion form giving permission for their child to leave the premises in the staffs care.

**Medication** (Policy available on request)

If your child requires medication during the day, you will need to sign a medication consent form. Staff will not administer prescription medication without a doctor's prescription in the name of the child and a signed consent form. You will also need to sign the medication book.

Staff will only administer non-prescription medication in accordance with the written dosage instructions. Staff will also be required to sign a medication form and the medication book.

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Administration Information

Fee Structure

Membership Fees

We have an annual membership fee of \$10.00 per family. This fee is charged for two reasons:

- to assist in costs for individual insurance cover for children attending Hay Mobile Children's Service.
- to meet our requirements under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 as an incorporated body registered with the Department of Fair Trading

This will be invoiced at the beginning of Term 1 and due for payment by week 4 of Term 1.

Venue Care Fees

Holders of current health care concession cards \$10 per session

Children aged 4 or 5, in the year before school, at preschool funded venues (Goolgowi, Coleambally and Hay) \$15 per session

All other enrolments \$20 per session

Farm Base Care Fees

This will be charged at \$5/hour regardless of number of children. These invoices are due for payment 14 days after date of Invoice.

Office hours and contact details

Hay Mobile Children's service office is open Monday and Wednesday between 09:00 am and 04:30 pm. If you contact the office by telephone and it is unattended you can leave a message on our answering machine and we will return your call as soon as possible.

The office street address: 350 Church Street, HAY NSW 2711

Postal address: P O Box 258, HAY NSW 2711

Telephone Number: 02 6993 3059 Fax Number: 02 6993 4970
Farm Based Vehicle: 0428 933 059 Mobile Vehicle: 0429 933 059
Office Email: office@hmcs.org.au
Childcare Co-ordinator Email: jennilee@hmcs.org.au

Rebates on your child care payments

Hay Mobile Children’s Service is an authorised childcare provider with the Family Assistance Office. We will provide you with childcare receipts for claiming the rebate for venue care and farm base care at the beginning of each term. You can then take these receipts to any Family Assistance Office (Centrelink and Medicare Offices) to claim your rebate.

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### **Complaints and Comments** (Policy available on request)

The input of parents is extremely important and we take your feedback very seriously. It provides the staff and management committee with ideas on how we can do things better and modifications we can make to policies and procedure. We hope that you will feel you can contact the childcare Co-ordinator, Committee Members or staff at your session with any issues you may have.

Positive feedback is also really important. If the staff are doing a good job and your child is enjoying their HMCS experience please tell the staff member – it is always nice to hear something good.

### **Formal Complaint** (Policy available on request)

You can contact the childcare co-ordinator at any time to discuss any problems you may be experiencing with any aspect of the service. Formal complaints require a letter to the childcare co-ordinator or completion of a complaint form to raise complaints related to service delivery, administration procedure, staff or other issues. If the dispute cannot be resolved at that level it will be referred to the management committee.

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Child Protection (Policy available on request)

Children have the right to grow up safe and protected. With this in mind, Child Protection is everyone’s business. If you suspect the abuse or neglect of a child, whether physical, emotional, or sexual you should report it.

Mandatory reporting is carried out by all our staff as they are legally required to do so.

To report suspected abuse or neglect of children or young people call:

132 111 (TTY 1800 212 936)

Child Protection Helpline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can ring statewide for the cost of a local call.

All reports are treated in confidence and you can remain anonymous if you wish.

The following contacts are provided for your further information:

NSW Commission for Children and Young People

Phone: 02 9286 7276
Fax: 02 9286 7267 NSW
Email: kids@kids.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.kidsnsw.gov.au

Street and mail address
Commission for Children and Young People
Level 2, 407 Elizabeth Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010

Family and Community Services; FaCs Web: www.community.nsw.gov.au

Head Office

4-6 Cavill Ave
Ashfield NSW 2131
Locked Bag 4028
Ashfield NSW 2131
ph: 02 9716 2222
fax: 02 9716

Albury CSC	553-555 Smollett St Albury NSW 2640 PO Box 1166 Albury NSW 2640	ph: 02 6058 4900 fax: 02 6058 4999
Wagga Wagga CSC	25-27 Thompson St Wagga Wagga NSW 2650 PO Box 176 Wagga Wagga NSW 2650	ph: 02 6937 9300 fax: 02 6937 9399

National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)

Suite 604 Level 6
46 Kippax Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010

Ph: 02 9211 0224 Fax: 02 9211 5676
E-mail: nsw@napcan.org.au Web: www.napcan.org.au

NSW Ombudsman

Level 24, 580 George Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
E-mail: nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au

Toll Free (outside Sydney metro): 1800 451 524
Telephone: 02 9286 1000 02 Fax: 9283 2911
Website: www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Information support and referral

If you require information about health and family services in your local area, talk to the Childcare co-ordinator.

Below is a list of special contacts together with some useful information to assist you.

Community Health Services (Speech) – Griffith
Tel 02-69669900

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## HEAD LICE – Facts and Treatment

While children are at school many families will have contact with head lice. The information contained here will help you treat and control head lice.



### About head lice

Enlarged image of head louse. Actual size 2 to 4 mm.

Head lice have been around for many thousands of years. Anyone can get head lice.

Head lice are small, wingless, blood sucking insects. Their colour varies from whitish-brown to reddish-brown. Head lice only survive on humans. If isolated from the head they die very quickly (usually within 24 hours).

People get head lice from direct hair to hair contact with another person who has head lice. Head lice do not have wings or jumping legs so they cannot fly or jump from head to head. They can only crawl.

### Finding head lice

Many lice do not cause an itch, so you have to look carefully to find them.

Head lice are found on the hair itself and move to the scalp to feed. They have six legs which end in a claw and they rarely fall from the head. Louse eggs (also called nits) are laid within 1.5 cm of the scalp and are firmly attached to the hair. They resemble dandruff, but can't be brushed off.

Lice can crawl and hide. The easiest and most effective way to find them is to follow these steps:

#### **Step 1**

Comb any type of hair conditioner on to dry, brushed (detangled) hair. This stuns the lice and makes it difficult for them to grip the hair or crawl around.

#### **Step 2**

Now comb sections of the hair with a fine tooth, head lice comb.

#### **Step 3**

Wipe the conditioner from the comb onto a paper towel or tissue.

#### **Step 4**

Look on the tissue and on the comb for lice and eggs.

#### **Step 5**

Repeat the combing for every part of the head at least four or five times



If lice or eggs are found, the hair should be treated.

If the person has been treated recently and you only find empty hatched eggs, you may not have to treat, as the empty eggs could be from a previous episode.

### Treating head lice

Treating head lice involves removing lice and eggs from the hair. There are two ways you can do this:

1. Buying and using a head lice lotion or shampoo, following the instructions on the product
2. Using the conditioner and comb method (described under 'finding head lice') every second day until there have been no live lice found for ten days.

If you choose to use a head lice product always read and follow the instructions provided with the product carefully.

The following points may also be helpful:

- Head lice products must be applied to all parts of the hair and scalp.
- No treatment kills all of the eggs so treatment must involve two applications, seven days apart. The first treatment kills all lice; the second treatment kills the lice that may have hatched from eggs not killed by the first treatment.
- Cover the person's eyes while the treatment is being applied. A towel is a good way to do this.
- If you are using a lotion, apply the product to dry hair.
- If you are using a shampoo, wet the hair, but use the least amount of water possible.
- Apply the treatment near the scalp, using an ordinary comb to cover the hair from root to tip. Repeat this several times until all the hair is covered.

There is no need to treat the whole family - unless they also have head lice.

Concentrate on the head - there is no need to clean the house or the classroom.

Only the pillowcase requires washing - either wash it in hot water (at least 60C) or dry it using a clothes dryer on the hot or warm setting.

### **Testing resistance**

Head lice products belong in one of the following categories depending on the active compound they contain:

- pyrethrins,
- synthetic pyrethroids (permethrin, bioallethrin),
- organophosphates (maldison or malathion),
- herbal with or without natural (non-chemical) pyrethrins.

Insecticide resistance is common, so you should test if lice are dead. If they are, treat again in seven days using the same product. If the lice are not dead, the treatment has not worked and the lice may be resistant to the product and all

products containing the same active compound. Wash off the product and treat as soon as possible using a product containing a different active compound. If the insecticide has worked, the lice will be dead within 20 minutes.

Any head lice product could cause a reaction and should be used with care by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, children less than 12 months old and people with allergies, asthma or open wounds on the scalp. If you are unsure, please check with your pharmacist or doctor.

### **Head lice eggs**

Head lice eggs are small (the size of a pinhead) and oval. A live egg will 'pop' when squashed between fingernails.

Dead eggs have crumpled sides and hatched eggs look like tiny boiled eggs with their tops cut off.

### **Head lice combs**

Combs with long, rounded stainless steel teeth positioned very close together have been shown to be the most effective, however, any head lice comb can be used.

### **Regulations**

According to the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009, children with head lice can be readmitted to school or children's service centres after treatment has commenced.

The department recommends a child with head lice can be treated the same day and return to school or children service centres once treatment has been administered, even if there are still some eggs present. There is no need to miss school or childcare because of head lice.

### **Preventing head lice**

Check your child's head regularly with comb and conditioner. There is no research to prove that chemical or herbal therapies can prevent head lice.

## Lunch Box Ideas

A sandwich, small pita wrap or small bread roll with fillings such as:

- ✚ mashed egg and lettuce
- ✚ shredded chicken with cheese and lettuce
- ✚ tuna, corn and lettuce
- ✚ turkey breast with cucumber and lettuce
- ✚ ham, chutney and alfalfa sprouts
- ✚ cold roast meat, chutney, lettuce and tomato
- ✚ vegemite and cheese
- ✚ cream cheese and grated carrot
- ✚ avocado, tomato and lettuce
- ✚ mashed banana
- ✚ A small, cold slice of frittata
- ✚ A homemade savoury muffin – zucchini, corn or cheese
- ✚ One or two slices of homemade pita pizza
- ✚ A few crackers or rice cakes with cheese

## Snack Ideas

- ✚ Small, fresh pieces of fruit: mandarin, banana, apricot, pear, plum or a bunch of grapes.
- ✚ Sliced fruit: apples, oranges, melon or pineapple.
- ✚ Two or three crackers with cheese or vegemite.
- ✚ One or two small pikelets – try including grated fruit or vegetables in the mix.
- ✚ A flavoured scone – pumpkin or cheese.
- ✚ A few vegetable slices or sticks served with dip.
- ✚ A small tub of yoghurt.
- ✚ A cheese stick.

## Drinks

The best drink for your child is water. Include a water bottle in your child's lunchbox every day.



**Notes:**