Head lice are insects that live on the human scalp. They lay eggs (nits) which attach to the hair shaft and hatch in about 6-10 days.

Anyone can get head lice. Young children are particularly at risk in group environments like schools and child care.

Lice must crawl from one person or object to another. This happens when heads touch (sleeping together, hugging, playing), or personal items are shared (combs, brushes, hats, car seats, bedding).

Diagnosis is usually made by finding nits attached to the hair near the scalp.

Treatment involves getting rid of the lice and nits from the infected people, environment and personal items.

Teach children not to share personal items such as hats, combs, brushes, hair ribbons, scarves, towels or bedding. Place items in children’s cubbies so that coats and clothing do not touch.

- Develop a clear written policy.
- Communicate your policy with families and staff.
- Make "head checks" a daily or weekly activity.

California Childcare Health Program
www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org