

Building 90
Launceston Airport
305 Evandale Road
Western Junction TAS 7212
PO Box 1087
Launceston TAS 7250

T 03 6391 0504
F 03 6391 8992
E enquiries@rfdstas.org.au
> www.flyingdoctor.org.au



Tuesday, 14 June 2016
RFDS/140616

MEDIA RELEASE

MAKING HEAD LICE HISTORY IN GEORGE TOWN

The Royal Flying Doctor Service have partnered with the University of Tasmania and Anglicare to deliver free education sessions for children and families at George Town.

Through the new RFDS 'Right as Rain' initiative, The Royal Flying Doctor Service attended the George Town Wings and Things event in February. Pre event community consultation highlighted head lice as an issue in the town and the initial head lice promotion at the event received a great response from families and the community sector.

The next stage includes four free education sessions that are designed to inform parents and carers about the importance of head lice prevention and treatment and provide them with the knowledge to help break the cycle in the seaside town. Free head lice shampoo, combs and brochures will be given to those who attend the sessions.

The four follow-up sessions are spanned over three consecutive days starting Tuesday 14th June 1.30pm at the Child & Family Centre followed by 2.20pm at South George Town Primary; Wednesday 15th June 2.20pm at Star of the Sea College before the final session on Thursday 16th June 2.20pm at Port Dalrymple School. Tea and coffee will also be available.

Royal Flying Doctor Service Chief Executive Officer John Kirwan, noted "head lice can affect people in a number of ways from discomfort and irritation, to social isolation and bullying, causing confrontations between families and schools and it can also lead to school absences."

"Every town, every school and every family will have to deal with head lice at some stage but there are many myths out there and we hope by delivering these sessions and encouraging people to come along, we can create steps to make head lice history in George Town," he said.

Anne Todd, Pharmacist and Primary Care Clinical Audit Coordinator at the University of Tasmania, will deliver the sessions. "Head lice are tiny insect parasites that live on the human head. Head lice reproduce by laying their eggs (nits) on the hair shaft close to the scalp. They are not dangerous, don't carry diseases and are not a sign of poor hygiene, but can cause a number of other issues," Anne said.

Project Manager Lucy Byrne said, "Head lice are spread by head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice so once you have treated your child it is important to inform the school or child care centre, and any other contacts including playgroup, neighbours and relatives, so that other close contacts, both children and adults, can be checked."



“By delivering these workshops, we envisage parents and carers will come away with clearer information on what they can do to help reduce the spread and hopefully break the existing cycle. This is a clear example of effective health promotion where groups work together to identify a health issue and together, come up with a local solution.”

For further information please contact Lucy Byrne on 0409 937 421.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY: Making Head Lice History in George Town

WHO: Students at South George Town Primary, Parents and Carers, Royal Flying Doctor Service Chief Executive Officer John Kirwan, Senior Project Manager, Lucy Byrne, Primary Care Clinical Audit Coordinator, Anne Todd.

WHERE: South George Town Primary, Franklin Street, George Town TAS, 7253

WHEN: 2.15pm

CONTACT: Lucy Byrne 0409 937 421, Janine Targett (school) 0439639422 or Ginnie Cameron (school) 03 6382 1564