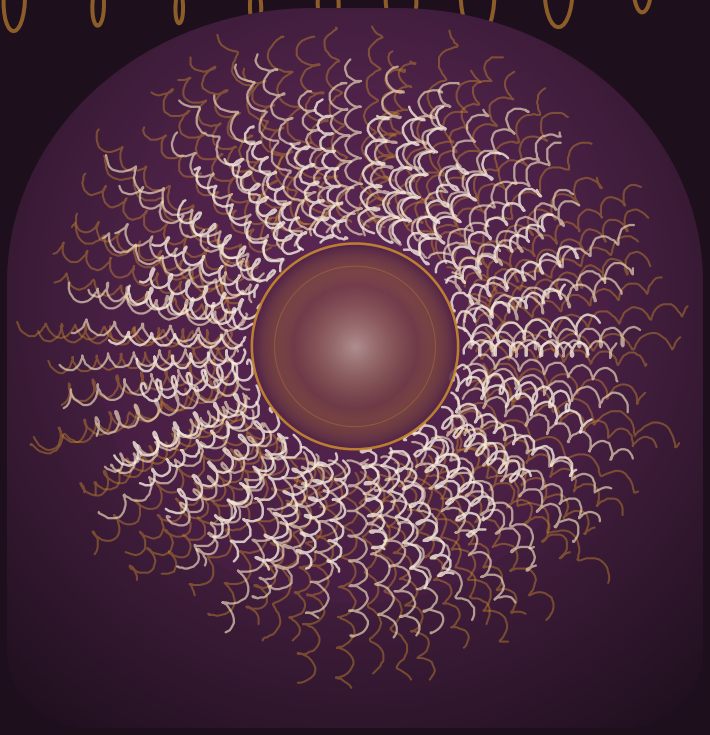
The family care calendar

A rhythm for real life. Not another chore chart.

Morning and night. A weekly check. Monthly, seasonal and yearly look-backs. You're scheduling attention, not treatments.



The calendar reminds. The hair decides.

These intervals are planning tools. When to wash, trim, relax or retighten depends on the actual hair, scalp and activity, and on what the professional or the label says.

Morning & night

Morning: look, refresh, go

Ask how the scalp feels. Check the roots and ties. Refresh only what needs it, and leave a comfortable style alone. Offer a choice, but don't make looks a daily performance.

Night: loosen, check, settle

Take out or loosen anything that pulls. Make sure the hair will dry. A smooth bonnet or pillowcase is optional; there's no required bonnet or nightly oil.

Sources AAD · Hairstyles that pull can lead to hair loss · AAP · How to keep your sleeping baby safe

Routine A: the full wash day (every 1–2 weeks)

For dry, coily hair, a full wash every 7–14 days works as long as the scalp is comfortable. Sweaty, itchy or flaky means sooner.

01 **Warm start**

Mist the hair with warm water and a little leave-in milk. Wrap it in a warm towel for a few minutes while they settle in. Just water and warmth, no essential oils.

02 **Scalp wash, lying back**

Recline them in the wash chair or lounger. Wrist-test the water, then wet the hair. Shampoo on the roots, and a soft silicone scalp brush in slow circles with light pressure. Rinse well.

03 **Deep condition and detangle**

Coat the hair in conditioner. Detangle with a flexible brush from the ends up while it's in. For a little extra: from about age 3, 5–10 minutes under a hooded dryer on low (under 3, a warm towel over a cap). Rinse.

04 **Set up for drying**

Earmuffs on, a wide band over the hairline. Part neat box sections, and run a wide-tooth comb through each from the ends to the roots to make sure it's detangled.

05 **Dry with the RevAir**

Feed each section in and hold the wand near the roots without pressing on the scalp. From about 3 on the low setting; under 3, cool only. The earmuffs keep the noise from bothering them.

06 **A quick protective finish**

A little gel or edge milk. Smooth twists or braids with a 9-row brush, or sweep the hair into a loose puff with a soft boar brush. Silk scrunchie. Beads only for kids 3 and up who don't mouth things.

Why, and the fine print

We dropped the lavender or chamomile oil from the warm towel. Lavender oil is in the same NIH report as tea tree, and a plain warm towel does the relaxing just fine.

Sources AAD · How often do children need to wash their hair? · MoKnowsHair · My length retention regimen + tips · NIH · Lavender and tea tree oils may cause breast growth in boys

Routine B: the mid-week refresh

For daycare dirt, sweat or product buildup between wash days. No shampoo.

01 **Co-wash**
Recline, wet the hair, and work in a co-wash (cleansing conditioner). Soft scalp brush, gentle circles, to lift sweat and oil.

02 **Quick brush-through**
Run the detangling brush through while the co-wash is in to catch shed hair and new knots. Rinse well.

03 **Bedtime puff**
While it's damp, a drop of jojoba or grapeseed oil, then gather a loose puff with a soft brush and a silk scrunchie. Satin bonnet for sleep (toddlers and up, never babies).

Sources AAD · How often do children need to wash their hair?

What's in the two routines

Mielle Pomegranate & Honey shampoo
Moisturizing, detangling shampoo for thick coily hair.
See it on Amazon

Jupiter scalp brush
Soft silicone bristles for slow circles on the scalp. Light pressure only.
See it on Amazon

Carol's Daughter Goddess Strength conditioner
Rich, slippery conditioner for detangling.
See it on Amazon

FHI Heat UNbrush
The flexible detangling brush MoKnowsHair uses; bristles bend around knots.
See it on Amazon

Wide-tooth comb
For parting clean box sections and a final check.
Search on Amazon

Koeuoi 9-row brush
Smooths and separates twists and braids.
See it on Amazon

Diane Prestige soft boar brush (D1707)
Soft bristles to gather hair into a puff without dragging.
See it on Amazon

As I Am Coconut CoWash
Cleansing conditioner for mid-week refreshes.
See it on Amazon

Mulberry silk scrunchies
For loose puffs; the right size so it isn't wrapped tight.
Search on Amazon

Kids' satin bonnet
For sleep from toddler age. Never for babies under 1.
Search on Amazon

Soft silicone hair beads (age 3+)
Only for kids who don't put things in their mouths. Check them daily.
Search on Amazon

Store links are for convenience; we haven’t tested every item, and prices change. Check the current listing before you buy.

The care calendar

When	Look at	Don’t make it automatic
Weekly check	The next wash or takedown, swim and sports days, a clean kit, the handoff to the other caregiver.	Exactly seven days between washes, or a big new style every Sunday.
Wash day, when needed	Choose, cleanse, deep condition and detangle, leave-in, style wet, dry hands-off.	A pre-poo, oil, heat cap, extra mask and blowout every single time.
Monthly look-back	Hairline, scalp, repeat tangles, ends, how products are working, one skill to practice.	Harsh detoxes, protein treatments, new purchases, length tracking.
Each season	A trim (about every 3–4 months, sooner if ends split), new activities, accessory fit, tools, and whether the routine still works.	A set trim length, a relaxer appointment, replacing everything.
Once a year	What they like now, how much they can do themselves, time, budget, and whether you need professional help.	A yearly straightening service or a specialist visit when everything is fine.

Symptoms don’t wait for the calendar.

Painful pulling, sores, an itch that won’t quit or noticeable thinning doesn’t wait for the monthly check. Loosen the style now and get anything ongoing looked at.

Sources AAD · Hairstyles that pull can lead to hair loss

Same calendar. Different jobs.

Path	The routine changes
Loose natural	Regular gentle detangling, comfortable styles and takedowns, a spot refresh when needed.
Occasional heat	A check before each press, no-reheat upkeep, and a wash and reset. Not a monthly press subscription.

Path	The routine changes
Chemically treated	A service log and a check before any repeat application. The calendar doesn't clear anyone for a relaxer.
Locs	Separate plans for washing, drying, retightening and styling, based on the method and the roots.

Hand it over as they're ready

Babies: gentle and minimal. No tension, no small decorations, and safe sleep before any hair goal. Cradle cap or scalp worries that stick around go to the pediatrician.

Toddlers and preschoolers: two real choices, show them the tools, honor the pause signal. Small parts, hot tools and scissors stay with you. They can help without having to sit through it all.

School age and teens: teach one skill at a time, then let them practice while you watch. Puberty can change how oily the scalp gets, so adjust washing. Adult services are never a deadline for kids.

Adults: build the routine around your real hair, schedule and taste. New, lasting shedding or crown changes deserve a checkup, not an automatic "it's just stress."

Sources AAP · How to keep your sleeping baby safe · AAD · How often do children need to wash their hair?

One care note for both homes

- [ ] Last wash / swim: _____
- [ ] Current products and any reaction: _____
- [ ] Current style / next simple finish: _____
- [ ] Pause signal / comfort helper: _____
- [ ] Scalp observations / clinician instructions: _____
- [ ] What worked this week: _____

Print it, or keep a shared note in an app you already use. This website doesn't send these entries anywhere.

Supporting sources

Checked October 26, 2026. Source roles and limitations are part of these instructions.

AAD · Hairstyles that pull can lead to hair loss · Date not displayed
https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/hair-loss/causes/hairstyles
Tension and early warning signs apply across hairstyles. A professional installation does not remove traction risk.

AAP · How to keep your sleeping baby safe · Date not displayed
https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/a-parents-guide-to-safe-sleep.aspx
Infant safe sleep takes precedence over hair-preservation accessories. No birthday-based bonnet clearance is inferred.

AAD · How often do children need to wash their hair? · Updated November 14, 2023
https://www.aad.org/public/everyday-care/hair-scalp-care/hair/wash-hair
Explicitly written for ages 8–12. Its heavy-sweat advice must not be presented as a tested toddler schedule.

MoKnowsHair · My length retention regimen + tips · August 8, 2024
https://moknowshair.com/blogs/news/lengthretentionregimen
Read in full on October 27, 2026: weekly wash day, scalp clarifier, deep conditioning as “the key element” (extra time with heat for low porosity), detangling with conditioner and a flexible brush, stylers on wet hair, hooded dryer, enclosed pineapple at night, trims about every four months, heat cut to about twice a year. Adult routine with her own product line; not pediatric clinical evidence.

NIH · Lavender and tea tree oils may cause breast growth in boys · February 1, 2007
https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/lavender-tea-tree-oils-may-cause-breast-growth-boys
Case reports in prepubertal boys linked to topical products with lavender or tea tree oil; growth resolved after stopping. Basis for keeping essential oils out of the kids’ routine.

Keep the routine close.

This guide lives online too, with every path, the full kit and the sources behind each step. Scan to open it on your phone.

thedadsystem.org/haircare/routines.html

The Dad System · Small systems. Deeper connection. General education, not medical advice; this guide has not been medically reviewed. Artwork is original and generated in code.