

Child Abuse and Neglect Part Two: Abusive Head Trauma (Shaken Baby Syndrome - SBS) RESOURCES

FAQs

- SBS is a leading cause of child abuse deaths in the United States.
- Babies (newborn to 4 months) are at greatest risk of injury from shaking.
- Children under age one are the most likely to die from abusive head trauma.
- Babies' heads are heavy (about 25% of total body weight), their neck muscles are weak, and their brains are soft and still developing.
- Just a few seconds of shaking can cause serious injury.
- 20 of victims die; nearly 80% suffer long-term or permanent disability, including blindness, hearing impairment, seizures, cerebral palsy and learning disabilities.
- Abusive head injuries are most often inflicted by a parent or caregiver who is angry, out of control or desperate.

Parent/Caregiver Risk Factors

- Exhaustion
- Financial problems
- Unrealistic expectations
- Young parents
- Mental health issues
- Alcohol
- Substance Abuse

Common Triggers Include:

- Inconsolable crying is the number one reason
- Perceived misbehavior
- Unreasonable expectations
- Interruption of caregiver's activity/sleep
- Feeding problems
- Toilet training

Family Support Professionals are Required by Law to Report Suspect Abuse

**Call 1-800-CHILDREN or
your local Department of Social Services**

If you suspect a child has been shaken, call 9-1-1!

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Resources for Providers

- Shaking Baby Injuries Infographic - [English](#)
- Websites
 - [National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome](#)
 - [The Period of Purple Crying](#)
- Videos
 - [Forever Shaken](#), Brain Injury Nebraska

Resources for Parents

- Helplines – 1 (800) CHILDREN or 1 (800) 4 A Child
- Create Your Own Crying Plan – [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- [Abusive Head Trauma: How to Protect Your Baby](#), [healthychildren.org](#), The American Academy of Pediatrics
- Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome/ Abusive Head Trauma, California Department of Social Services – [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- Never Shake Your Baby, Virginia Department of Social Services – [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- [Information for Dads](#), The Period of Purple Crying
- Videos Suitable for Parents
 - [All Babies Cry](#), Children’s Trust
 - [How to Calm a Crying Baby](#), BabyCenter
 - [Eyes Open](#), Health Education Design Group, James Madison University
 - [Keep Your Cool](#), (Especially for Fathers), Virginia Department of Social Services
 - [Never Shake a Baby](#), Phoenix Children’s Hospital
 - [Never Shake a Baby](#), Children’s Trust Fund of Missouri
 - [Monica’s Story: A Message about Shaken Baby Syndrome](#), Children’s Miracle Network

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When Your Baby Cries, Take a Break!

Remember that infant crying is worse in the first few months of life, but it will get better as the child grows. If you have tried to calm your crying baby but nothing seems to work, it is important to stay in control of your temper. Remember, it is never OK to shake, throw, hit, slam, or jerk any child—and it never solves the problem!

If you feel like you are getting angry and might lose control, try the following:



Take a deep breath and count to 10.



Put the baby in a safe place, leave the room, and check on the baby every five to 10 minutes.



Call a friend, relative, neighbor or parent helpline for support.



Call your child's doctor. There may be a medical reason why your baby is crying.



Be patient.

Babies eventually grow out of their crying phase. Keeping your baby safe is the most important thing you can do. Even if you feel frustrated, stay in control and handle your baby with care.

An Important Reminder for All Caregivers:

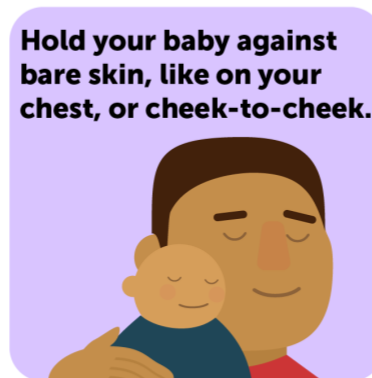
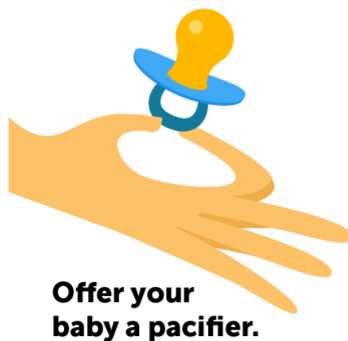
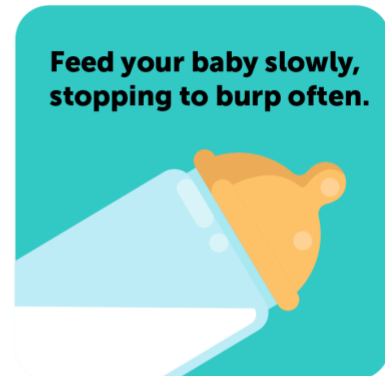
Anyone who cares for your children, including child care providers, boyfriends, girlfriends, older siblings, grandparents, and neighbors, should know about the dangers of shaking or striking a baby's head. This includes anyone who cares for your children. Make sure they know it is never OK to shake, throw, hit, slam, or jerk any child.

What to do when a Baby Cries:

It is not always easy to figure out why babies cry. They may be hungry or overtired. They may be cold or need their diapers changed. Crying is their only way of expressing their needs, and it's not because they dislike their parents. Sometimes it seems like they cry for no reason.

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SOME WAYS TO CALM A CRYING BABY



If you have tried all of these and your baby continues to cry, go back and try them again. Most babies get tired after crying for a long time and eventually will fall asleep. If all else fails, call your child's doctor and share your concerns and your stress.



IT'S NEVER OKAY TO SHAKE A BABY!