

Shaken Baby Syndrome
January 2011

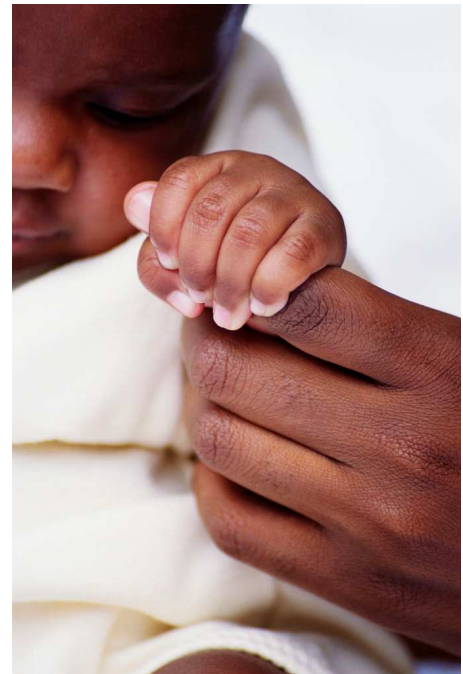
Parenting *Rules!*

What is it?

Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS), also called Shaken Infant Syndrome and/or Shaken Impact Syndrome, is the nationally recognized medical term used to describe brain injuries caused by shaking a baby or small child. It is a violent form of physical child abuse that causes permanent brain injury.

Shaken Baby Syndrome happens when a person caring for a baby or young child becomes frustrated and forcefully shakes the baby. Even mild shaking can cause serious injuries such as brain damage, blindness and paralysis. Shaking a baby can cause death.

According to Dr. Carole Jenny, Director of the ChildSafe Child Protection Program at Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence, there are about 7-10 head trauma cases directly related to Shaken Baby Syndrome annually in Rhode Island, and many more that go undiagnosed.



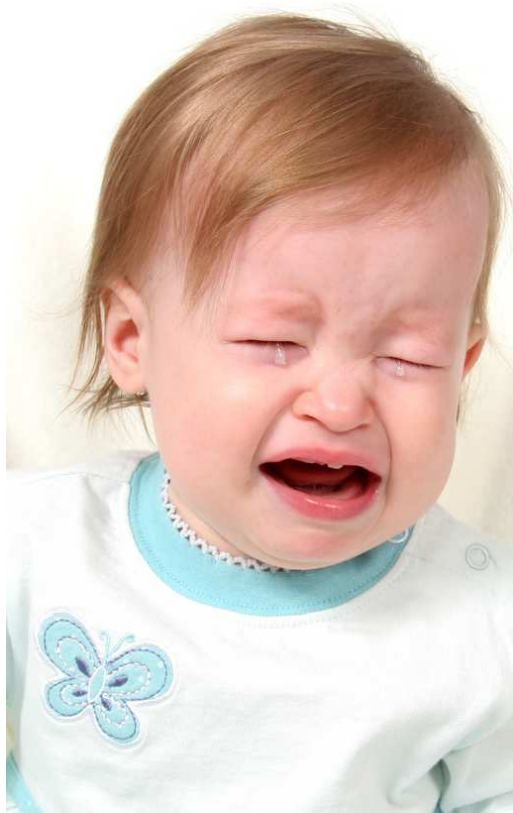
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Why does it happen?

Studies show that babies are shaken when a caregiver becomes frustrated by the baby's crying. Parents and caregivers become so stressed and frustrated by their inability to stop the baby's crying that they lash out and shake the baby in an effort to quiet him or her.



It is estimated that 65% - 90% of caregivers who shake a baby are male. Most often times it is a mother's boyfriend who is unprepared to care for and cope with a crying baby. However, there have been cases where a baby has been shaken by a mother, relative or hired caregiver.

The average age of victims is between 3 and 8 months old when prolonged crying is more common, but there have been reports of younger babies and toddlers up to 4 years old being shaken.

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What happens to the baby?

Babies are fragile! Their neck muscles have not become strong enough to support the weight of their own head.

When a baby or toddler is shaken their head is whipped back and forth with such force that it causes the child's brain to hit the inside of the skull. This banging causes blood vessels to burst and damage to nerves and tissues. The trauma causes the brain to swell and bleed. This kind of injury is not curable and many babies die from their injuries.

The children who survive may suffer from:

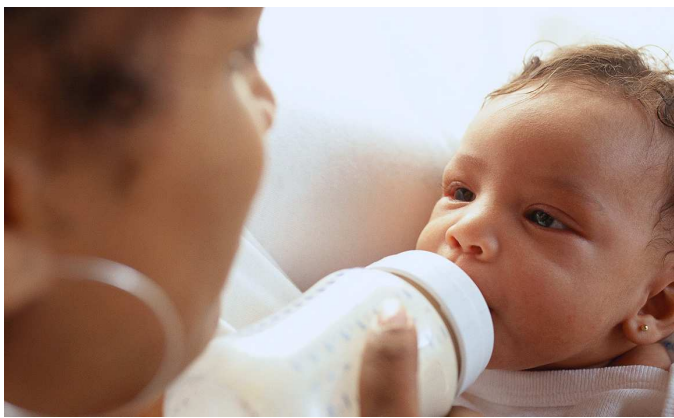
- Paralysis
- Loss of hearing
- Delays in development
- Partial or total blindness
- Learning difficulties
- Mental retardation
- Seizures
- Cerebral palsy
- Attention problems



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All Babies Cry...



Most infants spend two to three hours every day crying. Some babies cry even more than that. Babies will not always respond to attempts to comfort him or her.

Babies cry for a lot of reasons because it is one of the few ways they know how to express themselves. Babies cry when they are hungry, wet or not

feeling well, but some times they cry just to exercise their lungs.

When your baby won't stop crying, try some of these coping strategies:

- ✓ Make sure your baby is not hungry.
- ✓ Check your baby's diaper and change it, if needed.
- ✓ Make sure your baby's clothing is not too tight.
- ✓ Offer a pacifier.
- ✓ Check for signs of illness, like fever or swollen gums. If signs are present, take the necessary steps to treat the symptoms or call your doctor.
- ✓ Hold your baby against your chest and rock or walk her.
- ✓ Take your baby for a ride in his stroller.
- ✓ Run the vacuum, turn on the dryer or let water run in the tub for a few minutes. Babies are sometimes soothed by consistent, rhythmic noise.
- ✓ Sing or talk quietly to your baby

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How to cope...

So you have tried everything and your baby is still crying. What do you do now?

If nothing is working and you start to feel overwhelmed, IT IS OK to gently place your baby on his or her back in the crib. Close the door and turn up the TV or radio. Take several deep breaths and try to remain calm. Check on your baby every 10 to 15 minutes.

If you can't cope, call a trusted friend or relative for help.



Never, ever shake your baby!

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Resources for Parents....

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
2955 Harrison Blvd #102
Ogden, UT 84403
www.dontshake.org

Kids Health
<http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/brain/shaken.html>

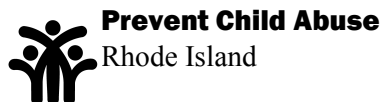
The Epilepsy Association of Central Florida
www.aboutshakenbaby.com

The Shaken Baby Alliance
4516 Boat Club Road, Suite 114
Fort Worth, Texas 76135
1-877-636-3727
www.shakenbaby.com

Butler Hospital
www.butler.org/body.cfm?id=125&chunkid=113330

Rhode Island Hospital
www.rhodeislandhospital.org/adam/healthillustratedencyclopedia/1/000004.html

ABOUT PARENTING RULES! E-NEWS...



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Please share this information with the families in your programs. Thank you!