

What is Shaken Baby Syndrome?

Shaken Baby Syndrome 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 shakes the baby forcefully.

Even mild shaking can cause serious injuries such as brain damage, blindness and paralysis. Shaking a baby can cause death.

Studies show that babies are shaken when a caregiver becomes frustrated by the baby's **crying.**

All babies cry. Most infants spend two to three hours each day crying. Some infants exceed that amount of time!

Sometimes, your baby may seem to cry irrationally.

Sometimes your baby will not respond to your attempts to comfort him or her.

Don't panic.

Here's How to Cope with Your Crying Baby

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.

Preventing the Tragedy of Shaken Baby Syndrome

If nothing is working and you start to feel overwhelmed, IT IS OK to place your baby on his or her back in the crib.

Close the door and turn up the TV or radio. Check on your baby every 10 to 15 minutes.

Do whatever it takes to calm yourself down.

- Sit down and close your eyes.
- Take several deep breaths.
- Ask a friend or relative to "take over" for a while.

Caring for your baby isn't about stopping the crying.

Caring for your baby is about COPING with the crying.

YOU CAN COPE!

Babies need attention most of the time.

Taking care of a baby is a BIG job.

It is all right to feel overwhelmed and frustrated with a crying baby.

It is NOT all right to shake a child to stop the crying.

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Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to keep every child in Rhode Island safe from abuse and neglect through a primary prevention approach of education, advocacy and public awareness activities.



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