



Never Shake Your Baby



Research shows crying as the number one trigger leading caregivers to violently shake and injure babies.



My Baby's Crying Plan



People I trust and can call for help when my baby cries.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Doctor: _____

Phone: _____



Remember: Don't leave your baby with a boyfriend or girlfriend if caretaking will be too much for them. Because you can care for your baby doesn't mean someone you're dating can do the same.

It is estimated that each year about 1,200 to 1,400 babies die or suffer injury from abusive head trauma.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Family Services


Prevent Child Abuse Virginia
1-800-CHILDREN

Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline
1-800-552-7096

Shaken Baby Syndrome of Virginia, Inc.
1-757-722-6011

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
www.dontshake.org



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Facts about Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) also known as Abusive Head Trauma (AHT)

Frustration with a crying baby is the primary trigger for shaking and abusing infants. Other events include toilet training difficulties, feeding problems and interrupting an activity the adult caregiver is trying to complete.

Shaking a baby in a moment of frustration can cause serious harm or death. When an infant is shaken, the head jerks back and forth rapidly causing the brain to slam repeatedly against the inside of the skull. This happens due to the difference in size between an adult and an infant and the degree of force of shaking and impact. The resulting damage can cause permanent disability or even death.

Because babies have weak neck muscles and heavy heads, even a few seconds of forceful shaking can cause serious damage to babies and small children. Impact to the head is believed to accompany most abusive head injuries. Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) describes abusive head injury caused by both shaking and blunt impact to the infant.



What Happens When a Baby Is Shaken?

You knew your baby would cry. But, did you know how frustrating that crying could be when you have tried everything to comfort your baby, and she just keeps crying? No one thinks they will shake their infant, but research shows crying as the number one trigger leading caregivers to violently shake and injure babies.

Jerking or violently shaking a baby causes more harm than dropping a baby head-first onto a hard surface from a height of several feet. The effect of the shaking can cause permanent brain damage, blindness or in up to 25% of cases, death.

Children of any age can die from being shaken. If you suspect the baby has been injured from being shaken, take the baby immediately to the doctor.

Because of infants' weak neck muscles and large head-to-body ratio, violent or sustained shaking can lead to:

- Cessation of breathing and heartbeat
- Extreme irritability
- Seizures
- Limp arms and legs
- Decreased level of consciousness and vomiting
- Learning and Physical disabilities
- Partial or total blindness
- Hearing impairments
- Speech disabilities
- Cognitive disabilities
- Cerebral palsy
- Behavior disorders
- Death



How To Soothe Baby - And You.

Parental frustration and fatigue may make you feel like you're about to lose your cool. Don't do it.

Common triggers for shaking a child include toilet training, perceived misbehavior and crying.

To soothe baby - and you - here are some things to try:

- Make sure your baby is not wet, hungry or running a fever.
- While sitting, hold your baby across your thighs and pat his/her back gently.
- Take the baby for a walk in a stroller.
- A wind-up swing might work; monitor carefully to make sure the baby doesn't slump over.
- People - and toddlers - learn at different paces. When potty training, remember that your child really does want to please you.
- Give it a rest and step away. Make sure the baby is safe and step away for a few minutes. Chill out, breathe, call a friend.
- Remember: It's more important to stay calm than to stop the crying.





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