

Crying Linked to Injury of Children

Infants and babies cry. Young toddlers have tantrums and unruly behavior. *The number one reason given for shaking or injuring a baby is feeling angry and frustrated when a baby cries.* Yet, crying is normal.

Babies and young toddlers do not cry or misbehave to punish their parents. It is their way to *talk* to adults. They are saying, “*I am hungry, tired, sick. Something is wrong.*” It is a signal for help.

Taking care of a fussy or crying child is especially hard. Parents and caretakers can become frustrated. It is possible to lose control in these moments. Sometimes parents and caretakers shake, throw or hit a child.

Research shows that head injuries are the leading cause of death and disability among abused children. Head injuries can be caused by trauma to a baby’s head. They can also result from **shaking** a baby — Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Forcefully shaking a baby can cause brain damage. When you shake your baby, the force on his brain is 5-10 times more than when he falls or trips. This force causes brain tissue to tear and bleed. Shaking a baby can lead to mental retardation, speech and learning problems, paralysis, seizures, hearing loss or death.

When your child cries, **take a break — don’t shake.**

All babies cry. People are more likely to shake a baby who is crying. When your baby cries and you feel frustrated, put your baby in a safe place — a crib, bed, or baby seat and:

- Call Parent Help Line,
- Call a friend or family member for help,
- Call your **baby’s doctor**. Your baby may be sick.



*Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John’s Children’s Hospital
to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.*



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889
10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

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