

Good Parenting

What to Do When Your Baby is Crying



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Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition
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Good Parenting

What to Do When Your Baby is Crying

Goals of the Presentation

- Share normal expectations for babies and new parents.
- Learn practical skills for calming a baby.
- Have a plan for when nothing calms the baby.
- Learn about Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Speaker Notes

What is Shaken Baby Syndrome? Scott Juceam is the father of Hannah, a 15-month old who is believed to have been killed by a baby sitter who shook her. For more information on Hannah's story, visit <http://www.dontshakeyourbaby.com/mediafiles/SacBee-Hannah.pdf>.

Mr. Juceam believes everybody should know what shaken baby syndrome is. "We never told this woman this concept: 'Don't shake your baby.' In our case, we assumed too much."

- We will **learn the normal expectations** we must have for our babies and ourselves in our role as parent or caregiver.
 - We will **learn new skills and practical tips** that will help us with calming a baby.
- We should tell other people about ways to calm babies—especially our babysitters, boyfriends or girlfriends, or other persons who might be watching our babies in the privacy and seclusion of our (or their) homes.
- We will learn about the **importance of having a plan** for when nothing seems to calm the baby.
 - Finally, we will briefly **discuss what Shaken Baby Syndrome is**.

Parenting Changes Everything

- Ideas about Self
- Relationships
- Lifestyle
- New Role



Speaker Notes

Parenting changes everything—things ALL change and not always as expected.

To Audience: Many of you are Moms or Dads.

How has parenting changed everything for YOU?

What changed that you did not expect?

EXPECT That Babies Cry

Crying:

- May worsen into the second month then **get better**
- Is more common in the afternoon and evening
- May come and go without reason
- May last hours
 - Pained look on baby's face
 - Hard to calm

From Period of Purple Crying summarized by Columbus Regional Hospital
<http://www.crh.org/body.cfm?id=154>

Speaker Notes

The crying that cannot be calmed is called “**inconsolable crying**” by the experts. It is no longer called colic. All babies cry. Many babies are sometimes difficult to console. Inconsolable crying isn't abnormal. It may occur from the time the baby is brought home from the hospital. It may worsen and peak in the second month then decrease. It occurs more during the time of day when the parents may be very tired—in the afternoon or evening. It may come and go without reason. It can last for hours.

Crying is a normal expectation of babies. But remember—it does get better after the third month.

Crying is one way babies communicate with us!



Speaker Notes

Crying is one way that babies communicate with us!

Sometimes, babies cannot be calmed no matter what is tried. Parents or caregivers can become frustrated and angry when this happens and may feel frustrated, angry, inadequate or “bad.” It is important that we learn that normal babies may have periods of crying that cannot be soothed.

What to Do to When Your Baby is Crying

- **Have a checklist for when baby cries.**
- **Know what to expect as your baby grows and ways to calm her.**
- **Plan for when nothing calms the baby.**



Speaker Notes

Three simple steps to help you calm your baby are listed here:

- Having a checklist to deal with crying.
- Knowing what to expect of the baby and what techniques will work at the different stages of your baby's growth and development.
- **PLAN** ahead for the times when nothing calms the baby.

Checklist

- Calm yourself first.
 - Take a deep breath (or two).
 - Count to ten.
- Check for baby's discomfort:
 - Hunger?
 - Diaper wet or soiled?
 - Too hot or too cold?
 - Is clothing too tight or uncomfortable?
 - Others?



Speaker Notes

The first step is to calm yourself first—you must try to be calm before calming your baby. If you show you are angry or frustrated, the baby can sense that and it may only make things worse. Count to ten, take a deep breath, close your eyes for a moment.

Then, check for the baby's discomfort—

Is the baby hungry? Is the diaper wet or soiled? Is the baby too hot or cold?
Is the clothing too tight or uncomfortable?

Checklist

Check if your baby is sick:

- Fever?
- Diaper rash?
- Other problems?



Call your doctor if you have questions or are worried!

Learn what “normal” is like for your baby.

- *You are the expert when it comes to your baby!*

Speaker Notes

A crying baby might be a signal that the baby is feeling sick. Check for a fever or a diaper rash. Other problems might include coughing, trouble breathing, vomiting and diarrhea. Be sure to call your doctor if you are worried and if you feel that your baby is not acting “normal.” Remember that you are the expert when it comes to your baby!

**Know what to expect and how to calm
your baby as she grows.**



Babies Change...



*... and Parents
Must Change, Too.*

Intro to knowing what to expect

What to EXPECT In the First Six Weeks

- Baby's head flops when unsupported.
- Baby hears but cannot understand.
- Baby rarely smiles.
- Baby does not see well.



Speaker Notes

The stage of development affects a baby's susceptibility to injury from shaking.

- For example, before the baby is one month old the **head flops backward** when not supported making the baby more susceptible to whiplash injury from shaking.
- The baby **smiles very little** prior to six weeks which may affect bonding of the baby with the parent and may frustrate the parent.
- The baby **does not see very well** his first month. His vision is good for only about one foot away. He cannot track with his eyes, see very far, understand visual cues or recognize visually his parents from a very far distance. This may disappoint the parent.
- The baby **hears but does not understand**.

What to EXPECT In the First Four Months

- Baby likes to be held close.
- Baby may not yet prefer parents to others, especially very early.
- Baby feels secure when snug.
- Baby startles self.

The “startle” reflex



Speaker Notes

•The baby **likes closeness to anybody** at this early stage with usually no discernment between mother, father and other warm and cuddly adults. This may disappoint the parent.

•He **feels secure when he is snug and insecure when not**. If a parent does not know how to swaddle and snugly wrap the baby, this may frustrate the parent.

•He sometimes **startles himself when he moves his arms**. He is unaccustomed to the freedom of moving now that he is out of the womb and he will actually upset himself! A parent may feel they are doing something wrong or are not a good parent when the baby startles self and starts to cry! He also startles with light, noise and sudden motion. It is a reflex.

•He has an **involuntary startle reflex** until about three months, so he will easily startle to sudden light, sound, movement and other triggers. He needs cuddling, cooing, snuggling and comforting.

Calming Babies Under Four Months

- **Swaddle, hold and cuddle**
- **Soothe**
 - **Allow sucking**
 - Thumb
 - Pacifier
 - Breast
 - **Positioning**
 - Side or stomach for calming
 - Put on back for sleeping
 - **Noise**
 - Soothing Sounds: cooing, shushing, humming, singing
 - White Noise: fan, radio static
- **Swaying or jiggling motion**

Speaker Notes

•**Swaddling** helps calm the baby. It brings the arms close to the body and decreases the startle reflex from moving arms. It makes the baby feel similar to how he felt in the womb—he likes close confinement.

•**Allow sucking** so the baby self-soothes. Dentist and pediatrician experts agree there is no harm in allowing sucking. Sucking the thumb is fine. The pacifier is helpful. If the baby is breast fed, you should wait about a month to introduce the pacifier to ensure that breastfeeding is firmly established. It is also fine to allow the baby to suck on the breast even if it is not feeding time. The act of sucking for a baby calms the baby!

•**Positioning on the side or stomach** temporarily to soothe the crying baby is known to calm a crying baby. Sometimes fathers like the “football hold.” **[DEMONSTRATE: Rest baby's head in the crook of your elbow; drape baby's stomach along your forearm and grasp the diaper area firmly. Your forearm will press against baby's tense abdomen. When baby's tense limbs dangle instead of stretch out, baby is beginning to relax. For variety, try reversing this position, with baby's cheek in the palm of your hand and her diaper area in the crook of your elbow.]** We will show a video in one of our next slides where you will see a baby immediately calmed when placed in the side positioning. **Remember, the back is for sleeping! The side and stomach positioning is for when you are holding the baby and calming the baby.**

•**Noise** works well to soothe a baby. Soft sounds are peaceful. But loud continuous sounds such as a loud continuous shush or the sound of a fan or radio static calms the baby. It is thought that the loud “white noise” as we call that noise made by a fan mimics the sound the baby heard in the womb when he was so close to the rushing loud blood flow in the mother's abdomen.

•**Swaying or a jiggling motion** mimics the movement the baby felt when inside the mother's womb as she walked and moved about. It is very comforting for babies.

Swaddle the Baby

- A snug swaddle will help with the startle reflex.
- Use swaddling only for soothing.
- Un-swaddle your baby to avoid overheating AND to get skin-to-skin contact for bonding.



Speaker Notes

Here is a swaddled baby—all snug and quiet. Make sure you remember to un-swaddle the baby to avoid overheating. You also want to get plenty of skin to skin contact with your baby for bonding, so do not always keep him swaddled.

How to Swaddle a Baby:



Lay out the receiving blanket in a diamond shape.



Bring the top of the blanket into the center.



Place the baby's shoulders so they line up with the edge of the blanket.



Take the left side of the blanket, bring it over the baby's chest and stick the right arm inside. Tuck it under the baby.



Take the bottom of the blanket and again, tuck it under the baby.



Bring the right side and arm across the chest and tuck under the baby.

Speaker Notes

[Demonstrate Swaddling Here with Simple Square Receiving Blanket and Doll]

Hands-on Participation may be helpful if the group is small.

Allow Babies to Self-Soothe by Sucking



- Introduce pacifier after one month in breastfeeding baby to avoid nipple confusion.
- Sucking habits up to age five cause no harm.

Source: The Changing Concept of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: Diagnostic Coding Shifts, Controversies Regarding the Sleeping Environment, and New Variables to Consider in Reducing Risk PEDIATRICS Vol. 116 No. 5 November 2005

Speaker Notes

Sucking is an important way that most babies use to calm themselves. This is what doctors like to call “non-nutritive sucking” because it doesn’t provide nutrition, but it’s a way that they use to feel comforted. Some babies even suck on their fingers before they are born!

Pediatric experts recommend no sucking on a pacifier the first month of life in a breast feeding baby to ensure that breastfeeding is firmly established .

Dental experts say sucking behavior is normal in babies and young children. Sucking habits in children up to age five are unlikely to cause any long-term problems

Policy statements in case you are asked:

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry policy statement on oral habits:
“Non-nutritive sucking behaviors (ie, finger or pacifier) are considered normal in infants and young children ... and in general, sucking habits in children to the age of five are unlikely to cause any long-term problems.”

What to EXPECT At Four to Seven Months

- Baby recognizes people at a distance and knows important people in his life.
- Baby begins to communicate by babbling, different types of crying and other ways.
- Baby responds well to mimicking games.



Speaker Notes

The Baby has changed a whole lot since being a newborn!!

Baby now has a preference for people and probably likes mom best. Baby visually recognizes mom from a distance. His whole life revolves around her. This is a time to **beware of jealousy**. The baby is responding to whom he is bonded. He will start to be “scared” or **afraid to be handed to strangers**.

The baby also begins to babble. He is usually most comfortable babbling and communicating with mom. He may not “perform” for others.

The baby loves to mimic. He loves to play mimicking games and again is usually most comfortable doing so with mom to whom he is most bonded.

What to EXPECT At About Seven Months

- Baby begins to respond to his name and to a firm “no.”
- Baby begins to distinguish tones of voice.
- Responds to other people’s expressions of emotion.



Speaker Notes

Only now can baby begin to understand the command “NO!!” AND it is a good thing, because now he is beginning to sit and will soon crawl; he grasps and explores and gets into mischief!

Babies distinguish tone of voice. Sometimes only a change in mother’s voice will “discipline” the baby. The baby needs to learn safe boundaries. Mother learns to be firm and consistent with her tone of voice and “no.”

It is important to create a safe environment for baby to allow him to explore and reduce the need for discipline or punishment. Parents should get down on their hands and knees to see whether there are any unsafe objects within the baby’s reach.

What to EXPECT At About One Year

- Baby can follow simple commands.
- Baby says “dada” and “mama.”
- Babies are often shy and anxious with strangers.
- Babies often cry when mother or father leaves.
- Babies are fearful in some situations.



Speaker Notes

Babies can follow simple commands. But sometimes they don't. The baby tests rules and that is normal behavior. Get used to it because it lasts all the way through the teen years.

They really want to know what they can do. They need you, the parent EXPERT, to be firm and be consistent without anger.

Others now have more difficulty with baby when mother and father leave. They are not the easy baby of a few months ago. They do not understand themselves. But we know they cry because they now miss the comfort of mom and dad and they naturally are shy and anxious with strangers.

Calming Babies Four to Twelve Months

- Swaddling may not work anymore!
- Cuddling and holding are still important.
- You can continue to try:
 - **Sucking** on a pacifier, thumb or breast.
 - **Noise**: singing, music, humming, white noise.
 - **Motion**: swaying, dancing, and rocking.
- Try distraction.
 - Offer the baby a different toy or activity.
 - Take a walk.
- Lower the noise and lights in the room.

Speaker Notes

At four to twelve months, cuddling may not work anymore as the baby likes to now explore with his arms and hands. Cuddling and holding continue to be very important. Some techniques that can still be used include sucking, noise and motion. Older babies and situations are more individualized. Try different things to learn what helps your baby.

Have a PLAN When Nothing Calms the Baby

- **PLAN to have somebody to call.**
- **PLAN to ask somebody to watch the baby.**
- **PLAN to take a break!**
 - Put baby down safely and walk away for a short time.
- **Call for help:**
 - Parents Anonymous/Family Tree hotline
 - 1-800-243-7337
- **Call the baby's health care provider.**

Speaker Notes

Make arrangements ahead of time to call a friend, neighbor, a relative-- or for mom and dad to relieve each other by having planned times to be primary caregiver. If you can, schedule time away from the baby. Of course, the person who watches the baby needs to be a responsible individual and needs to know to never shake a baby. If the baby is crying and cannot be comforted and there is nobody to help, put the baby down safely and walk away for a short time. It is not your fault when baby cries and cannot be soothed. Take care of yourself so you can take care of your baby.

For emergency help 24 hours daily, know these resources:

Parents Anonymous/Family Tree Hotline

The baby's health care provider

Summary

What to Do When Your Baby is Crying

- Know about normal and realistic expectations.
- Have a **checklist** ready to help calm the baby.
- Know simple **ways to calm your baby**.
 - Swaddle, cuddle.
 - Sucking.
 - Soothing sounds.
 - Positioning on side or stomach to calm.
 - Swaying, dancing.
- **PLAN** for when nothing calms the baby.
- Know what Shaken Baby Syndrome is.

NEVER, NEVER SHAKE A BABY!!

Speaker Notes

Summary slide. Allow for questions or comments.

What is Shaken Baby Syndrome?

- An injury caused by shaking a baby or small child usually under two years
- Injuries include:
 - Brain injury (bleeding, bruising)
 - Bleeding in back of the eye
 - Bone fractures

For More Information...

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
www.dontshake.com/

Speaker Notes

Shaken Baby Syndrome is an injury caused by violently shaking a baby or small child usually under two years of age but sometimes occurs at ages 3, 4 and 5 years.

It is a combination of injuries that includes:

- Brain injury**
- Bleeding in the back of the eye**
- And may or may not include BONE fractures (of long bones, ribs, skull)**

Shaking Hurts Babies

- Whiplash forces
- Adult is bigger and stronger than baby
- Babies have:
 - Large heavy heads
 - Weak necks
 - Immature brain and blood vessels

Speaker Notes

Shaking and the whiplash force exerted is particularly dangerous to babies and young children because

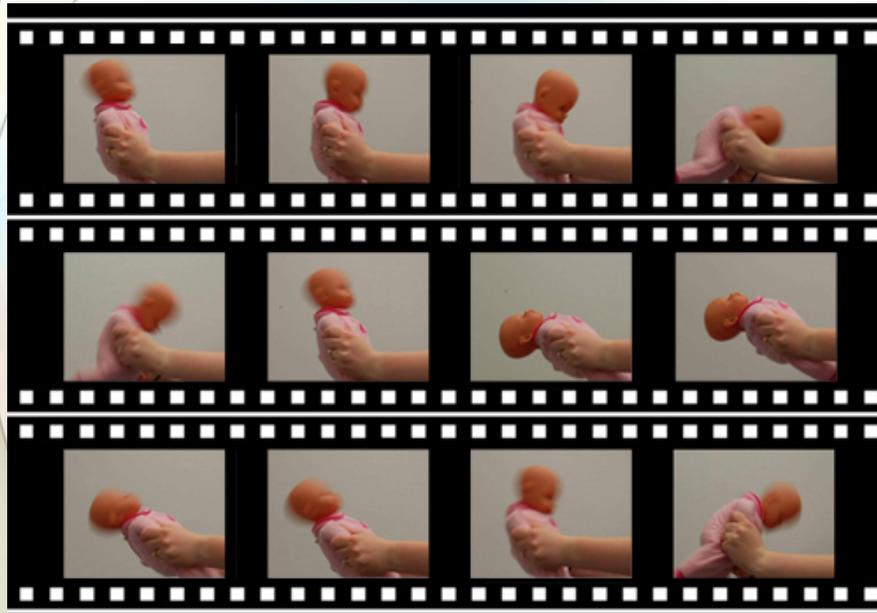
•The **adult who causes the injury is much bigger and stronger** than the baby. An injury can be extreme to the baby even when the shake did not seem strong to the adult.

•Babies have **large heavy heads** relative to the rest of their bodies.

•Babies have **weak neck muscles**.

•Babies' **brain and blood vessels are still developing**.

Whiplash Forces



Speaker Notes

The **whiplash force causes the heavy head to snap forward and backwards**, potentially causing **bleeding and bruising of the brain as well as bleeding inside the eyes**. Notice also that holding the baby by the arms or the body can result in broken arms or ribs.

Why is shaking a baby dangerous?

It can cause:

- Death
- Coma
- Brain injury
- Paralysis
- Blindness
- Seizures
- Cerebral palsy
- Delayed development
- Behavior problems
- Learning disabilities

Speaker Notes

- The **severity of the injury is very variable.**
- It ranges from learning disabilities or behavior problems to death.
- Physicians and others are more likely to miss the diagnosis when babies have more minor symptoms.

What Else Can You Do?

- Talk to everyone who takes care of your baby about how to calm your baby.
- Reach out to new parents.
 - *If no group exists, consider starting your own!*
- Recognize depression and substance abuse problems.
- ASK FOR HELP.
- Call your doctor.

NEVER, NEVER SHAKE A BABY!!

Speaker Notes

Continued Summary Slide—Keep open for comments and questions.

Additional Resources

- **Anne Arundel County Department of Health**
www.aahealth.org/healthybabies.asp
- **National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome**
www.dontshake.com
- **The Shaken Baby Alliance**
www.shakenbaby.com
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**
www.hhs.gov
- **American Academy of Pediatrics**
www.aap.org
- **Prevent Child Abuse America**
www.preventchildabuse.org
- **Healthy Families America**
www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org

Thank You!

Babies are Fragile. **Never Shake a Baby.**



WARNING: Shaking a baby may result in severe injury or death.

From: National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome