

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 the child. Injury or death can result.

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. This is Shaken Baby Syndrome. Forcefully shaking a baby can cause brain damage. This 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.**

Shaking a baby is harmful and can be deadly. It causes brain damage. When you shake your baby, the force on his brain is 5-10 times more than when he trips and falls. This force causes brain tissue to tear and bleed.

People are more likely to shake a baby who is crying.

All babies cry. 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 and St. John's Children's Hospital



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

