

Please Don't Shake Them, You Might Break Them

Knowing what to do to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome (also known as Abusive Head Trauma) is important. It may be hard to believe, but shaking a baby can forever change or even end a child's life. Here are a few tips to help you prevent the abuse caused by shaking a baby:

- Never shake a baby or young child.
- Know which actions may harm a baby or cause Shaken Baby Syndrome, including: spinning a baby, bouncing a baby, or failing to support a baby's head when holding or playing with him or her. Remember, babies are fragile. They need to be treated with care.
- Make sure that anyone who is caring for your baby knows how to hold and handle the child. Tell them to "never shake the baby" and explain that babies are fragile.
- Know what to do if a baby in your care won't stop crying.

Calming a Crying Baby

When a baby in your care won't stop crying, try these tips:

- Make sure the baby is not ill. Check for fever, swollen gums, or any other indications of illness or injury. If these signs are present, call the baby's physician or seek immediate medical attention. Give the baby proper care based on the doctor's recommendations.
- Check to see if the baby needs to be fed, changed, or made comfortable.
- Gently rock or walk with the baby.
- Take the baby for a ride in a stroller or in a car seat in the car.
- Put the baby in a wind-up swing.
- Put the baby in a snugly, soft sleepsack that will keep the baby warm but will not bunch around the face like a regular blanket.
- Check to make sure that the baby's clothing is not too tight or that the fingers or toes are not bent.
- Sometimes increasing sound in the baby's room is calming. Try turning up the music on the stereo or adding other consistent rhythmic noise, such as a ceiling fan.
- Talk or sing quietly to the baby.
- Offer the baby a safe, noisy toy. Shake or rattle the toy.
- Lay the baby tummy down on your lap and gently rub or pat the baby's back to help relax him or her. Remember to always support the baby's head and neck.
- Show a child love and concern by gently holding and cuddling him or her.
- Call a friend or a relative you trust to take over, while you take a break.
- If nothing else works, put the baby in his or her bed, close the door to the room, and turn on a television or the radio. Check on the baby frequently. The baby may just go to sleep. Remember that infants should always be placed on their backs to sleep. Placing an infant on his or her back may help prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).



Taking care of a baby can sometimes be as overwhelming as it is joyful. Caring for a baby is a big responsibility. When a baby cries inconsolably, it can leave you frustrated, angry, and overwhelmed. But shaking a baby to quiet him or her is dangerous. You should never shake a baby. Each year, many young children suffer serious injuries or die due to violent shaking. It can happen so quickly. A baby cries, and the caregiver becomes frustrated and angry. In the blink of an eye, the child is shaken and the damage is done.

Shaking causes brain damage to babies because they have weak neck muscles that must support their relatively large heads and developing brains. A baby's brain is fragile. It has not fully developed and is more prone to injury than the brain of an adult.

Injuries from shaking can last for a lifetime. Even a few seconds of shaking can cause serious damage to infants and young children.

GET INVOLVED WITH A CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND PROGRAM IN YOUR AREA!



Children's Trust Fund
Protecting Michigan's Children

Never Shake a Baby Campaign and the Children's Trust Fund

The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) "Never Shake a Baby Campaign" is designed to make parents, families, caregivers and communities in Michigan aware of the dangers of shaking a baby.

Since it was created in 1982, the Children's Trust Fund has generated more than \$80 million for the prevention of child abuse and neglect throughout the state. Through the work of its direct service programs and local councils across Michigan, the Children's Trust Fund has provided critical services to more than 8 million children and families.

The Children's Trust Fund is working in your community thanks to the generous donations of people just like you. If you would like to help bring more prevention programs to your community, you can make a donation to the Children's Trust Fund in four ways:

- Buy a Children's Trust Fund License Plate.
- Give through the State Income Tax Check-off.
- Donate directly to the trust fund through its website or by mail.
- Contact your local prevention council for other ways to help your community.

For more information on CTF call:
(517) 373-4320 or 1-800-CHILDREN

Web site: www.michigan.gov/ctf

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