

What Is Shaken Baby Syndrome?

Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) is the name given to physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken. The shaking may only last a few seconds, but the effects can be deadly.

What triggers shaking?

Inconsolable crying is the number one reason given for shaking a baby. Usually, those who have little or no knowledge on how to safely care for a crying infant or young child are most at risk. The caregiver becomes frustrated, loses control, and violently shakes the child to get him to stop crying. They just want the baby to stop crying!

Why are babies vulnerable to shaking?

It is not unusual for babies to cry for two to three hours a day. Some cry for longer periods for no obvious reason. Babies communicate by crying. Babies also have very large heads, soft brains, and weak neck muscles. Their neck muscles can't support their heads, and when shaken, the head whips back and forth, causing the brain to bounce off the skull. This results in bruising, bleeding, and swelling.

What are the long term effects?

- Severe brain damage
- Learning disabilities
- Blindness
- Paralysis
- Hearing loss
- Speech problems
- Death

Tips For Quieting A Crying Baby

- Wrap the baby snugly in a warm, soft blanket and gently tap or rub the baby's back while the baby is lying on its side or tummy on your lap.
- Talk, sing, play music, turn on the vacuum or a static TV channel, or play with a noisy toy in front of the baby.
- Rock, dance or try a baby swing. Take the baby outside for some fresh air, a ride in the stroller or in the car in the car seat.
- Try feeding the baby, offer a bottle, breast, or try a pacifier.
- Give the baby a warm bath.
- Stay calm and speak softly to your baby.

How can I keep my child safe?

Remember no matter how angry, tired or frustrated you become **NEVER SHAKE YOUR BABY**. In a few seconds your life and child's life could change forever.

- Never leave your child with someone who may be stressed.
- Make sure your child's caregiver knows never to shake a baby.
- Know your own limitations.
- Seek help.
- Always play gently with your baby.
- Have a plan before you can no longer tolerate your child's crying.

ChildHelp Pee Dee 24 Hour Toll-Free Helpline

1-866-867-9857

Parenting is tough. Asking for help doesn't have to be.

Information brought to you by: Keeping Pee Dee kids Safe at Home, sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse Pee Dee, program of the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault.

Website: <http://www.peedeecoalition.org/safe>

