

Coping with Crying

WHEN YOUR BABY WON'T STOP CRYING, it can be very upsetting. Know that it is normal for your baby to cry. The average newborn cries two to three hours a day, and sometimes more. Sometimes it may seem like your baby never stops crying; and all parents find it hard to cope with crying. **It may seem like your baby cries more than others, but ALL babies cry a lot.**

You can try the following things to help soothe your baby:

- › Check your baby's basic needs: feed, burp or change your baby's diaper if needed
- › Make sure your baby's clothing is not too tight, too hot, too cold, etc.
- › Offer your baby a pacifier, but never force it
- › Gently rock your baby in a rocking chair or in your arms
- › Softly pat your baby on the back
- › Sing or talk softly to your baby
- › Play soft music
- › Take your baby for a walk in the stroller
- › Give your baby a warm bath

Strategies to handle your frustration when your baby is crying:

- › Call a trusted friend, relative or neighbor and ask them to come over to watch the baby and give you a break
- › Sit down, close your eyes and take deep breaths
- › Listen to music
- › Exercise
- › Make sure baby is safe in crib and go to another room

Dealing with a crying baby can be very stressful, but please **NEVER SHAKE YOUR BABY!** Shaking a baby can cause blindness, brain damage or even death. If you are feeling overwhelmed, it is important to reach out for support.



Soothe, Don't Shake Your Baby

Everyone who cares for your child should know about Shaken Baby Syndrome. Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) is one of the most common injuries causing death by physical abuse to infants in Florida. SBS occurs when a frustrated parent or other caregiver loses control and shakes a young child, causing permanent brain damage or death. Crying is the most common reason someone shakes a baby. The outcomes for survivors typically include cerebral palsy, blindness, deafness, seizures and learning/behavioral difficulties. Young males who care for a baby alone are most at risk to shake a baby. **Everyone who watches your baby needs to know they should never shake your baby.** The most important thing you can do to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome is to understand your baby and how to cope with him when he cries or is irritable.

The Florida Department of Health contributed to the content of this tip sheet. For more information, visit their website at www.floridahealth.gov.

HERE'S HELP

Use the **Family Resources on pages 72–78** to learn about a variety of family support services available in your community.