

## **Special Bulletin**

# **Coping with a crying baby and keeping your baby safe**

- ✓ **Share this with your colleagues and teams**
- ✓ **Share this with the families you work with who are pregnant or have babies**
- ✓ **Display these key messages on your notice boards where workers and parents can see**

Babies under one are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect and are seven times more likely to be killed than older children.

Infant crying is the most common reason why parents seek help when they have a small baby. In extreme cases crying can cause problems in parenting and even trigger abuse

In extreme cases, parents may become angry and harm their baby. Shaking a baby - or when a baby is thrown or handled roughly - can result in what's called non-accidental head injuries. This may result in brain damage, caused by shaking and/or impact onto a surface, and is a major cause of death and disability ( including learning disabilities, physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy, blindness, hearing impairment and seizures) for abused children.

Head injuries are the leading cause of death and long-term disability for babies who are harmed. Research shows that educating parents about the risks of head injury, and providing them with practical advice about keeping their baby safe, can reduce the risk of babies suffering from non-accidental head injuries.

### **A crying baby:**

It is normal for babies to cry up to 5 hours a day. This increased crying is a normal developmental stage that research has shown, amongst other things, is most likely to occur in the late afternoon and evenings, very likely around the same time a father/parent might be returning home from work.

Looking after a crying baby is hard but for some families it can be very serious. The effects of feeling that a baby is constantly crying has been linked to:

- stress
- depression
- relationship problems.

To find out about the NSPCC Coping with Crying DVD resource for professionals click [here](#)

### **Advice for parents - What to do:**

If you can't find what's making your baby cry, see if there's anything else you can do to calm them down, like:

- sing a song
- give them a baby massage
- go for a walk to change the surroundings.

It is important to try to stay calm, which sounds easier than it is, but your baby will soothe quicker if you are calm.

Talk to other parents about how they calm down a crying baby, or visit an online forum like [Netmums](#). Other mums and dads probably all have their own ways of soothing their babies, and their suggestions might work for yours too.

If you feel like the crying is getting too much and you might harm your child, place them in their cot safely and leave them for a few minutes. Contact your Health visitor or GP for advice. Click [here](#) for information on how to cope with a crying baby.

Kind Regards,

Lucy Short



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