

I Never
Meant
To Hurt
Him . . .
I Only
Wanted
Him
To Stop
Crying.

“
I only
wanted to
stop my
baby
from
crying,
that's all.

I never
meant to
hurt
him.

I only
shook him
for a few
seconds . . .”

Never
Shake A
Baby.

Ever.

Never
Shake
A Baby.



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Ever.

The Dangers of Shaken Baby Syndrome

There is no one type of person who will shake a baby. Everyone from young babysitters to grandparents have done it.

Usually it's done to make a baby or young child stop crying. But it often only makes the situation worse, causing more vigorous shaking.

Until brain damage or death occurs.

You probably aren't aware of the dangers of shaking a baby. Most people aren't – in fact, it's estimated that between 25 and 50 percent of parents and caregivers aren't aware of the serious dangers of shaking a baby. But here's something you should learn now – never, ever shake a baby. It can cause blindness. Permanent brain damage. Or death.

It's called Shaken Baby Syndrome. And it can be deadly.

Here's What Can Happen

Infants and young children up to age five are susceptible to head trauma because their neck muscles are weak and can't always support the size of their heads. Sudden shaking motion causes the baby's fragile brain to slam against the skull wall – causing damage or death. It's so deadly, in fact, that almost 25 percent of its victims die.

Damage to a child's brain from shaking can affect many different parts of the child's body. And these effects can be devastating. They include:

- *Death*
- *Cerebral Palsy*
- *Severe motor dysfunction*
- *Communication impairment*
- *Dyslexia*
- *Attention deficit disorder*
- *Mental retardation and*
- *Other learning disabilities*

You Can Prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome

There are many things you can do to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome:

- *Leave the baby in a safe, secure place, take deep breaths and count to 10*
- *Go to another room or area of the house*
- *Ask someone else to watch the baby for you – a parent, a neighbor or a friend*
- *Gently rock or give the baby a bottle or pacifier*
- *Take the baby out of the house for a ride in a stroller or a car*
- *Be patient. If you find you can't calmly care for the baby, or have trouble controlling your anger, take a break. Let the baby cry it out*

Remember, no matter how angry or impatient you feel – never shake a baby. Ever.

Helpful Resources

There are many organizations available to help you. Hire a caregiver to give you a break. Or contact one of the resources below for additional help and information.

For Immediate help Call:
Childhelp IOF Foresters Hotline
1-800-4A-CHILD

Hold Them
Hug Them
Love Them.

Never
Shake A
Baby.
Ever.