



*No matter how
frustrated or angry
you become, do not
shake the baby.*

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Child Abuse Prevention Fund
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Calming a crying baby

Comforting a crying baby

Crying is a normal part of an infant's everyday life. It is not meant to be annoying and does not signify poor caregiving. It is simply a form of communication for babies who can't speak.

Although temperaments vary, the reason babies cry are usually the same. They may cry if they are hungry, sick, wet, hot, cold or in pain. Boredom, loneliness and fatigue also may cause babies to cry.

As you get to know a baby, you will begin to interpret different cries and be able to respond appropriately and immediately. Learning what your baby is trying to communicate through crying will pay off later. When babies needs are met sensitively during the first few month of life, they are more likely to cry

less in the future. Meeting those needs develops a sense of attachment and security for the infant.

Prompt attending to your baby's needs is not going to spoil your child. In fact, by providing immediate attention, you will be supporting your child's development and creating a world that is safe and predictable.

Very few caregivers know exactly what to do at all times with a crying baby. Learning to communicate with babies not only helps meet their needs, but also paves the way for strong and healthy relationships.

What parents can do

When a baby is crying:

- Check to see if the baby's diaper is wet.
- Offer the baby a bottle or pacifier.
- Check to see the baby too hot or cold.

Soothe the baby

- Place the baby against your shoulder and pat or rub the baby's back.
- Lie with the baby tummy-down on you so the baby can hear your heartbeat.
- Give the baby a warm bath.

Cuddle the baby

- Walk with the baby snuggled against you.
- Slowly dance together.
- Comfort the baby with a breast feeding.

Amuse the baby

- Go for a stroll or visit a friend.
- Use mobiles or toys to change the mood.
- Hold the baby up to a mirror.

Calm the baby

- Read or talk to the baby in a quiet voice.
- Take a drive with the baby in his or her car seat.
- Sing or hum softly.
- Change the scenery. Go to a quiet, darkened room.

Be patient

If you are getting frustrated and can't take it anymore, put the baby in a safe place, such as a crib, go to another room and breathe. Calm yourself. Call for help. You are not the only parent who feels this way. No matter how frustrated or angry you become, do not shake the baby. Shaking can cause irreversible brain damage and even death. Letting your baby cry when you've had enough is safer than shaking.