

# Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abusive Head Trauma & Child Maltreatment

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## Policy & Procedure – Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abuse Head Trauma & Child Maltreatment

Last Reviewed on April 3, 2026

Last Updated on July 14, 2023

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*From Employee Handbook, pg. 29*

### Policy

Prohibited Practices (Child Abuse)—No child will be humiliated, shamed, or frightened, or subjected to verbal or physical abuse by Jolly Toddlers staff members, by parents on Jolly Toddlers premises, or during any Jolly Toddlers field trips.

Suspected Child Abuse—Child abuse is a serious physical or mental injury which is explained by medical history as being non-accidental sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; or serious physical neglect of a child if the injury, abuse, or neglect of a child has been caused by the acts or omissions of the child's parent, by a person responsible for the child's welfare, by an individual residing in the same home as the child, or by a paramour of a child's parent.

As outlined by the Department of Public Welfare:

- Jolly Toddlers and any staff person whom has any reason to believe that a child enrolled in the facility is in any danger of being abused, has been abused, or neglected is required to report suspected child abuse to Child Line in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law. We are mandated reporters as outlined by this law.
- A staff member may be designated by the operator as the person responsible to notify Child Line of suspected child abuse. The operator or designated staff person with this responsibility shall immediately notify Child Line at 1-(800)-932-0313.

Within 48 hours, a written report regarding the suspected child abuse shall be submitted by the director or designated staff person to the Child Protective Services Unit, which has the responsibility of the report.

- Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma, and Child Maltreatment. These topics are mandated for all employees in their pre-service professional development through Better Kid Care training, but please pay special attention and understand the signs associated with each so you can confidently protect children from all forms of abuse. We will review this annually. See JT Handout.

Shaking a baby or young child can cause their brain to repeatedly hit the inside of the skull. This impact can trigger bruising in the brain, bleeding in the brain, and brain swelling. Other injuries may include broken bones as well as damage to the baby's eyes, spine, and neck.

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Signs and symptoms include, but are not limited to: extreme irritability, vomiting, poor appetite, breathing difficulties, convulsions, lethargy (lack of movement, extreme tiredness, inability to stay awake) pale or blue colored skin.

Coping Strategies for crying, fussing, distraught children: Understand it's normal. Crying increases 2-3 weeks of age, peaks around 6-8 weeks, and tapers off and usually ends by age 4 months. Tips: Wrap up in snuggly blanket, sing softly, bouncing or dance gently, and most of all, don't take it personally. Check to see if baby is sick, hungry, wet, etc. Plan ahead for times when you know baby will be fussy.

Steps for Addressing the Prevention and Identification of Child Maltreatment: Teach Families Strategies and Realistic Expectations through Parent workshops and social media outlets, handouts, etc.. Practice PURPLE Education: PPeak Patterns: Crying peaks around 2 months, Unpredictable: crying for long periods can come and go, Resistant to Soothing: May just keep crying for long periods, Pain-like look on Face, Long bouts of Crying, Evening Cry: babies cry more in afternoon and evening.

## Responsibility & Accountability

Teachers will be familiar with the specifics of Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma and Child Maltreatment. They will understand the signs and symptoms, they will be trained with coping strategies, and have knowledge of which steps to take when addressing prevention and identification:

## Procedure

1. Teacher is trained as new hire.
2. Teacher will have annual recertification training on this topic.
3. Teacher will report any child abuse concerns to ChildLine within 48 hours of suspected abuse.
4. Ages and Stages Screening will be conducted within 45 days of enrollment, meeting will be scheduled, and screening discussed, along with any referrals.

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## All babies cry.

It is normal and natural. Healthy babies start crying the day they are born. Crying increases when babies are 2 weeks old, and gets worse at 2 months old. Babies cry more in the afternoon or evening. Babies can cry 2 to 3 hours a day, for an hour at a time! It is normal.

Crying is the only way your baby can communicate. Your baby cries to tell you he:

- Is hungry.
- Needs to be burped.
- Needs a diaper change.
- Is too hot or too cold.
- Is lonely or scared.
- Is in pain or uncomfortable.
- Is over-tired or over-stimulated.

**Sometimes, parents and caregivers can't figure out why a baby is crying.**

## Toddlers cry, too.

Toddlers cry for the same reasons babies cry. Plus, toddlers cry when they try to learn new things. Toddlers and their crying can be especially frustrating at times such as:

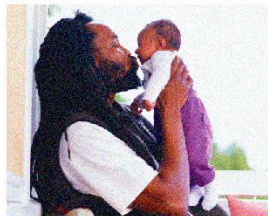
- Potty training.
- Feeding time.
- Naptime and bedtime.
- When teething.

## Tips for soothing crying babies.

Because all babies cry, try not to let the crying frustrate you. Check for the common reasons for crying, then try some of the following:

- Hold the baby close and walk or gently rock. Wrap the baby snugly in a soft blanket.
- Find a calm, quiet place. Turn out the lights; turn off loud music and the TV.
- Offer a pacifier.
- Take the baby for a ride in a stroller or car. Always use a car seat.
- Play soft music; hum or sing to the baby.
- Run the vacuum, dryer, dishwasher or fan to make background noise.
- Place the baby in a baby swing.
- Lay the baby across your lap and gently rub or tap the baby's back.
- If all else fails, place the baby on her back in a safe crib or playpen. Walk away and check back every 5 to 10 minutes.
- Call your baby's doctor or nurse if your baby seems sick.
- If you feel you are getting stressed out, call a trusted friend or relative for help.

**Sometimes, a crying baby just can't be soothed. It is OK to ask for help.**



**Most adults feel frustrated when babies and toddlers cry.**

## Never shake your baby!

**No matter how long your baby cries or how frustrated you feel, never shake or hit your baby.**

Shaking can cause brain damage that can lead to:

- Blindness
- Deafness
- Epilepsy (seizures)
- Cerebral palsy
- Mental retardation
- Learning problems
- Behavior problems
- Poor coordination
- Death

Shaken baby syndrome is a brain injury that happens when a frustrated person violently shakes a baby or toddler.

## Calm yourself, so you can calm your baby safely.

Caring for babies and toddlers is stressful, even when they are not crying. Know when you are becoming stressed out. Have a plan to calm yourself. **After putting your baby on his back in a safe crib or playpen:**

- Take several deep breaths and count to 100. Go outside for fresh air.
- Wash your face, or take a shower.
- Exercise. Do sit-ups, or climb the stairs a few times.
- Go in another room and turn on the TV or radio.
- Call a friend or relative.

**Check on your baby every 5 to 10 minutes.**

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The Letters in **PURPLE** Stand for

**P U R P L E**

**PEAK OF  
CRYING**

Your baby may cry more each week, the most in month 2, then less in months 3-5

**UNEXPECTED**

Crying can come and go and you don't know why

**RESISTS  
SOOTHING**

Your baby may not stop crying no matter what you try

**PAIN-LIKE  
FACE**

A crying baby may look like they are in pain, even when they are not

**LONG  
LASTING**

Crying can last as much as 5 hours a day, or more

**EVENING**

Your baby may cry more in the late afternoon and evening

The word *Period* means that the crying has a beginning and an end.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_