

Child Abuse Prevention Tips

Shaken Baby Syndrome

When a child less than one year old is shaken, it can damage the child's brain, causing blindness, brain damage, paralysis or even death. Older children can also be injured. No child of any age should ever be shaken. It is a form of child abuse. Help prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome by telling others about the dangers of shaking children.

Prevention Tip: Never lose control and shake your crying baby. If your baby is crying check to see if the baby is hungry or wet; Gently rock or walk with the baby; take the baby for a ride in the stroller or car; place the baby in a safe place, like a crib, and leave the room for a few minutes; call a friend, neighbor, or relative to help. Sing or take to the baby; gently rub the baby's back; offer a noisy toy; Think about how much you love your baby and how much he or she depends on you.

Dealing with Temper Tantrums

Two-and three-year olds have many skills, but controlling their tempers is not one of them. Tantrums are common at this age because toddlers are becoming independent and developing their own wants, needs, and ideas. However, they are not yet able to express their wants and feelings with words. Take comfort in the fact that most children outgrow tantrums by age 4. Normal toddlers: Love to say "no!" "mine!" and "do it myself!"

Prevention Tip: Direct your child's attention to something else. ("Wow, look at that fire engine!") Stick to a daily routine that balances fun activities with enough rest and healthy food. Praise your child when he or she shows self-control and expresses feelings with words. If you cannot prevent the tantrum, say what you expect from your child and have confidence that your child will behave. Remain calm. You are a role model for your child. Take your child to a quiet place where he or she can calm down safely. Speak softly or play soft music. Some children throw tantrums to seek attention. Try ignoring the tantrum, but pay attention to your child after he or she calms down. Resist overacting to tantrums and try to keep your sense of humor.

Teen Parents

Being a parent is a 24-hour-a-day job, and sometimes it can feel overwhelming. Many teen parents sometimes feel ... Confused and uncertain about their future or their skills as a parent. Overwhelmed – They don't know where to begin or they feel like giving up. Angry – at the baby's other parent, their friends or even their baby. Lonely – like they are the only person dealing with so many problems. Depressed – sad and unable to face their problems. These feelings do not mean you are a bad parent!

Prevention Tip: You can join a support group. Find ways to handle stress. Take a break while someone reliable cares for your baby. Improve your parenting skills. Don't be afraid to ask for advice from experienced parents.

Safe Sleep

- Placing babies in a safe sleep position is very important to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or "crib death." When a baby, usually between the ages of 1-12 months old dies suddenly without a clear cause, the death is often referred to as SIDS.
- More babies between 1-12 months of age die from SIDS than any other cause. SIDS has also been called "crib death" but cribs do not cause SIDS.

The Safest Way for Babies to Sleep to Reduce the Risk of SIDS

- Babies that are put to sleep and to nap on their backs are much less likely to die from SIDS.
- The safest place for babies to sleep or nap is in a crib or on a firm sleeping surface with a fitted sheet. The place where the baby sleeps or naps should not have toys, pillows or other soft items that could get near the baby's face.
- Everyone who takes care of babies like grandparents, friends, and baby-sitters, should know about safe sleep. Parents should share this information with anyone who will be taking care of their baby.
- Babies can get hot while they are sleeping, which can make them more at-risk for SIDS. It is safest to put babies to sleep with light clothing and the temperature of the room should feel comfortable to you.
- Babies do best when they are not exposed to tobacco smoke. Babies that are around people who are smoking are more at-risk for SIDS. It is safest to make sure babies are in a "smoke-free" zone at home, away from home, and in cars.