

Never Shake a Keiki (Child)

Why Not?

Shaking a baby or child can cause lifelong brain damage, blindness or death...

If the Keiki is Crying:

- Make sure the keiki is not hungry, too hot or cold and does not have a dirty diaper.
- Give the keiki a pacifier
- Stop, sit down and take a deep breath, count to 10 slowly
- Put the keiki in a safe place (such as a crib) and leave the room for a few minutes
- Take the keiki for a ride in a stroller or car
- Play calming music
- If you think the keiki may be sick, call your doctor.
- Call for help-call your family, friends, doctor, or 911
- Do not pick the keiki up until you feel calm

SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME

Why would someone shake a child?

Frustration and stress are the reasons some one shakes a child. A crying child is reported to be the number one reason why people have shaken a child.

What is it?

Shaken Baby Syndrome is the term used to describe the injuries babies and very young children sustain from being violently shaken. Children who sustain life threatening injuries from this syndrome are held by the arms and shaken back and forth in a quick, jerking motion.

Effects of Shaken Baby Syndrome

Children can suffer the following injuries:

- The collecting of blood between the brain and the skull. – Subdural Hematoma
- A tearing of the child's brain tissues. – Axonal Shearing
- The child's brain swells. – Cerebral Edema
- Bleeding along the back inside layer of the child's eye. – Retinal Hemorrhage
- The inner most layer of the eye detaches from the rest of the eyeball. – Retinal Detachment
- Bone fractures of the skull and ribs, due to the way the child was held during shaking.
- Other physical damages may occur.
- Mental Retardation
- Coma
- Death

Symptoms of Shaken Baby Syndrome

- Appears to be glassy eyed
- Convulsions
- Irritability
- Fixed pupils
- Seizures
- Sleepiness or inactivity
- Breathing problems
- Vomiting
- Choking
- Head is turned completely to one side
- Swelling of the head
- Pooling of blood in the eyes

How can I prevent shaken baby syndrome?

- If you find yourself becoming annoyed or angry with your baby, put your baby in the crib and leave the room. Take a time-out. Call someone for support. Give the keiki a pacifier. Take the keiki for a ride in a stroller or car. Play calming music.
- Do not hold your baby during an argument or fight. Do not pick the keiki up until you feel calm.
- Do not leave your baby with someone who is angry, drinking or using drugs, or who seems at all violent.
- If possible, use childcare providers who are licensed.
- Never throw or shake a baby.
- Call for help – call your family, friends, doctor, or 911.

For more information on Shaken Baby Syndrome or to find out how you can participate in the Never Shake a Keiki Task Force, call Prevent Child Abuse Hawaii at 951-0200 or contact us at

Prevent Child Abuse Hawaii
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