



# Pennsylvania Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention and Awareness Program

*“Saving babies’ lives one family at a time.”*

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Crying cards available to all hospitals and physician’s offices**
- **Serious injuries result from shaking episodes**
- **Message from SBS Nurse Coordinator**
- **Moms need to be advocates for their children**

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### The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians Unite to Distribute Crying Cards to Pennsylvania Hospitals

Robert Cicco, MD, FAAP, President of the PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Richard Neill, MD, FAAFP, President of the PA Academy of Family Physicians mailed a joint letter to all Pennsylvania birthing and children’s hospitals during the summer of 2005 noting that they have joined forces in focusing on the prevention of injuries and fatalities due to caretaker stress over a crying infant.

In an effort to give practical and effective advice for calming a crying infant, they developed a laminated crying card and distributed 23,000 of these cards, with the letter, to all birthing and children’s hospitals as well as physician’s offices across Pennsylvania. In addition, two documents on infant swaddling were included.

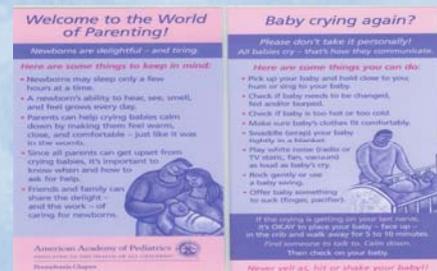
The laminated crying card gives new parents some helpful tips about the behaviors of newborns along with suggestions for handling a crying baby. It is a simple way to acknowledge a parent’s frustrations, prescribe a plan of action and encourage them to seek support for challenges they are facing. By helping parents soothe a crying baby, it is hoped there will be increased bonding and, consequently, fewer incidents of child abuse.

Since the original mailing, the PAAAP has had requests for more than 40,000 additional cards. Many PA hospitals are including these cards and the swaddling information in their discharge packets for all newborns. *The Pennsylvania Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness and Prevention Program* supports the use of the crying cards in the education of parents for the

prevention of shaken baby syndrome.

Teresa Olsen, Director of the Child Abuse Education Program with the PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and an author of the crying cards states, “The ‘Welcome to the World of Parenting’ cards, more commonly referred to as the ‘baby crying again’ cards, include simple tips for helping parents calm a crying baby. The incredible response to these little cards tells me that there is a real need for this information. My hope is that parents who successfully calm their baby will feel more confident, get more sleep, have increased bonding and that, subsequently, we will see fewer cases of child abuse.”

If your hospital needs additional cards they can be requested by calling **866-823-7226** or emailing [tolsen@paaap.org](mailto:tolsen@paaap.org). They are free of charge. Unlimited copies of the swaddling information can be made by the hospitals or health care providers.



**Crying cards are a valuable tool in the prevention of child abuse including shaken baby syndrome.**



*No baby deserves to suffer from being shaken.  
Educate parents on SBS to protect their baby  
from this tragedy.*

### *The Serious Consequences of Shaking a Baby*

When educating your patients remember that the consequences of a shaking episode can be devastating for an infant. The injuries sustained could include:

1. Brain Tissue Edema
2. Subdural Hematoma/Hemorrhage
3. Retinal Hemorrhages

These injuries could lead to:

1. Permanent brain damage
2. Blindness
3. Seizures
4. Paralysis
5. Ventilator dependence
6. A lifetime of special needs
7. Death

These injuries can be prevented through parent awareness and education.

## **A Message from the PA Shaken Baby Syndrome Nurse Coordinator**

Providing nursing care to children who are admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care and Intermediate Care Units can be very challenging due to the severity of the injury or illness. Such is the case of the shaken baby. These babies suffer significant brain injury resulting in life-long physical and/or cognitive abnormalities or even death. When the shaken infant presents for medical care, the history of the illness is often inaccurate, and significant delay in obtaining medical care has likely occurred. This causes delay in treatment and allows complications to occur which will worsen the brain injury and the prognosis for the infant.

I have been a PICU nurse for fifteen years. My colleagues in critical care nursing and I have shared the sadness of caring for many shaken babies. These injuries do not have to happen! They are totally preventable. We focus our attention on caring for the medical needs of the child and are ever vigilant for signs and symptoms of secondary brain injury. We also are providing emotional support to the child's family members. Many times we do not know who the perpetrator is so we have to be tender and giving to all who present themselves at the bedside. One of my colleagues, a PICU nurse for 25 years, has cared for many shaken baby victims and notes that, *"Caring for these babies is a test of professionalism. Feelings of anger or sadness can not hinder the care and compassion that I provide to the family or the provision of medical care that I give to my patient. I can only hope that the legal system will serve justice to the perpetrator. Nurses pay a price as we struggle between professionalism and coping with the emotions that this form of child abuse brings to the surface."*

I remember: the babies I cared for who were declared brain dead; Making a plaster hand print for the mother, letting her choose the blanket that the baby would be wrapped in to go to the morgue; Allowing her to hold her baby as the child was removed from mechanical ventilation and died in her arms; Sharing in many family's sadness that they were not permitted to allow organ donation due to the nature of the death and the need for autopsy; Wrapping my arms around family members who just could not bear to say good bye to their baby in death; The SBS survivors who are left blind and are mentally or physically disabled, who often return to the PICU/IMCU for continuing care and treatment; Assisting parents as they learn to care for a very dependant child who will grow into a very dependant adult.

We must remember that shaken baby syndrome is associated with a high incidence of mortality and neurologic morbidity. Reports estimate that shaken baby syndrome accounts for 10 to 12 % of all child maltreatment related deaths. Approximately 25% of all SBS victims will die as a result of their injuries. In those who survive, many will suffer severe motor deficits, seizures, developmental delay, and blindness.

Prevention education is key to eliminating this tragedy. As nurses in PA we have a law that requires us to educate families of newborns about the dangers and devastation of SBS and how to cope with infant crying. We must be tireless in our education of parents and families. **Hopefully in the future, new nurses will only read about shaken baby syndrome victims and seldom have to care for them as patients.**

**Carroll Rottmund RN, BSN, CCRN, CLNC  
PA Shaken Baby Syndrome Nurse Coordinator**

## Six New Hospitals Join Shaken Baby Program in the Third Quarter 2005!

We welcome the following six new hospitals who have made a commitment to participate in *The SBS Prevention and Awareness Program* by submitting their commitment statement data in the third quarter of this year:

*Doylestown Hospital*  
*Evangelical Hospital*  
*Heart of Lancaster County Regional Medical Center*  
*Lehigh Valley Medical Center: OB Department*  
*Pottstown Hospital*  
*St. Clair Hospital*

If you are one of the six PA hospitals listed above then a *Third Quarter 2005 Report* specific to your hospital is enclosed with this newsletter. Please review these statistics carefully and contact the SBS Nurse Coordinators if you find a discrepancy.

**If there are months that your hospital did not submit data, and you have it, it's not too late to add it.** Just contact the SBS office with the new information. We will make any necessary adjustments in your database file and reissue a new report if necessary.

An *End of Year Database Report* is sent to all participating hospitals annually.

The data that you submit is vitally important in assessing the effectiveness of the SBS education that Pennsylvania nurses are providing. Please utilize the *Third Quarter Report* as a QI tool to provide feedback to your staff on the effectiveness of your program.

**Thank you for taking the time to submit this information in 2005!**



*Encourage each Mom to pass on the shaking baby education that she receives at the time of the baby's birth to everyone who cares for her child. Parents need to be advocates for their children!*

Contact the SBS Office to schedule an in-service for your staff and receive 1.2 Contact Hours from PNA.

*Please remember to note the Number of OB Live Births or NICU/PICU Discharges on the front of the envelope when submitting your Monthly Data. We cannot calculate the percentage of parent participation for your hospital without this information. Thank You!*

### Did You Know...

*That all supplies your hospital needs to implement a shaken baby syndrome education program are free of charge to you?*

- 1) The "Portrait of Promise" VHS or DVD can be obtained directly from our office in English and Spanish, as well as, the American Academy of Pediatrics educational brochures, and pre-addressed envelopes to return your commitment statement data.
- 2) The triplicate commitment statement forms can be reordered directly from [jane.hoffman@standardregister.com](mailto:jane.hoffman@standardregister.com). They are provided in cases of 1,200 for the English and 500 for the Spanish.
- 3) The Pennsylvania Department of Health Shaken Baby Syndrome educational brochures can be ordered from [khuling@state.pa.us](mailto:khuling@state.pa.us) or by calling 717-772-2762.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.PASBS.COM



**Pennsylvania Shaken Baby Syndrome  
Prevention and Awareness Program**  
"Saving babies' lives one family at a time."

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*The Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention and Awareness Program* was developed in 1998 in Upstate New York by Dr. Mark Dias, Pediatric Neurosurgeon. Since the inception of the SBS program, Upstate New York has reduced the incidence of SBS by nearly 50%. In 2002, the identical program was started in Central Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Bill 2002-176: *The Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Act* was passed. In 2004, through the generous funding of *The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency* and in collaboration with *The Pennsylvania Department of Health*, Dr. Dias' program was extended to the Eastern and Western portions of the state. The SBS program provides nursing in-services, supplies, educational videos and guidance to all PA hospitals free of charge. Our goal, with your help, is to ensure that every parent of every child born in Pennsylvania receives education on shaken baby syndrome.

**Please help us reduce the incidence of abusive head  
trauma in Pennsylvania's babies!**

## *The Hospital Corner*

The following 109 hospitals are active participants in *The Pennsylvania Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention and Awareness Program* !

Albert Einstein Med. Center  
Allegheny General Hospital  
Alle-Kiski Medical Center  
Altoona Hospital  
Armstrong Hospital  
Berwick Hospital  
Bloomsburg Hospital  
Blue Mountain Health Hospital  
Bradford Regional Med. Center  
Brandywine Hospital  
Butler Hospital  
Carlisle Regional Med. Center  
Chambersburg Hospital  
Charles Cole Memorial Hospital  
Chestnut Hill Hospital  
Chester County Hospital  
Children's Hospital: Philadelphia  
Clarion Hospital  
Clearfield Hospital  
Community Medical Center  
Conemaugh Hospital  
Corry Memorial Hospital  
Doylestown Hospital  
Dubois Regional Med. Center  
Easton Hospital  
Elk Regional Health Center  
Ellwood City Hospital

Ephrata Hospital  
Evangelical Hospital  
Geisinger Medical Center  
Grand View Hospital  
GMC: Wyoming Valley  
Gettysburg Hospital  
Good Samaritan: Lebanon  
Hahnemann Univ. Hospital  
Hamot Medical Center  
Hanover General Hospital  
Harrisburg Hospital  
Hazelton General Hospital  
Heart of Lancaster County RMC  
Hershey Medical Center  
Holy Redeemer Hospital  
Indiana Hospital  
Jameson North  
J.C. Blair Memorial Hospital  
Jeanes Hospital  
Jennersville Regional Hospital  
Lehigh Valley Hospital  
Lewistown Hospital  
Lock Haven Hospital  
Magee Woman's Hospital  
Main Line: Bryn Mawr  
Main Line: Lankenau  
Main Line: Paoli

Meadville Medical Center  
Medical Center of Beaver  
Memorial Hospital: Towanda  
Memorial Hospital: York  
Mercy Hospital: Pittsburgh  
Mercy Hospital: Scranton  
Mercy Jeannette Hospital  
Mercy Suburban Gen Hospital  
Millcreek Comm. Hospital  
Monongahela Valley Hosp.  
Montgomery Hospital  
Moses Taylor Hospital  
Mt. Nittany Med Center  
Nason Hospital  
Northeastern Hospital  
Ohio Valley Gen Hospital  
Pennsylvania Hospital  
Phoenixville Hospital  
Pocono Medical Center  
Pottstown Hospital  
Pottsville Hospital  
Punxsutawney Hospital  
Reading Hospital  
Sacred Heart Hospital  
Sewickley Valley Hospital  
Sharon Regional Health  
Soldiers & Sailors Memorial

Somerset Hospital Center  
St. Clair Hospital  
St. Joseph Hospital  
St. Luke's: Allentown  
St. Luke's: Bethlehem  
St. Mary's Medical Center  
Temple Lower Bucks  
Thomas Jefferson Hospital  
Titusville Area Hospital  
Tyler Memorial Hospital  
Tyrone Hospital  
Uniontown Hospital  
United Community Hospital  
University of PA Med. Center  
UPMC: Bedford Memorial  
UPMC Horizon: Greenville  
UPMC Horizon: Farrell  
UPMC: Northwest  
Warren General Hospital  
Washington Hospital  
Wayne Memorial Hospital  
Waynesboro Hospital  
Western PA Hospital  
Westmoreland Regional  
Wilkes Barre General Hospital  
Winber Hospital  
Women & Babies: Lancaster  
York Hospital