



SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME

In 1972, Dr. John Caffey through his article "On the Theory and Practice of Shaking Infants" brought to the forefront the issue of shaken baby syndrome, a serious form of child abuse resulting in permanent brain damage for children primarily under the age of 1 year. At that time, Dr. Caffey also called for a nationwide education effort to educate the public about the dangers of shaking babies.

It was not until 1989 that studies began in Ohio and then expanded to five surrounding states. These studies focused on the lack of public knowledge about the dangers of SBS and collected feedback from parents as to the benefits of receiving SBS information.

Dr. Jacy Showers published the results of these studies in 1992 and reported that **25-50% of teenagers and adults did not know that shaking a baby could be dangerous!** In addition, parents receiving information about SBS reported that it was helpful and 51% said they were less likely to shake their babies after reading the information.

Public Awareness Campaign Begins

In 1992, most of the initial prevention efforts focused on educating new parents, but over the past couple years, more emphasis has been placed on the male population, which is considered one of the highest risk groups. Education typically includes information on the dangers of shaking babies, signs and symptoms of SBS, and ways to cope with a crying baby, along with information about crisis hotlines to utilize in the event they felt they may potentially shake a child.

Positive parenting practices have also been emphasized in agencies advocating the prevention of child abuse. However, there still remains a need to educate many other groups with the same intensity, including professionals in the areas of child care, social services, medicine, and law to name a few. Specifically, physicians need medical training on abusive head trauma, including recognition of early signs and symptoms so children are spared from serial shaking. Child care providers in the state of Texas and another concerning risk group must now have mandated child abuse training that includes SBS education before they begin caring for children. The mode of delivery of educational materials has varied, but has primarily been through one page brochures or flyers. Most agencies have developed curriculums and have utilized trained volunteers to go out into the community to spread SBS prevention information to every segment of the public, including school aged children. Many families touched by SBS have become involved in prevention volunteer activities either through agencies or on their own.



PREVENTION EDUCATION SAVES LIVES

In 2004, the Children's' Advocacy Center of Tom Green County acquired the Shaken Baby Syndrome training initiative to educate the public and those at risk of harming their baby. Education is the key component in decreasing the incidence of SBS. Parents, child care providers, and other caregivers are encouraged to educate others by printing out the dangers of shaking babies, signs and symptoms of SBS, ways to cope with a crying baby, and crisis hotlines.

And please *don't forget*, volunteering with the Children's Advocacy Center SBS prevention program is just one way to help in conquering this horrific form of child abuse. We are always in need of quality volunteers with a passion for preventing child abuse and neglect who would be willing to speak on this issue.

One of our duties is to certify local registered childcare providers for their yearly certification. The cost for this certification, which covers Early Brain Development, Shaken Baby Syndrome, and SIDS is \$7.00.

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