



PREVENT CHILD ABUSE  
**KENTUCKY**

# Coping with Crying

All babies cry and some babies cry a lot. This is normal. Babies cry to tell you they have a need—they are hungry, need a clean diaper, are lonely, in pain, or just want to be held. When you respond to your baby's cries, you are not only making the baby happy, you are also teaching him to trust you.

## Helping Your Baby Calm Down

There is no single “right” way to soothe a crying baby. It takes time to learn what your baby likes and how she will respond. Many parents have favorite ways to help their infants settle down. First, you should make sure your baby has a clean diaper and has been fed. Then check to make sure your baby is not in discomfort—he is not too hot or too cold. If your baby is still crying, try one of these tips:

- Let your baby suckle. Try using a pacifier or help your baby find her finger in their mouth or your clean knuckle.
- Cuddle your baby close to you. Some infants like to be swaddled in blankets or held close.
- Try gently rocking or swaying while holding your infant. Talk softly, hum, or sing. Take your baby outside for a change of scenery.
- Distract your infant. Turn on music, lightly shake a rattle, turn on a mobile above your child's crib or read a book to your child.
- Try burping your baby, even if he has not been fed recently.
- Get your baby moving. Riding in a car, stroller or baby swing can be very soothing.

## When to Call the Doctor

If your child seems to cry for a lengthy period each day, talk with your pediatrician about colic. The pediatrician may have helpful suggestions for dealing with colicky babies. Crying can be a sign of illness or pain. If your baby's crying seems different from usual, do not hesitate to contact your child's pediatrician.

## When All Else Fails

No one likes to hear a baby cry. The last thing you want to do is lose your temper. Shouting or getting rough with a baby will not stop crying, it will only make matters worse. Whatever your feelings or thoughts, never shake a baby. Shaking babies is very dangerous.

If you feel yourself getting frustrated with your child, try these tips:

- Try to relax. Take deep breaths and try to stay calm.
- Call a friend or relative and take a few moments for yourself.
- Ask someone you trust to watch your baby and take a break.
- Walk away and give yourself a few minutes to regain your composure.
- Call 1-800-CHILDREN (800-244-53736) for support.

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