

PRACTITIONER GUIDE

ICON

The ICON Programme is a multi-agency programme, developed to support parents to cope with infant crying as an intervention to reduce the risk of Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) from suspected shaking injuries. Within Hampshire, the key messages are delivered at numerous stages throughout pregnancy and post-birth to parents.

Secondary and tertiary services, such as Children's Services, also reinforce the ICON messages when they are working with families where additional needs have been identified, such as within parenting classes. The reason for the repetitive 'touch point' approach is that it is widely accepted as a way of helping parents and carers to retain information.

ICON stands for:

- I** Infant crying is normal
- C** Comforting methods can help
- O** It's OK to walk away
- N** Never, ever shake a baby

Implementation

The ICON Programme was implemented in Hampshire in September 2018 in response to a recommendation from a Serious Case Review for a baby (referred to as Child U) for a local preventative campaign of AHT.

What is abusive head trauma?

- 'Shaken Baby Syndrome'
- Child abuse
- Catastrophic injuries:
 - * Bleeds in the brain and behind eyes
 - * Fractures
- Babies can be shaken, thrown, or hit
- Affects approximately 26 of every 100,000 babies admitted to hospital each year in the UK
- Research suggests 1 in 9 mothers may have shaken their baby and up to 2 in 9 felt like doing

Who shakes and why?

- **70% perpetrators are males – fathers/ male surrogates (Kesler et al 2008; Altman et al 2010)**
- Occurs in every socio-economic group
- Coping with crying: Living on the edge
- Caregivers lose control and shake – baby stops crying
- Demonstrable relationship between the normal peak of crying and babies subject to AHT. (Barr et al 2006)
- Increase in cases in the first month of life, a peak at 6 weeks during the second month and a decrease during the third and fifth months of life

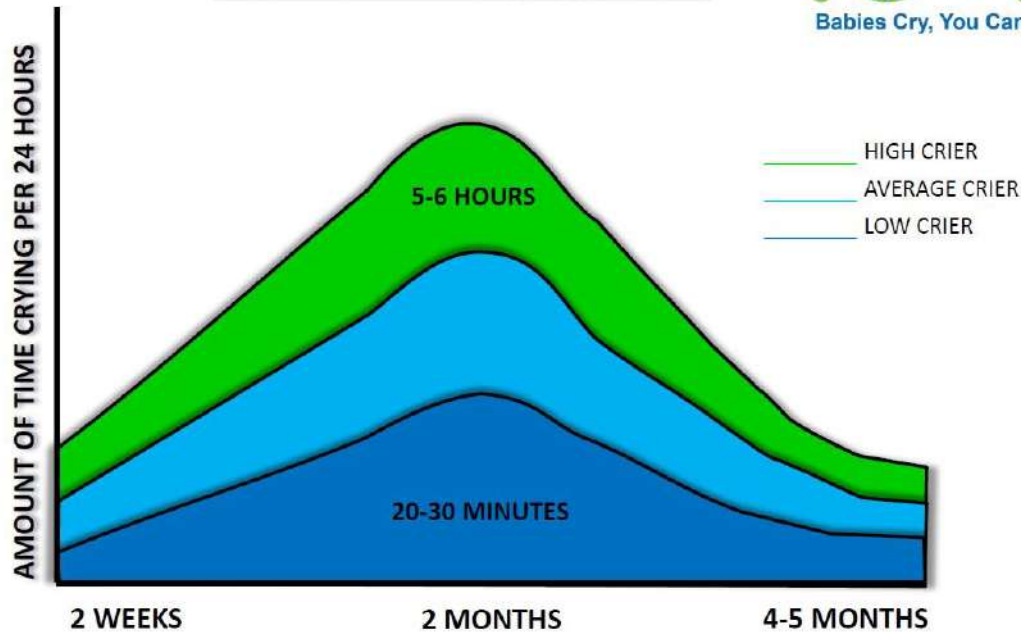
What are the triggers?

- Crying is considered the main trigger
- Peak of crying is 6-8 weeks of age
- Parents or the mother's partner are responsible for AHT in 75% of babies
- Majority of perpetrators are male
- Most at-risk groups are:
 - * Male
 - * Below 6 months
 - * Low birth weight
 - * Regular contact with health professionals



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The Normal Crying Curve



*Taken from: Barr RG. The normal crying curve: what do we really know? *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology* 1990;32(4):356-362

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Resources: Delivering the message

[ICON toolkit](#) – provides useful information and tools to support professionals in sharing the ICON message. Includes access to DadPad app, Coping with Crying Plan, posters, fridge magnets, films and leaflets.

[ICON eLearning course](#) – develops professional understanding of the risks of abusive head trauma and to share the key messages to support parents/carers.

[Wessex Healthier Together website](#) – 6-week mother and baby check for professionals.

[DadPad](#) – developed with the NHS, gives new dads and dads-to-be the knowledge and skills needed to gain confidence and give their baby the best start in life.

[ICON website](#) – provides useful advice for professionals, parents, and caregivers.

[Hampshire ICON Evaluation Report – 1 year on](#) – read the evaluation report to discover the impact the programme has had on the work of professionals and outcomes for families in Hampshire, one year on.