

## FAMILY ADVOCACY BABY TALK

### DISCUSSION LEADER'S OUTLINE

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Good morning my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Today we will be discussing how to deal with Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Period of Purple Crying, and reducing the incidence of child maltreatment.

The **ground rules** for this discussion are:

- (1) No personal attacks on anyone's opinions
- (2) Allow each participant to express themselves
- (3) Make head calls at your leisure, just don't interrupt the group
- (4) Keep your language clean as not to offend others
- (5) PARTICIPATION BY ALL!!!!!!

#### **Gain Attention**

You and your girlfriend just had a baby two months ago. Between her nagging, her parents visiting, your mom calling to make you feel guilty that she could not be there, the sergeant riding your back at work and eight week old Samantha crying non-stop you are exhausted and stressed out.

**Key points** for this discussion will be:

- (1) Definition of Shaken Baby Syndrome
- (2) Definition of the Period of Purple Crying
- (3) How to increase protective factors to reduce the incidence of child maltreatment

**Learning Objective:** After this guided discussion, you will have a better understanding of how to manage your stress in relation to the care of your baby.

#### **DISCUSSION**

You are more stressed than usual. This whole baby thing kind of caught you off guard. You love baby Samantha but were not prepared for the responsibility. You didn't even want a girlfriend but ended up with one by default when the girl you were seeing got pregnant. You were hesitant to move in together but felt pressured by your mother and hers. Since the baby came home two months ago all she does is cry. Your girlfriend is constantly nagging you about getting married, the time you spend at work, and her feelings of having no support. You try to pitch in where you can but now that you've been promoted to Corporal you have a lot more work responsibility. You are trying to balance it all but feel like you are about to explode. You have agreed to keep baby Samantha while your girlfriend goes out with her friends for the evening. You've bathed Samantha, fed her, and have been holding her for two hours. So far she has not stopped crying. You feel yourself getting frustrated and angry.

#### **What would you do?**

*Facilitator Note: Ask group to generate 3-4 answers. Here are a few you might hear. Have the ideas continue to generate until at least one healthy choice is mentioned. The first bullet is the only healthy choice listed in this section. Review healthy decisions with group.*

- Put the baby down in a safe place and remove yourself from her (checking on her in

intervals)

- Grab a beer, ignore her and turn up the TV hoping to drown out the noise
- Tap her legs, after all, you were spanked
- Shake baby Samantha forcefully hoping to calm her down

**Healthy decisions include:**

- Place the baby safely in her crib, close the door, and let her cry (this is only acceptable if you check on her frequently).
- Call someone you trust for support; either to physically assist by coming over, allowing you to bring Samantha over, or offering support over the phone (a neighbor, your parents, a sibling or friend may offer really helpful parenting advice).
- Separate yourself, collect your thoughts:
  - ✓ Take a shower
  - ✓ Practice tactical breathing
  - ✓ Grab a snack
  - ✓ Turn on some music

**KEY POINT 1**

Shaken Baby Syndrome is a serious brain injury resulting from forcefully shaking an infant or toddler. Shaken baby syndrome destroys a child's brain cells and prevents his or her brain from getting enough oxygen. Shaken baby syndrome is child abuse. It can result in permanent brain damage or death. Shaking a baby is never ok!

**KEY POINT 2**

“Period of Purple Crying” is a child abuse prevention program that emphasizes that excessive crying is normal, and to be expected. The “Period of Purple Crying” begins at about 2 weeks of age and continues until about 3-4 months of age. Parents are encouraged to develop coping skills to relieve their parenting stress while keeping their infants safe.

**Interim Summary:** We just finished discussing Shaken Baby Syndrome and Period of Purple Crying; now let’s talk about how to establish some protective factors.

**KEY POINT 3**

1. The Center for the Study of Social Policy defines protective factors in the following manner:
  - **Protective factors** are conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities or the larger society that mitigate or eliminate risk such as establishing/ maintaining healthy relationships, good nutrition, adequate sleep and maintaining a positive attitude.
  - **Promotive factors** are conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities or the larger society that actively enhance well-being such as established support in times of need, informational support (information on child development) and social support (talking with other parents or your healthcare provider about concerns or experiences).

Increasing protective factors in families decreases the likelihood of child abuse, supports parents in meeting their parenting obligations, and results in healthier families.

2. Some protective factors include:
  - **Parental resilience:** parents are resilient when they are able to call forth their inner strength

to proactively meet personal challenges and those in relation to their child, manage adversities, manage the effects of trauma and thrive given the unique characteristics and circumstances of their family

- **Social connections:** a social network of emotionally supportive friends, family, and neighbors can assist in times of need
- **Concrete support in times of need:** concrete supports allow families to maintain their financial security and ensure they are able to meet daily needs or unexpected costs
- **Knowledge of parenting and child development:** information about infant and toddler development, including brain development
- **Nurturing and attachment:** an early secure attachment between parents and young children
- **Social and emotional competence of children:** healthy social and emotional development in children when they model how to express and communicate emotions effectively, self-regulate, and make friends

### **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

Today we have discussed Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Period of Purple Crying. I am confident that you now have a better understanding of how to care for yourself in relation to caring for your baby.

**Closing Statement:** Remember babies require a lot of care. In order to make sure you are meeting yours and your baby's needs it is important to understand the different phases of their development. As you've learned today, there are times when babies cry for no obvious reason. It is important to have a solid support system and strong protective factors. Your local Family Advocacy Program (FAP) and New Parent Support Program (NPSP) are two excellent resources.

### **END OF DISCUSSION**

### **RESOURCES**

1. [http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/2013/SF\\_All-5-Protective-Factors.pdf](http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/2013/SF_All-5-Protective-Factors.pdf)
2. [https://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/social\\_connect.cfm](https://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/social_connect.cfm)
3. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy1246>
4. <http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/nuturingandattachment.pdf>