

# Five Easy Steps to Calm a Fussy Baby

---



Based on the works  
of Harvey Karp, M.D.



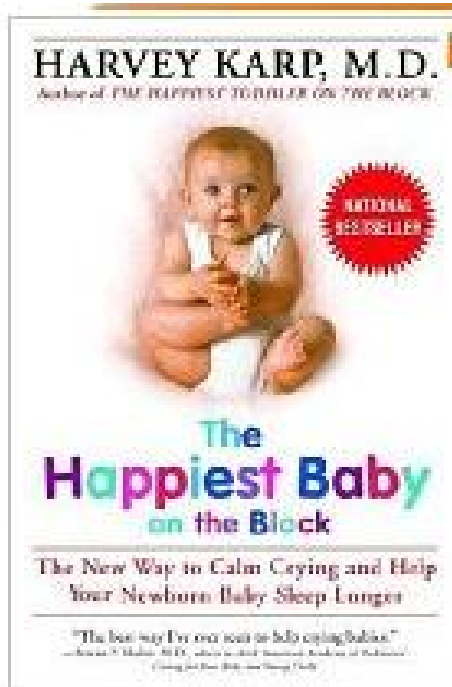
# Presentors

---

- Cindy VanderWeele, R.N.  
Sheboygan County Division of Public Health
- Peggy Wiedmeyer, Parent Educator  
Family Resource Center of Sheboygan County
- Members of Team Blue Ribbon in Sheboygan  
County

# Based on the works of Harvey Karp, M.D.

---



- [www.thehappiestbaby.com](http://www.thehappiestbaby.com)
- Certification program available



# Meeting Needs of the Community

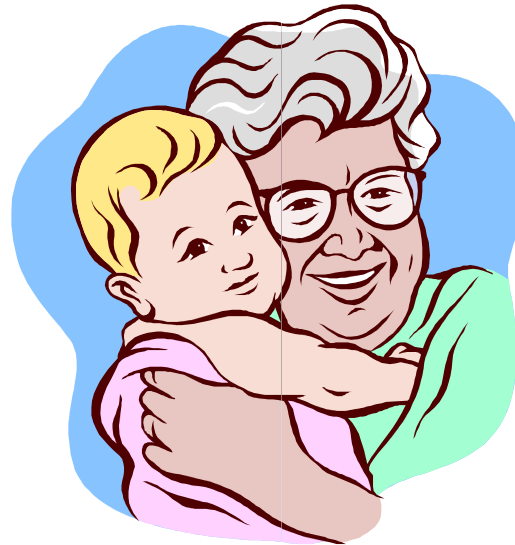
---

- 28 cases of shaken baby syndrome treated at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin since January 1, 2008
- “Never Shake a Baby” is an important message
- What to do instead of shaking is an equally important message
- Class was created to teach parents and caregivers what to do instead of shaking

# Meeting Needs of the Community

---

- Even parents/caregivers who are not at the point of shaking a crying baby can benefit from learning these skills





# Missing 4<sup>th</sup> Trimester

---

- ❑ Human babies born at 9 months gestation
- ❑ Birth brings drastic change in baby's environment
- ❑ Some babies can handle this change
- ❑ Some babies cannot handle this change
- ❑ Fussy babies have poor state control
- ❑ Temperament – you can't change it; a very sensitive or intense baby may need lots of help to calm down
- ❑ All babies cry, some more than others



# Missing 4<sup>th</sup> Trimester

---

- Babies sleep a lot in the first 2 weeks
- More alert after 2 weeks of age and if a baby is going to be fussy, this may be when it starts
- Much more alert after 6 weeks of age and the vulnerable babies will cry that much more
- Many self-soothing skills in place by 4 months of age

# Sensory Differences Between Newborn and 4-month-old Baby

---

- Newborn
- Can focus on objects  
8-12 inches from face
- Loves looking at  
light/dark contrasts and  
designs
- 4 month-old
- Easily focus on large  
objects across the room
- Can turn head to find  
where sound comes  
from

# Social Abilities Differences Between Newborn and 4-month-old Baby

---

- Newborn
- More attracted to the sound of the human voice than to music or noise. Can recognize mother's voice from the muffled sounds heard in the womb.
- Prefers to look at a person's face rather than an object. May be able to imitate facial expressions.
- 4-month-old
- Patiently waits for parent to stop talking before s/he takes a turn in the conversation by cooing, grunting, giggling.
- Enamored with parents' faces and brightens visibly when parents enter the room. May become upset when ignored.

# Motor Differences Between Newborn and 4-month-old Baby

---

- Newborn
- Often crosses eyes. Can track visually only when object moves slowly and may have jerky eye movements.
- Hard for baby to get his/her fingers in mouth and even harder to keep fingers in mouth for more than 30 seconds.
- 4-month-old
- Eyes no longer cross. Can now visually track objects smoothly and swiftly.
- Much more able to reach out and touch objects. Can easily get fingers into mouth and keep them there for many minutes.

# Physiological Differences Between Newborn and 4-month-old Babies

---

- Newborn
- Hands and feet may be blue much of the time.
- Bodies occasionally get jolted by hiccups, jittery tremors, irregular breathing.
- Has little ability to control body movements-they're largely controlled by reflexes.
- 4-month-old
- No longer gets blue hands and feet unless cold.
- Rarely hiccups, never tremor, breathing is smooth and regular.
- Much better at controlling body movements. Some can roll over, lift head high off the floor when on tummy, may roll to side from back.



# Reflexes

---

- ❑ Babies born with more than 70 reflexes
- ❑ Keeping safe reflexes
- ❑ Getting a meal reflex
- ❑ Fetal and left-over reflexes
- ❑ Calming reflex
- ❑ Moro reflex

# Parental Instinct

---

- Parents' instinct to want to calm a crying baby is strong
- Knowing how to calm a crying baby is not instinctive but it is easy to learn





# The Five S's

---

- Swaddling
- Side/stomach position
- Shushing
- Swinging
- Sucking



# Swaddling

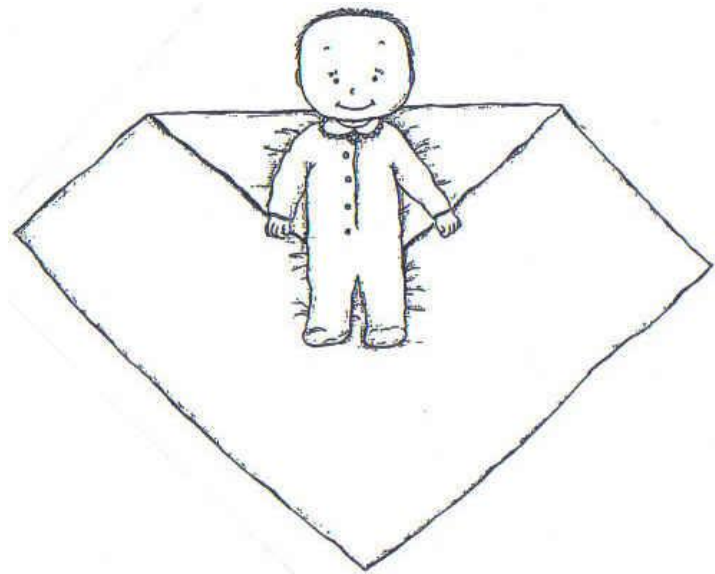
---

- ❑ Tight wrapping returns baby to continuous touch and tight fit of the uterus
- ❑ Keeps baby from flailing about
- ❑ Helps baby pay attention to other calming techniques
- ❑ Many irritable babies resist swaddling

# Swaddle Position #1

---

- ❑ Place blanket on flat surface with a point at the top
- ❑ Fold down top point so it touches center of blanket
- ❑ Place baby on blanket so baby's neck lies on top edge of fold





# DUDU Wrap

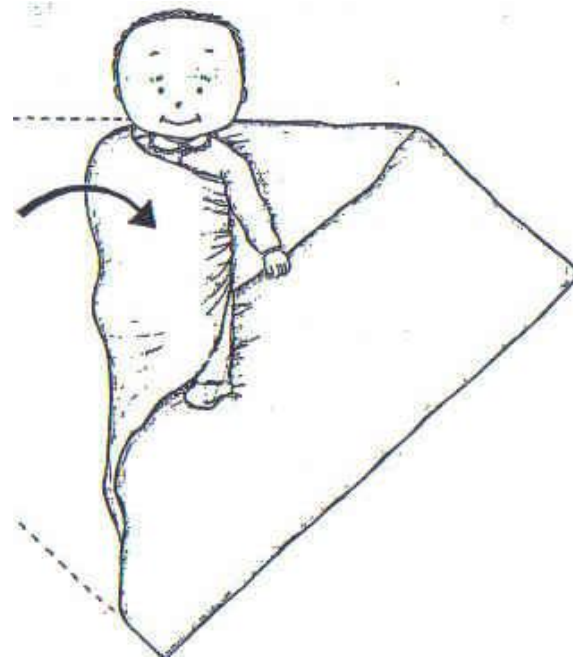
---

- This is the starting position for swaddling baby
- DOWN, tuck, snug
- UP, tuck, snug
- DOWN – a smidge, hold
- UP, across, snug

# Swaddle Position #2

---

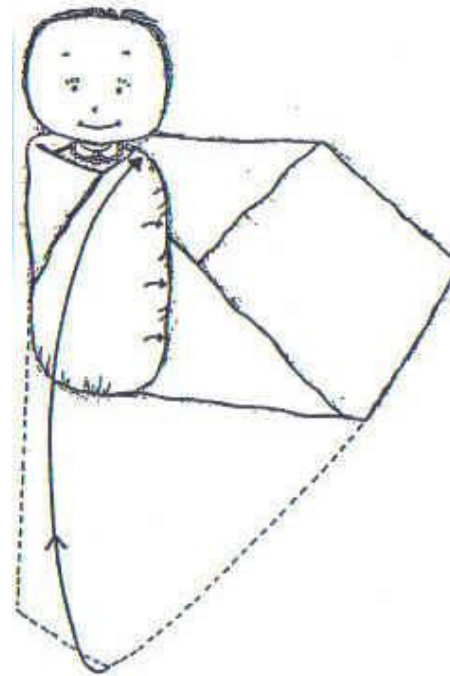
- ❑ Hold baby's right arm against her side
- ❑ Grab blanket 3-4 inches from her shoulder
- ❑ Pull blanket very tightly down and across her body
- ❑ Tuck blanket under her left buttock and lower back
- ❑ Hold blanket against baby's left hip with your left hand, grab blanket next to her left shoulder and tug it very, very snug.



# Swaddle Position #3

---

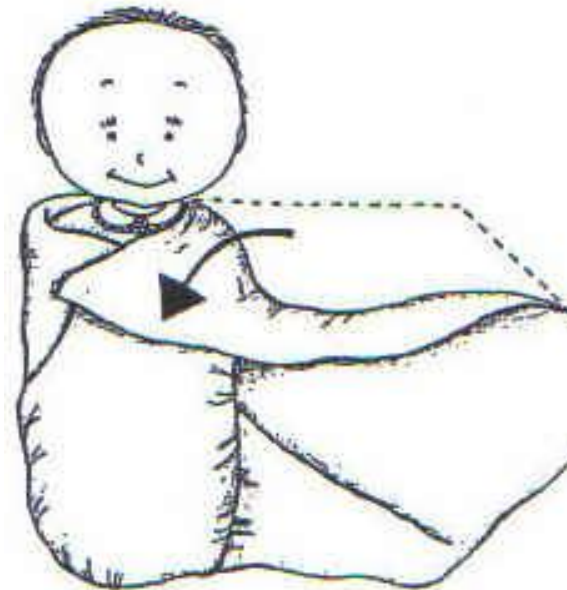
- Straighten baby's left arm against her side
- Bring bottom corner of blanket straight up to cover her arm; it should reach just over her left shoulder
- Hold baby's left covered arm against her body and tuck the blanket edge under it
- Use your left hand to hold her left arm down, then use your right hand to grab the blanket 3 inches from her left shoulder and snug it tight



# Swaddle Position #4

---

- Still holding blanket very snug, 3 inches from her left shoulder, pull top edge of blanket down just to baby's upper chest
- Hold that part of the blanket against the baby's breastbone, like you are holding a ribbon down while making a bow



# Swaddle Position #5

---

- Keeping the blanket in place, grab the last free corner with your right hand and pull it straight out to your right.
- Without releasing any tension in the blanket, lift that corner up and across baby's waist and then all around her body like a belt.
- Tuck this corner of the blanket into the beginning of the "belt."





# Side/Stomach Position

---

- ❑ Stops panicky feeling of falling that babies feel when lying on their backs
- ❑ When upset, lying on back can make baby feels like he's in a freefall (Moro reflex)
- ❑ Side/stomach lying position shuts off the Moro reflex

# Shushing

---

- ❑ Mimics whooshing sound of blood flowing through arteries in uterus
- ❑ Sound you make needs to be as loud as baby's crying and close to baby's ear
- ❑ Loud radio static, tape recording of hair dryer or water running, white noise machine
- ❑ Gradually diminish loudness as baby quiets

# Swinging

---

- ❑ Duplicates motions felt in uterus for 9 months
- ❑ This is not the same movement as shaking a baby
- ❑ Baby's head and neck are supported
- ❑ Dads often can do swinging on their arm easily and don't need mechanical swing
- ❑ Baby swing: strap baby in, including strap between baby's legs; swing fully reclined; fastest speed



# Sucking (If Baby is Not Hungry)

---

- ❑ Releases natural chemicals in brain, which leads to deep relaxation
- ❑ Offer breastfeeding as first sucking option
- ❑ Can also offer parent's finger or pacifier
- ❑ Introduce pacifier only after breastfeeding is well established (after 6 weeks)
- ❑ Works best after baby is calmed by other techniques



# Follow Baby's Lead

---

- ❑ Meet baby's level of intensity; slow down as he calms down
- ❑ You cannot spoil a baby in the first months of life by responding quickly to baby's needs
- ❑ It's easy for parents to feel manipulated by a baby that cries every time he's put down.
- ❑ Letting a baby cry is not going to teach him to be independent, any more than leaving him in a dirty diaper is going to toughen his skin.
- ❑ Reading baby's cues



# Things May Get Worse at First

---

- ❑ Baby brains have a hard time shifting gears
- ❑ Baby brains move s-l-o-w-l-y; takes longer for messages to reach the brain
- ❑ Baby brains get in the cycle of crying
- ❑ Continue calming techniques for 5-10 minutes after baby stops crying.



# In Conclusion

---

- ❑ Don't give up. Every child is different and you are still learning what your baby likes best.
- ❑ You have to find just the right position that your baby likes best
- ❑ If it doesn't work the first time, try again later when you have more energy.

# In Conclusion

---

- ❑ It's never OK to shake a baby!
- ❑ Parents/caregivers need to know what they can do instead of shaking
- ❑ These techniques work!
- ❑ Long-term goal is child who is able to self-calm and who trusts that parents/caregivers will be there when baby needs them