

ICON Abusive head trauma prevention campaign – GP 6 week postnatal check intervention

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Learning from Serious Case reviews

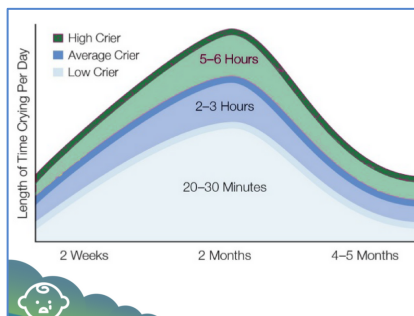
'Shaken baby syndrome'

24 of every 100,000 babies affected each year = approximately 5 cases in Hampshire

Common themes:

- Families vulnerabilities known to multiple agencies
- Unidentified adults
- Mental health issues and substance misuse
- Domestic violence
- Communication between professionals
- Assessing parenting capacity and sharing this information

1 in 9 mothers may have shaken their babies and up to 2 in 9 have felt like doing so



Crying is the main trigger – peaking at 6-8 weeks old¹

Research has shown that public health campaigns educating new parents and care givers in coping with their baby's crying can reduce rates of abusive head trauma by up to 75%²

The Prevention Campaign

Based on the findings from Dr Smith's Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travel Fellowship³:

- Secondary School – Single education session on coping with a crying baby
- Antenatal / Birth – hospital based education – Film and leaflet which reinforces the message to caregivers
- Health visitor to reinforce message at antenatal contact from 28 weeks
- <10 days – home/clinic reinforce the message – check parents have the leaflet
- HV New Birth Visit – reinforce the message – combine with safe sleeping advice
- 6/8 week check – reinforce the message - GP to complete perinatal template and reinforce the message
- 6-8 HV postnatal contact – Health visitor to reinforce the message
- <6 months – All professionals including social workers reiterate the message to parents/ caregivers – when visiting home/undertaking assessments

The pilot

The template has been piloted at 3 practices in South East Hampshire and Fareham & Gosport CCGs over 3 months.

Prior to using the template all GPs were given training in using it as well as training to enable them to deliver the ICON message. Posters were put up in GP waiting rooms and leaflets were given to patients to share with other care givers during the appointments.

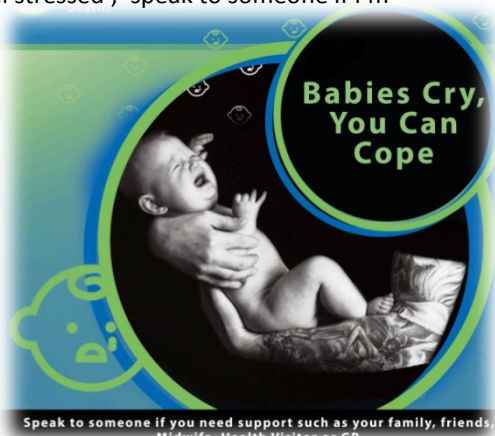
Feedback from GPs

- Prior to using the template 90% of GPs were not routinely asking about coping with crying at the 6 week check.
- 90% of GPs felt using the template had changed their practice.
- 100% of GPs found the ICON message and training helped them to discuss coping with crying - 'it helped me discuss it in a clear, concise way that mum seemed to respond to'.

Feedback from Patients

- Prior to the consultation only 14% of patients had been asked how they were coping with their infants crying.
- 100% of patients found the questions they were asked useful.
- 70% would change their behaviour in relation to their baby's crying following receiving the ICON message – 'I will take a step back if I feel stressed', 'speak to someone if I'm struggling'
- 100% feel confident to share the ICON message with other caregivers (eg partner, family member, friend, babysitter).

Following the success of the multiagency pilot the ICON campaign is being launched throughout the health and education pathway across Hampshire in September 2018.



The ICON Message

When crying gets too much...

I

nfant crying is normal, it will stop!

C

omfort methods can soothe the baby and the crying will stop.



It's okay to walk away if you have checked the baby is safe and the crying is getting to you.

N

ever, ever shake or hurt a baby.

Speak to someone if you need support such as family, friends, Midwife, GP or Health Visitor

Maternal Postnatal GP template

Currently there is no uniform, structured template for the maternal part of the 6-8 week check. Recent studies also suggest that perinatal mental health problems are under-diagnosed in 50% of cases. Using this information and the known common themes from serious case reviews a template has been developed and embedded in practice computer systems such as EMIS to assist GPs in assessing parenting vulnerabilities and discussing coping with crying.

Mental health screening questions

Is motherhood everything you thought it would be?

In the past month have you felt little interest or pleasure in doing things?

In the past month have you often felt down, depressed or hopeless?

During the past month have you been feeling anxious, nervous or on edge?

During the past month have you not been able to stop or control worrying?

Is this something we can help you with?

link to RCGP perinatal mental health toolkit

Domestic Abuse screening questions

How are things at home?

Have you ever felt frightened or had to change your behaviour due to someone you had a relationship with?

Social Support

Who is at home to support you?

Have you or your family ever received help or support from children's services?

How is your partner coping with parenthood? (If concerns consider need to offer partner an appointment)

Postnatal health education

Do you feel your baby is crying excessively?

ICON advice discussed and leaflet given (link to icon information leaflet for parents/carers)

Safe sleeping advice (including avoiding co-sleeping)

Link to Dadpad for support for partners (not yet a free resource)

Physical health

Type of delivery/Feeding details

Postnatal examination

Contraception

Smear

Smoking status

Alcohol consumption

History of substance misuse

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References:

1. Barr R.G., Hopkins B., Green J.A. (2000) Crying as a sign, a symptom and a signal: clinical, emotional and developmental aspects of infant and toddler crying London: MacKeith Press
2. Dias et al (2005) Preventing Abusive Head Trauma Infants and Young Children: a hospital based prevention program Pediatrics 115: 470 – 477
3. Smith, S (2016). Abusive Head Trauma: The Case For Prevention. Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.