



Tips for Soothing a Crying Baby in Child Care

ALL BABIES CRY

Caring for a crying baby, or multiple crying babies, in a group setting can be overwhelming and exhausting. It helps to understand that crying is a normal part of infant development, and babies cry for many different reasons. Crying peaks for most infants around 6-8 weeks, and decreases after 3-4 months. Some babies however may cry more than others. Responding to each infant's crying will help you to build a relationship with that child and support that child's future development and learning. Below are some strategies you can use in the child care setting to respond to infant crying.

- **Check baby's basic needs.** Is the baby hungry or tired? Does the baby have a wet or soiled diaper?
- **Talk with families.** What soothing strategies have worked for the baby at home? Does the family have a Crying Plan?
- **Consider routines.** When does the baby usually cry? Are there certain times of day, or certain routines in which a baby cries more?
- **Hold the baby close.** Babies need to be held and touched.
- **Go for a walk.** Many babies can be soothed with fresh air and movement.
- **Offer a pacifier.** Some babies need to suck when not hungry. If the parents have provided a pacifier, identify times in which the baby will use the pacifier (i.e. when tired and preparing for sleep).
- **Change the environment.** Is the classroom too loud? Is there too much to look at? Or is it too bright? Does the baby need a space in the classroom with less stimulation?
- **Take a break.** Many babies just need to cry. If you find yourself becoming upset ask your director, or another child care provider for help.

Information Adapted From:

Parlakian, A. & Lerner, C. (n.d.) *Colic and Crying*. Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families. Retrieved from <http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/challenging-behavior/colic-behaviors.html>