



FAQ for Professionals

1. What is the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program and why is it different from other shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma (SBS/ABT) prevention programs?

The program is **unique** among SBS/AHT efforts in several important ways:

- It approaches prevention through child development education about normal infant development, specifically, about crying in normal infants, rather than being limited to warnings of the negative consequences of shaking
- It is based on over 30 years of research on normal infant crying conducted by Ronald G. Barr, MDCM, FRCPC and experts in the field of infant and child development
- It is based on strong evidence about infant crying, since we know that crying is shown to be the most important stimulus for shaking
- It aims to bring about a cultural change in caregivers and the community in general about our understanding of infant crying; it is a positive program that gives all parents encouragement that aims to improve their relationship with their baby

2. What has the testing of the program included?

The program was initially tested over a three year period and it continues to be evaluated by partners and other researchers. In the first year the new materials, a 10-minute video and booklet were revised through testing with 19 parent focus groups in the United States and Canada. The focus groups included 16 groups for mothers, 2 for fathers, and 1 for Native Americans/First Nations. The groups were multicultural and had various socioeconomic backgrounds. The materials were also reviewed by 35 highly regarded clinical pediatric and academic research physicians, public education consultants and public health nurses. The program was then rigorously tested in two parallel randomized controlled trials in Seattle, Washington (USA) and in Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada). The large scale trials included 4,400 parents and assessed their ability to change knowledge and behavior of mothers related to the information provided in the educational materials. The settings where the program was delivered included: (1) prenatal classes; (2) maternity wards; (3) pediatric practices; and (4) home visits by public health nurses. Additionally, there has been important recognition that the evidence based prevention program, *Period of PURPLE Crying*, has received. The recognition sources are diverse and yet all very important on a national level.

- Testimony from Dr. Bob Block, President of the American Academy of Pediatrics, to the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families. The *Period of PURPLE Crying* program is described as an effective prevention program on pg. 19. <http://help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Block.pdf>
- The *PURPLE* program was published in the [Federal] Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research's Innovations Exchange as a new strong evidence-based innovation to prevent infant abuse. The Innovations Exchange is used by thousands of healthcare professionals and researchers who are investigating new and better ways of delivering health care. <http://www.innovations.ahrq.gov/content.aspx?id=3281>
- The California Evidence Based Clearinghouse is a collection of child welfare programs that have been evaluated for their relevance and research evidence to allow child welfare professionals to make informed decisions about the programs and services they offer. The *Period of PURPLE Crying* program

has been evaluated and is included on their website <http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/period-of-purple-crying/>

- In the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shaken baby syndrome prevention guide for public health and community based organizations, the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program is described as an example prevention program. The description of the *PURPLE* program can be found on page 13 of the guide using the following link http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion/pdf/Preventing_SBS_508-a.pdf.
- The National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions (NACHRI/NACH) released the second edition of their *Defining the Children’s Hospital Role in Child Maltreatment* guide in late 2011. The guide contains an example of the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program being implemented in Oregon on page 43 and a more detailed overview of the program on page 57. <http://www.childrenshospitals.net/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home3&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=59013>

3. What were the results of the testing?

From 2003-2007, the NCSBS conducted research testing the *PURPLE* program through randomized controlled trials in Seattle, Washington and Vancouver, B.C. Delivery sites included pediatric practices, maternity departments, pre-natal classes, and nurse home visitor programs. Over 4,400 parents practiced in the studies. Additionally, 25 parent focus groups were conducted to develop new materials. Refer to www.PURPLEcrying.org and visit Research Lines of Evidence for more information on the randomized controlled trials. In March of 2009 these studies were published in *Pediatrics* and the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. The studies show positive results of parents changing their behaviors and increasing their understanding of normal infant crying and the dangers of shaking a baby.

The summary of the results are as follows:

- Crying knowledge increased significantly
- Increases were from 4.5 to 22% on crying knowledge scale questions
- Parents who thought shaking was a “good” way to soothe an infant decreased by 63%
- Walk away behavior increased by 74%
- Sharing information on crying, walking away, and shaking dangers was increased by 9%, 12% and 13% respectively

4. What are the advantages of this program?

The program materials DVD/booklet or APP/booklet were designed to overcome recognized barriers of delivering educational information to parents that occur with other prevention materials by ensuring that the materials are:

- Educational and attractive to parents of newborns on the first day of life
- Interesting and valuable for all parents because of the information about normal increased infant crying whether or not they would ever consider shaking their baby
- Clear, memorable, and meaningful with a positive message
- Presented at a grade three language level
- Inclusive of many cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Acceptable to public health nurses: no bottles, blankets, or bumper pads
- Economical
- Designed for each family of a new baby to receive a copy of their own to review and to share with others

5. What is the difference between the *PURPLE* program and the program of Dr. Mark Dias that was published in *Pediatrics* in 2006?

The published article by Dr. Mark Dias describes a “process” model or “steps of how to deliver” an SBS/AHT prevention program. The *PURPLE* program is the “content.” These two can be combined for a very effective *Period of PURPLE Crying*® is a registered trademark and all content is copyright protected. All Rights Reserved, Ronald G. Barr, MD, MDCM, FRCPC and the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (2004–2016). Revised 10/16/2016.

program. Dr. Dias is very clear that his model refers to the “process” not the “content.” The Dias published model is an “open source” model with regard to the materials that are delivered. For more information on Dr. Dias’ process model and how the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program fits as content, refer to the [White Paper](#).

6. Is the *Period of PURPLE Crying* empirically based?

Over the last several years, the body of robust, scientific research on infant crying, shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) and the *Period of PURPLE Crying* has grown significantly. The following link takes you to research that includes two randomized controlled trials, parallel studies underway in British Columbia and North Carolina and summaries of independent and parent evaluations on the *Period of PURPLE Crying*. [Period of PURPLE Crying Research](#)

7. What does the *PURPLE* program model include?

The program that was tested to be effective in changing knowledge and behaviors in mothers included the 10-minute *Period of PURPLE Crying* video and the 10-page full color booklet. **The tested model is that every family of a new baby receives their own set of program materials.** There are four very good reasons families must each have their own copy:

- *The Period of PURPLE Crying* starts at about 2 weeks, peaks at about two-months, and usually comes to an end by about 4-5 months, and often earlier. **It is very important that parent(s) have access to the materials with them, when their baby goes through the *Period of PURPLE Crying***
- It is vital that other people who care for the baby, including relatives, friends, boyfriends, also look at the video and read the booklet. **The parent(s) must have these materials to share and to educate others**
- People do not usually learn things only by hearing or watching the information one time. They must also be willing to “receive/hear” the message when it is relevant to them. **Parents and other caretakers must be exposed to the messages as many times as is necessary to understand the message**
- When parents experience having a baby that cries a lot, even for one day, **they need something immediately that can give them accurate and supportive advice so they do not get frustrated with the baby.** They need permission to put the baby down in a safe place and walk away for awhile and take some time to calm down when they become frustrated

8. What is the process for implementation of the *PURPLE* program?

The Program has two aims. The first aim is to support caregivers in their understanding of early increased infant crying. The second aim is to reduce the incidence of shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma. The *PURPLE* program is designed to educate parents and others about the normal properties of early infant crying, and to reduce the stress and frustration parents experience when they have a baby who cries. In this aim, it is similar to the “Back to Sleep” campaign for the reduction of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). This approach brought about a cultural change in the way we put babies to sleep. The *PURPLE* program has been designed to change the way we understand early increased infant crying so that parents and caregivers will have reasonable expectations for their baby and for themselves as caregivers. Since the program is designed to bring about a cultural change in attitudes and beliefs about infant crying, we recommend the following triple dose approach.

Dose One: Delivery of the *PURPLE* Program Materials to Parents

Dose One: Delivery describes delivery of the intervention materials to parents of all newly born infants via a demonstration of the materials by a trained educator or provider. This would replicate current “best practice” on the basis of available studies. The timing of each Dose delivery depends on a number of factors; however, the first Dose of the program needs to take place within the first two weeks of the baby’s life before the baby’s crying increases. The timing of each Dose delivery depends on a number of factors; the first Dose of the program needs to take place within the first two weeks of the baby’s life before the baby’s crying increases. For example, a maternity delivery setting is ideal because it is universal, meaning most babies are delivered at hospitals.

The *Period of PURPLE Crying*® is a registered trademark and all content is copyright protected. All Rights Reserved, Ronald G. Barr, MD, MDCM, FRCPC and the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (2004–2016). Revised 10/16/2016.

Home visiting programs, pediatric well baby visits and public health, to name a few, have also been a good fit for Dose One: Delivery.

Dose Two: Reinforcement of the Messages

Dose Two reinforces important messages of the program to parents, such as, “babies can still be healthy and normal even if they cry five hours per day” and the “the crying will come to an end.” Reinforcement of the messages often takes place at public and state department of health programs, home visiting, and/or pediatric well baby visits. The services available in the community will determine where parents receive the second dose. Dose Two: Reinforcement is a little more flexible in terms of timing than Dose One: Delivery, generally occurring throughout the first three months following the baby’s birth.

Dose Three: Public Education Campaign Toolkit

The third Dose is a public education campaign. Dose Three is important to make sure that all other members of society hear about and understand the *Period of PURPLE Crying*. The online training modules have a Dose Three Public Education Campaign Toolkit with resources and downloadable assets for small or large campaigns, single events (like a radio or TV advertisement) and case studies describing events and successful campaigns. The timing for Dose Three is not set to the timing of a baby’s birth. It is dependent upon a jurisdiction or an organization’s capacity to educate the community where Dose One: Delivery, and ideally Dose Two: Reinforcement, is occurring.

9. Can the PURPLE video be shown in the hospital and be given to the parents?

Yes, it is recommended that hospitals who invest in the program model provide at a minimum a 3-minute presentation at the bedside or in a discharge class about the *Period of PURPLE Crying*, show the 10-minute *PURPLE* video and answer any questions about the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program. Talking points are provided for the presentation. However, each family must receive their own copy of the program materials as this is the tested model. The program is also designed to be presented at pre-natal programs, discharge classes, child care classes, health departments, and other places where families are served. These sources of information serve as “enhancements” or “reinforcements” of the program. Talking points are available for these settings as well so that the message remains consistent and correct. The NCSBS offers a Copyright Permission Form for those organizations interested in uploading the 10-minute *PURPLE* video to closed circuit television systems. Ask the *PURPLE* staff for more information or request the copyright release form at PURPLE@dontshake.org.

10. How much does the program cost?

The tested model is that each family of a new baby receives their own set of program materials. The materials are distributed in two forms and can be purchased as either; DVD/booklet or APP/booklet. They both include a 10-minute *PURPLE* video, full color 10-page reading materials and a 17-minute video called *Crying, Soothing, and Coping: Doing What Comes Naturally*.

The cost of the *PURPLE* program materials are offered at the following flat rates (plus shipping fees)

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>PURPLE</i> Booklet + DVD: | <i>PURPLE</i> Booklet + DVD: | <i>PURPLE</i> Booklet + App: |
| \$2.30 per package for | \$3.50 per package for | \$2.00 per package |
| English, Spanish and French | All Other Languages | English, Spanish and French |

The *PURPLE* program is not distributed in increments of less than 100. For orders of 10,000 or more, the NCSBS offers complimentary personalization on the Parent Reminder Card that is located within the booklet. This may include information like local contact numbers, program sponsors and logos.

11. What other materials for the PURPLE program do you have?

The NCSBS has developed additional materials to be used as enhancements or to reinforce the message. Some items include a:

- Community Flyer
- Reminder Poster in English and Spanish plus

The *Period of PURPLE Crying*® is a registered trademark and all content is copyright protected. All Rights Reserved, Ronald G. Barr, MD, MDCM, FRCPC and the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (2004–2016). Revised 10/16/2016.

- Bilingual English and Spanish
- Visual Aids for Classes
- Crying Curve Graph in English and Spanish
- *PURPLE* Acronym in English and Spanish
- Talking Points
- 3-Minute Delivery Talking Point Instructions
- 10-Minute Delivery Talking Points
- Certificate for Parents
- Reminder Postcard
- Reinforcement Reminder Card
- Reinforcement Talking Points
- Completion of Training Certificates for Providers
- Training Quiz for Providers

12. What languages does the program come in and how much do the other languages cost?

The DVD/booklet is available in 11 languages: English, Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Somali, Cantonese, Punjabi, Korean, Japanese, Portuguese and Arabic. The App/booklet is available in 3 languages: English, Spanish, and French. The English version also had closed captioning for the hearing impaired on the DVD version. The translation process has been completed with the most sophisticated process possible for all written materials. The 10-minute *PURPLE* video in each language is not subtitles, but an overlay.

13. How am I able to preview the *PURPLE* program materials?

The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (NCSBS) has developed Online Modules on www.dontshake.org that allows professionals to view the 10-minute *PURPLE* video, 10-page booklet, and 17-minute soothing in their entirety.

14. What learning materials does the online training module contain?

The *Period of PURPLE Crying* training module includes a 30 minute narrated and non-narrated PowerPoint presentation pertaining to the lines of evidence of *PURPLE*, the 3 and 10-minute delivery talking points, the reinforcement talking points, FAQs for Professionals, and Q&A for parents. To access the training module visit NCSBS' Online Training tab of the website.

15. Are there any other available resources for parents?

Yes, www.PURPLEcrying.info is available for anyone interested in research-based child development concerns. The website expands on common questions and concerns when raising an infant. The information provided is based on published research and includes detailed interviews from experts in their respective fields from around the world. This website has articles on feeding concerns, coping with crying, soothing techniques, child care questions, and more detailed information on the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program.

16. I have heard about an initiative being organized in some jurisdictions to distribute knitted purple caps with the program materials. What is this and how can we get involved?

The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome launched a campaign to help spread awareness of the *Period of PURPLE Crying* program. The campaign called, *CLICK for Babies: Period of PURPLE Crying Caps*, is a grassroots effort which involves partnering with crafters throughout North America to help make purple colored baby caps. The caps are collected from April through October each year and then distributed in select birthing hospitals to new babies during the months of November and December. Jurisdictions are invited to participate in the campaign depending on their progress with implementation of the *PURPLE* program. To learn more about whether your jurisdiction is or can participate in the campaign contact the NCSBS at 801-447-9360 or by email at PURPLE@dontshake.org.