



Dear Readers



GET SCREENED!

Healthy Start offers services for you when you are pregnant or between pregnancies, and for your baby from birth to age three. Services are free and are not based on income, educational background or ethnic makeup. Healthy Start services are based on a “screening”—a simple set of questions to determine if there are any risks that could affect your pregnancy and your baby’s growth or development.

Services include education and counseling in childbirth, breastfeeding, parenting, nutrition, smoking cessation, and between pregnancy care.

Find out if you qualify for Healthy Start services by saying “Yes” to a Healthy Start screening! Even if you do not wish to obtain any Healthy Start services, by completing the screenings you are helping ALL mothers and their babies in your community.

Brain Injury Awareness

Preventing brain injuries in children

Traumatic brain injury is a blow or jolt to the head or an acute head injury that disrupts the function of the brain. Brain injuries are especially devastating to infants and young children, and can cause short- or long-term changes in thinking, speech, emotions, behavior and sensation. Brain injury can also cause death. Children ages 0-4 years old are at greatest risk for traumatic brain injury. One of the most tragic causes of brain injury occurs when an adult shakes an infant out of anger or frustration. This is called Shaken Baby Syndrome. Fortunately, there are many things parents can do to prevent the most common causes of brain injury: baby-proof

the home to prevent falls, ensure proper use of infant and child car seats, and practice bike safety. This issue of “Blossom” discusses prevention tips for and symptoms of traumatic brain injury in children.

Falls Infants can rollover suddenly, causing them to fall from a changing table, couch, or bed. Toddlers are always curious...and clumsy. It’s up to parents to make their child’s home and yard safe to reduce the chances of a bad fall. Never leave a baby alone on changing tables, beds, sofas or chairs. Put up baby gates to block stairways and use window guards on windows. Make sure throw rugs are

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Central Healthy Start

For more information about Healthy Start services, call your local Healthy Start Care Coordinator:

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(352) 726-1731

Hernando County
Janet Dick
(352) 540-6800

Lake County
Dianne Casson
(352) 357-1668

Sumter County
Gwen Whitehead
(352) 569-2959

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Newsletter produced by WellFlorida Council

Protect children from brain injuries by baby-proofing your home and using car and bike seats properly, cont.



secure to prevent slips and falls. Use an “exersaucer” rather than a baby walker because walkers can tip over, roll down steps or allow the baby access to unsafe areas. Young children love to climb so always be watchful for places that tempt toddlers: chairs left next to counters, windows, bookshelves and tables. Finally, make sure outside playgrounds have safety-tested rubber mats or loose-fill mulch that’s soft enough to absorb a fall (at least 9-inches deep).

Child safety seats Did you know that children who weigh 75 pounds or less and are smaller than 4’9” should be placed in a car seat or booster seat?



Seat belts are designed for average sized adults, meaning younger children do not receive the full benefits of a car’s safety belt and can even be injured by the seat belt during a crash. Be sure that: (1) the child restraint seat is the correct style for your child’s height and weight; (2) the seat is properly installed in the rear seat of the car; and (3) the child is properly buckled in the car seat every time the vehicle is in motion. *Never put an infant in the front seat of a car with airbags.* The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (see “Useful Websites” section) has guidelines for proper installation of car seats and car seat rating guides.

Installation guidelines:

- Birth to at least one year and 20 pounds: Rear-facing seat in the back seat
- Greater than one year and 20 pounds to age four and 40 pounds: Forward-facing seat in the back seat
- Age four to at least age 8, unless 4’9” tall: Booster seat in the back seat

Bicycles Riding a bicycle with a baby on board is a fun way for an adult to exercise and for the baby to get fresh air. Safety measures must be taken, however, to make sure that the baby is protected from injury should a mishap

SAY “YES” TO A HEALTHY START FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY!

Healthy Start services cover conception through maternal care for mothers and infancy-to-age-three children. In the early stages of your pregnancy, ask to be screened for Healthy Start services. After your baby is born, be sure to have your newborn screened for Healthy Start services at the hospital or birth center.

occur. Children under one year of age are too young to sit in a rear-mounted bike seat. Older children who can sit unsupported and whose necks are strong enough to support a lightweight helmet may be carried in a child trailer or rear-mounted seat. The seat must be securely attached, and should have a high back, sturdy shoulder harness

and lap belt. Make sure the correct helmet is used, one that is appropriate for the child’s age and size and that is fitted properly. Finally, avoid riding in busy streets or in bad weather. Rather, ride in safe areas such as parks or quiet streets. You’ll enjoy the journey more if you know your baby is safely on board.



Brain Injury

WORD SEEK PUZZLE

N W O D M L A C L T U S Q V
L E B S H U F T B R L S R N
C V V U N D C B R A R E R S
F X T E C M I F A U G N M Z
I R F A R K Z F I M O R J O
P G B M E S L Z N A T A O B
F F W S H S H E F T M H S D
X D E Q A S R A S I I V Y F
U A D J X Z K A K C D R A I
T H E L M E T W C E U L N U
P V U U H S F N K J L Q C F
K U G Y Z A X E N S V B K J
S K R U U J M I T G G H Y A
A Z D Z X L Y F K N C P S H

BIKE SEAT
BRAIN
BUCKLE
CALM DOWN
CAR SEAT
FALLS
HARNESS
HELMET
INJURY
NEVER SHAKE
TRAUMATIC

Did You Know?

In Florida, children ages 0-4 years are nearly twice as likely to sustain a traumatic brain injury as people in other age groups.

Useful Websites and Phone Numbers

Brain Injury Association of Florida
Information on brain injury awareness, prevention, research, education, support services and advocacy.
www.biaf.org or
1-800-992-3442

American Academy of Pediatrics
Information on car safety seats, etc. The Injury Prevention Program (TIPP) link provides age-related safety sheets.
www.aap.org/healthtopics/safety.cfm

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
Information on Shaken Baby Syndrome and tips to help parents cope with a crying baby.
www.dontshake.org

Crisis Hotlines for Parents under Stress
1-800-FLA-LOVE
(1-800-352-5683) or
1-800-4-A-CHILD
(1-800-422-4453)

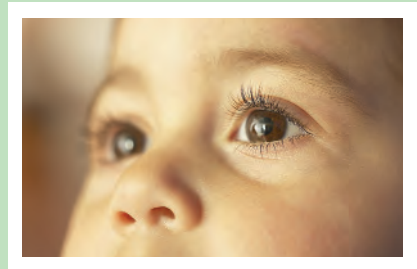
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Child passenger safety ratings, information on car seats.
www.nhtsa.gov



Central Healthy Start Administrative Office
1785 NW 80th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32606
Tel: (352) 313-6500 | Fax: (352) 313-6515
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If you would like a presentation or more information regarding Healthy Start, contact your local Community Liaison:

Blaire Peterson
(352) 228-9047
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Shaken Baby Syndrome: Never, Ever, Shake a Baby!



Taking care of an infant can be stressful. Sometimes, feelings of frustration and anger are overwhelming: maybe the baby won't stop crying or there are difficulties with toilet training or feeding. If a parent or caregiver reacts by shaking the baby, the results can be devastating. A baby's brain is not fully grown, their neck muscles are weak and their head is large and heavy. Because of this, shaking a baby causes its brain to move inside the skull with bruising and tearing of blood vessels. The

result may be permanent brain damage, blindness, cerebral palsy, seizures or death. The key to prevention is for parents and caregivers to recognize feelings of frustration and anger and take steps to be sure these emotions are not taken out on the infant. Helpful steps include:

- Remember, it's normal for babies to cry
- Avoid disciplining your child when you're angry
- Take a deep breath and count to 20
- Make sure the baby is in a safe place and take a time out
- Call a friend or relative for help with the baby so you can calm down
- Hire a sitter if you need time away from the stresses of parenting
- Call the Parent Helpline at 1-800-352-5683

Brain Injury Symptoms

If your child suffers a blow, jolt or acute injury to the head, be alert for the symptoms listed below and get prompt medical attention. It's better to be safe rather than sorry.

- Cannot be awakened (call 911)
- Seems increasingly sleepy
- Cannot stop vomiting
- Has a seizure
- Daydreams or has a fixed stare
- Has dramatic mood swings—annoyed, sad or restless
- Cannot see clearly; has blurred or double vision
- Does not speak clearly
- Seems confused; doesn't recognize you
- Has blood or clear liquid from the nose or ears
- Has more headaches or neck stiffness
- Has different-sized eye pupils
- Has problems walking
- Is dizzy

Did You Know?

A baby's brain is the consistency of gelatin—forceful shaking can cause tearing, bruising and bleeding in the brain. This can cause severe brain damage or death.