



Key talking points

This intervention should last no longer than 6 minutes of professional talking time.

Different parents will have different questions and the intervention may take longer with some than with others.

This is an important time to discuss this topic with male partners and every effort should be made to deliver this short intervention when the male partner is present, making sure they are as involved as possible and that questions are directed to them as well as to the mother.

You will need:

- The ICON leaflet
- Local ICON products (e.g. fridge magnet and Dad Pad information)
- Coping with Crying: My Personal ICON Plan

1. Step One: Infant crying is normal and it will stop

It's a good idea to deliver this message alongside the information about safe sleep. This information is also included on the ICON leaflet and is a good starting point and a way to lead into the topic of crying. If babies aren't asleep, they are sometimes crying.

Start with 'Hello my name is.... I just want to spend a few minutes talking with you about why and when babies cry and give you some information to take home with you'.

Ask what the parents/partners know about why babies cry and whether they knew that increased crying between 2 and 8 weeks is normal.

Go through the leaflet starting at the beginning and emphasising that it is normal for babies to cry more frequently from 2 weeks, reaching a peak at 6-8 weeks then starting to cry less and less each week.

Acknowledge that a baby's cry is designed to get your attention and can be frustrating and worrying.

Highlight that if they are worried their baby is not well or need some reassurance, they can talk with their Health Visitor, Midwife or GP.

2. Step Two: Comfort methods can sometimes soothe a baby and the crying will stop.

Talk about ways to comfort a crying baby. Ask what methods the parents/partners have tried or thought about trying to comfort a crying baby? If they're an experienced parent ask what methods they have tried in the past and what they find works. Talk through the techniques referred to in the leaflet.

Mention that sometimes, a baby will continue to cry for no obvious reason and that it doesn't necessarily mean they are doing anything wrong. They need to think about what they can do, to keep themselves calm, which will help them to cope with the baby's crying.

Ask the parents/partners to jot their ideas on the **C** section of their 'My Personal ICON Plan'

- **Comfort methods they can try....**
- **Who will they call if the crying won't stop?**
- **What will they do if they need a few minutes to themselves? What makes them feel better?**

This is an opportunity to reinforce that if they are worried that the crying won't stop, it's OK to contact a health professional such as their HV, Midwife, GP or 111.

3. Step Three: It's OK to walk away if you have checked the baby is safe and the crying is getting to you.

Ensure that the parents/partners understand that walking away from their baby is a strategy for coping and that they should try to comfort and soothe the baby before employing this method.

Make sure you emphasise that the parents/partners must make sure the baby is safe before walking away and emphasise that they must gently place the baby in a cot or Moses basket.

After walking away, they should go back to check on baby after a few minutes when they feel calmer. This is an opportunity for the parents/partners to call someone they've listed for help and support.

Emphasise the need for parents/partners to find time for themselves to help them cope through what can be a really stressful time for all parents/partners.

4. Step Four: Never ever shake or hurt a baby.

Refer to the leaflet 'What not to do' and point out how some people looking after babies can sometimes get so angry and frustrated with a baby's cry that they lose control and shake or hurt their baby, which is very dangerous and can lead to lifelong injuries and potentially death.

Suggest to the parents/partners that it is important that they share the ICON information with everyone who looks after their baby as it's not only parents who get frustrated by a baby's cry.

Finally: ICON – Babies Cry, You Can Cope

Go to the ICON message in the leaflet and run through the acronym to reiterate everything you have just said.

Reiterate the DadPad App.

Suggest that they put their 'Coping with Crying: My Personal ICON Plan' somewhere where they can see it easily (e.g. pinned to the fridge etc)

Ask the parent/carers if they have any questions.