If you’re pushed to the limit
Ask for help as quickly as possible. You should never smack, hit or shake your baby. Rough handling, especially shaking, is dangerous and can cause serious damage.

Getting help
Many organisations exist to help parents. Some have been set up by parents who felt the support wasn’t there for them when they had their own babies. Remember, you aren’t alone. Many parents would ask for help if they knew it was available. Here are some of the key organisations:

- **Council for Disabled Children**
  Tel: 020 7943 0611/0658
  Provides an information and advice service on all matters relating to disability, children and their families.

- **Home-Start UK**
  Tel: 0111 233 9055
  Volunteers offer support, friendship and practical help to young families in their own homes.

- **Meet-A-Mum Association**
  Tel: 020 7671 5585
  Helpline: 020 8766 0123
  (Mon-Fri 7pm-10pm)
  Provides counseling, practical support and group therapy for women suffering postnatal depression.

- **National Childbirth Trust (NCT)**
  Enquiry line: 020 8902 3857
  Website: www.nct-online.org
  Widely known for ante-natal classes, but also provides local post-natal support groups for parents.

- **Parentline Plus**
  Helpline: 0808 800 0222
  Telephone: 0800 783 8783
  Website: www.parentlineplus.org.uk
  Parentline is the free confidential helpline run by Parentline Plus for anyone in a parenting role, including step-parents and those experiencing family change.

- **Serene**
  (Including the Cy-sis Helpline)
  Helpline: 020 7404 5911
  (Barn-11pm)
  Provides emotional support and practical advice to parents dealing with excessive crying, demanding behaviour and sleep problems.

- **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline**
  The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service which provides counseling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.

- **NSPCC Child Protection HELPLINE**
  0808 800 5000
  Textphone: 0800 356 0566

This leaflet has been supported by

NSPCC
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

NSPCC National Centre
42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH
Tel: 020 7825 2500
Website: www.nspcc.org.uk
Registered Charity Number 216401
All parents of young babies get stressed and feel at times that they have been pushed to their limit. We want parents to know that support is available.

The NSPCC has launched a campaign to protect babies as part of its wider FULL STOP Campaign to protect all children. This leaflet highlights some of the emotions parents experience. It also provides contact information so you can request help, advice and information.

Being a parent is probably the most valuable and rewarding job in the world. Caring for a baby can also be very demanding. Even the most loving and attentive parents experience frustration and sometimes this can lead to babies being harmed. We know that most of these incidents can be prevented.

Having a baby is a life-changing event
Babies are dependent on you for their every need. Some parents make this adjustment more easily than others. It often takes time for loving feelings to grow, so don’t worry - just try to spend time getting to know your baby.

Every baby is different
Some babies cry a lot, others may not respond to you in the way you would like. Crying is the only way babies can communicate their needs, such as hunger or discomfort. If your baby’s crying is getting to you, take a deep breath and let it out slowly, put the baby down in a safe place like a cot or pram and take a break. If possible ask your partner or a friend to take over for a while.

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Ask for help as quickly as possible. You should never smack, hit or shake your baby. Rough handling, especially shaking, is dangerous and can cause serious damage.

Helping you to protect your baby

Need support and understanding?
Take advantage of any offer of help you receive from caring friends or relatives. Your health visitor, midwife, GP and local social services can provide you with information and support. Never be afraid to ask; they’ll be glad to help.

Sad or confused?
Most mothers experience the ‘baby blues’ briefly after giving birth, however, around one in 10 mothers suffers from long-term post-natal depression. A difficult birth can add to these feelings. Talk to other mothers if you can, or your health visitor or GP will be able to help.

Feeling exhausted?
In the early days it’s a good idea for you to rest when your baby is asleep. It takes time for a baby to establish a night-time sleep pattern.

Lonely?
Don’t forget to take care of your own needs and spend time with friends or other parents. If you feel lonely, ask your health visitor or GP about local support groups.

Domestic violence?
If there is violence in your household seek help to protect yourself and your baby.

Other difficulties?
For advice about any aspect of caring for your baby, talk to your health visitor or GP. Social services can provide support to families under stress (look in the phone book under your local authority).

See overleaf for organisations that can help.

The NSPCC offers a wide range of resources, including parenting publications, which are available FREE of charge.

Please send an A4 stamped addressed envelope (with two 1st class stamps) to: Publications Unit, NSPCC National Centre, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH or call the Publications Unit direct for more information on 020 7825 2775 Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Please tick box to request further information:

☐ Handle With Care - how to hold and look after your baby, including advice on how to cope with persistent crying
☐ Putting Children First - advice on the care of 0-5 year olds
☐ Listening to Children - a colourful booklet for parents on how to listen to children
☐ Stress - A Guide for Parents/Tips To Beat Stress - easy to read, the guide will help you identify and manage stress and the leaflet offers some simple stress solutions
☐ Behave Yourself - colourful leaflet providing a positive approach to managing your children’s behaviour

Information and advice sheets
☐ Child protection  ☐ Crying and colic  ☐ Especially for dads
☐ Feelings and memories  ☐ Getting to know your baby
☐ How mothers feel  ☐ Sibling rivalry  ☐ Sleeping
☐ Take the stress test

Name: ____________________________ Postcode: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
e-mail: ____________________________