ASSEMBLY, No. 2884

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Sponsored by:
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SYNOPSIS

Establishes public awareness campaign concerning Period of PURPLE Crying program and shaken baby syndrome.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/1/2021)

AN ACT concerning the Period of PURPLE Crying program and shaken baby syndrome and supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. The Period of PURPLE Crying describes a period of increased and unsoothable crying in infants that begins at about two weeks of age, peaks in the second month of life, and continues until about three to four months of age.

b. There are other common characteristics of this period which are better described by the acronym PURPLE: Peak of crying; Unexpected and unexplained crying; Resists soothing; Pain-like face; Long-lasting crying; and Evening or late afternoon crying. During the Period of PURPLE Crying, some infants cry more, others less, but all infants experience increased crying as a normal part of early childhood development.

c. Shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma are terms used to describe the collection of signs and symptoms resulting from violent shaking or shaking and impacting of the head of an infant or small child. Shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma most often occur when an infant or child won’t stop crying or is experiencing toilet training difficulties and feeding problems.

d. The Period of PURPLE Crying program is an educational, evidence-based shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma prevention program offered in hospitals and other community based organizations to support parents and caregivers in their understanding of increased and unsoothable infant crying and help reduce the incidence of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma.

e. A public awareness campaign to provide information about the Period of PURPLE Crying program, increased and unsoothable infant crying, shaken baby syndrome, and abusive head trauma is in the public interest and will serve the interests of public safety in this State.

2. a. The Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the Commissioner of Children and Families, shall establish a public awareness campaign to inform parents and caregivers about:

(1) the Period of PURPLE Crying program, increased and unsoothable infant crying, shaken baby syndrome, and abusive head trauma; and

(2) preventive measures that may be taken by parents and caregivers to promote child safety and protect against injuries or death caused by shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma.

b. The commissioner shall, at a minimum:

(1) make available electronically on the Departments of Health and Children and Families Internet websites, in English and Spanish, information about the Period of PURPLE Crying program, increased and unsoothable infant crying, shaken baby syndrome, and abusive head trauma; and

(2) disseminate information for distribution to parents and caregivers, through a variety of entities, including, but not limited to, local health agencies and clinics, physicians and advanced practice nurses, health care facilities, birthing facilities, licensed child care centers, pharmacies, libraries, Division of Child Protection and Permanency local offices, and other community-based outreach programs and organizations.

3. The Commissioner of Health shall report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than 24 months after the effective date of this act, on the activities and accomplishments of the public awareness campaign.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the Commissioner of Children and Families, to establish a public awareness campaign to provide information to parents and caregivers about the Period of PURPLE Crying program, increased and unsoothable infant crying, shaken baby syndrome, and abusive head trauma, and preventive measures that may be taken by parents and caregivers to promote child safety and protect against injuries or death caused by shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma.

The Commissioner is required to: make, at a minimum, information about the Period of PURPLE Crying program, increased and unsoothable infant crying, shaken baby syndrome, and abusive head trauma available electronically on the Departments of Health and Children and Families websites; disseminate information to parents and caregivers through a variety of entities, including, but not limited to, local health agencies and clinics, physicians and advanced practice nurses, health care facilities, birthing facilities, licensed child care centers, pharmacies, libraries, Division of Child Protection and Permanency local offices, and other community-based outreach programs and organizations; and report to the Governor and the Legislature concerning the activities and accomplishments of the public awareness campaign within two years of the effective date of the bill.

The Period of PURPLE Crying describes a period of increased and unsoothable crying in infants that begins at about two weeks of age, peaks in the second month of life, and continues until about three to four months of age. There are other common characteristics of this period which are better described by the acronym PURPLE: Peak of crying; Unexpected and unexplained crying; Resists soothing; Pain-like face; Long-lasting crying; and Evening or late afternoon crying.

While the Period of PURPLE Crying is a normal developmental phase for infants, increased and unsoothable crying often leads to shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma when a parent or caregiver shakes an infant out of frustration or anger.

The Period of PURPLE Crying program is an educational, evidence-based shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma prevention program offered in hospitals and other community based organizations to support parents and caregivers in their understanding of increased and unsoothable infant crying and help reduce the incidence of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma.

A public awareness campaign to provide information to parents and caregivers about the Period of PURPLE Crying program, increased and unsoothable infant crying, shaken baby syndrome, and abusive head trauma is in the public interest and will serve the interests of public safety in this State.