

# Teen Parenting

# Rules!



Pregnancy • Parenting • Prevention

## Watching Over Your Child

### Choosing Child Care

#### What should you look for?

Watch how the caregiver works with the children or your child. Drop by and spy. Look around for a clean and safe environment for your child. Trust your gut. If something doesn't feel right, it may not be right.

#### Questions to ask a caregiver.

- Can I examine all of the areas my child will use?
- Have staff members received up-to-date first aid and CPR training?
- Do you have a nurse who works here?
- How do you like working here?
- Would you leave your child here?

#### Questions to ask yourself.

- Does the staff seem to enjoy the children, and do the children seem happy?
- Are there enough caregivers present at all times?
- Is there a clean diaper changing area and clean bathroom?
- Is your first reaction to the program that it would be a good, loving and safe environment for your child?

*Adapted from [www.americanbaby.com](http://www.americanbaby.com)*



#### Guidelines for Your Child's Safety

Do not assume that just because your child couldn't do it yesterday, he or she cannot do it today.

#### Never leave your child alone.

Try to be very careful when you have company or are visiting other people's homes.

Know that even the most careful child proofing can not replace watching your child.

# Teen Parenting Rules!

A publication of:



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
Rhode Island

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Family & Children's Trust Fund  
Administered by RI DCYF

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For additional copies or  
parenting tips, please call  
Prevent Child Abuse  
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401-728-7920  
Visit our website at  
[www.preventchildabuse-ri.org](http://www.preventchildabuse-ri.org)

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child abuse or neglect call  
1-800-RI-CHILD

## Shaken Baby Syndrome

by Ronald Garcia

Shaken Baby Syndrome is a serious problem that parents need to be aware of. Shaking a baby is very dangerous for a baby's health. If you shake a baby it can cause brain damage, blindness, cerebral palsy, hearing loss, spinal cord injury, seizures, learning disabilities, and even death.

Shaken Baby Syndrome often happens when a parent becomes frustrated because the baby is crying a lot. Many parents think it is harmless to shake a baby when he or she is crying. Researchers have found that 25-50% of caretakers or parents don't know the effects of shaking a baby.

**25% of all babies that are shaken die.**

### Here are some ideas to deal with frustration and help a crying baby:

- Change the baby's diaper.
- Walk or rock your baby.
- Check if the baby is hungry.
- Play with him or her.
- Give the baby a warm bath.
- Make sure your baby is not sick. Check for fever.
- Sing a song or put music on.
- Wrap your baby with a warm blanket.
- Give him a pacifier or a teether.
- Put her in a safe place like a crib.
- Call a friend or parent.
- Take a break.

Adapted from Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island

**Crying  
doesn't harm  
a baby, but  
shaking  
does.**



## Interview With A Teen Mom

by Carleen Mylers



**Carleen:** How did you feel when you found out that you were pregnant?

**LEAH:** I felt scared, happy and confused.

**Carleen:** What does child supervision mean to you?

**LEAH:** Making sure your child is safe and out of harm.

**Carleen:** How do you choose who you leave your child with?

**LEAH:** I try to choose family members who I trust. If not a family member, someone I feel comfortable with and that has experience with children.

**Carleen:** How do you deal with stress?

**LEAH:** I try to get quiet time, time to myself, and relax.

**Carleen:** The people who you do choose to leave your child with may not deal with stress the same way you do. Do you know what Shaken Baby Syndrome is and do you think your baby could be a victim?

**LEAH:** Yes, I do. Only because he is still young, and people might get frustrated and shake him to quiet him. You never know. It could happen to the people you trust.

**Carleen:** Are you aware that statistics show that males are more likely to shake a baby than females?

**LEAH:** No, I did not know that. I guess that males are more aggressive than females, and they get frustrated and can't really deal with their feelings like women can.

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# The Joy of Being a Dad

An Interview by Ronald Garcia

Salvador is a 26-year-old father who had his first child while he was a teenager. Salvador now has six children and he works hard to be a part of their lives. Salvador is a member of the Fathers Program at the Federal Hill House in Providence.

## *Can you describe your children to me?*

Michael looks like his father; he's very funny and hyper. Kagmare is very lovable, nice and always smiling. Kimberly is quiet and likes to write and draw. Gaesha always likes to be with her mother or father, and is very active. Kathy plays a lot and likes to clean. Nicole likes watching cartoons and playing.

## *How does it feel to be a father?*

It feels good. It changes your character in a positive way.

## *What are the biggest joys of being a father?*

Being with my kids and playing with my kids.

## *How does your presence affect your child?*

My presence makes them happy. They run to me and start saying "Daddy, Daddy."

## *What goals or dreams do you have for your children?*

Be successful, get their education, and work. I try to discipline them so that they can have a better future.

## *What goals do you have for yourself?*

Keep on trying to live, and have a better life for me and my kids. I keep on struggling for my kids.

## *What qualities do you have that make you a good father?*

Talking with my kids, playing with them, taking them to different places.



## The Fathers Program—Helping Teen Dads

The overall goal of the Fathers Program at Federal Hill House is to assist young fathers and fathers-to-be. The program guides fathers into becoming self-sufficient, independent and responsible individuals. The Fathers Program works with fathers in five areas:

**Self-Development:** Fathers gain self-respect, self-esteem and self-control. By gaining these qualities and eliminating self-destructive behavior, fathers begin to live positive lifestyles.

**Family Development:** Fathers receive help improving relationships between themselves and their children and improving relationships with the mother of their children.

**Education Development:** The program helps fathers continue their own educations and become involved with the education of their children.

**Employment/Financial Development:** The program helps fathers prepare for and find jobs.

**Support Group:** The support group gives members the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they are facing.

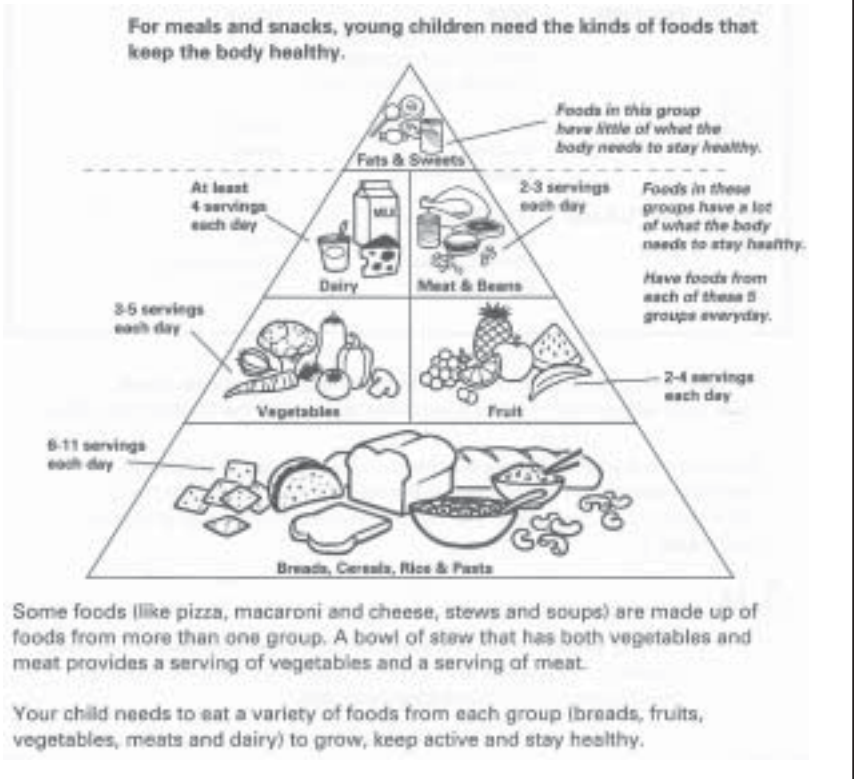
**To become involved with the Fathers Program at Federal Hill House in Providence, contact Damon Harris at (401) 421-4722.**

# Keep Your Children Healthy

by Carleen Mylers

## Nutrition Rules

- Teach healthy eating habits to your children.
- Learn about foods and nutrition. Log on to [www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/)
- Offer food in tasty and nutritious ways. Try making faces out of food.
- Be a role model. Children are imitators.
- Avoid “junk food” snacks.



# Food Safety

## What foods can be harmful to your child?

Some foods can be a danger to your child because...

Your child may not have fully developed good chewing and swallowing skills.

Your child may not have the necessary teeth for chewing.

Your child may be allergic to a certain type of food.

The food might have dangerous germs if it's undercooked.

## PREVENT YOUR CHILD FROM CHOKING

Avoid whole grapes, raw carrots, raisins, apples, hot dogs, popcorn, hard candies, nuts, and thick food like peanut butter or some baby foods.

Hard foods like carrots or apples can be given if they are cooked or grated. Thinning down food can help, such as adding milk to cereal.

Your child should never be left alone while eating. Even safe foods can become choking hazards.

Your child should never be allowed to run or play while eating.

Adapted from [www.americanbaby.com](http://www.americanbaby.com)

# Get Help When You Need It

## Rlte Care

**1-800-462-1300**

Health insurance for children and families who qualify.

## Travelers' Aid Helpline

**1-800-367-2700**

**401-351-6500**

Housing Assistance

**401-521-2255**

## Project Link

Women & Infants' Hospital

**401-453-7610**

Treatment of substance abuse for pregnant and parenting women.

## Family Independence Program

Rhode Island  
Department of Human  
Services (DHS)

**1-800-DHS-3322**

Offers help with child care expenses, food stamps, job training and more to families who qualify.

## Parenting Help on the Net

[www.sesamestreet.com](http://www.sesamestreet.com)

When the street sign comes up, click on it and take a stroll! Lots of stuff for both parents and kids.

[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

National SAFEKIDS website gives you everything you need to know to keep your children safe.

## DCYF Family Services Offices

Working toward strengthening and supporting families in need.

### Providence

101 Friendship Street,  
Providence

401-528-3502

### East Providence to Jamestown

530 Wood Street,  
Bristol

401-254-7000

### Kent and Washington Counties

650 Ten Rod Road,  
North Kingstown

401-294-5300

### North and Northwestern Rhode Island

249 Roosevelt Avenue,  
Pawtucket

401-721-2400

## Save the Date

Saturday, April 12, 2003

## 13th Annual Parenting Matters Conference

Workshops and a resource center offer practical information on raising and caring for children.

8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Toll Gate High School

Warwick

Sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse RI, Bradley Hospital and Hasbro Children's Hospital

Registration Information

**401-728-7920 or**

**401-444-4800**

[www.preventchildabuse-ri.org](http://www.preventchildabuse-ri.org)

## The Teen Health Center at Planned Parenthood

111 Point St. Providence

Mon. 3:30 - 7:30 p.m.

247 Roosevelt Ave. Pawtucket

Wed. 4:30 - 7:30

**401-421-9620**

## Receive Teen Parenting Rules!

If your agency would like to receive *Teen Parenting Rules!* please call 401-728-7920. The publication can be drop-shipped in bundles of 50.