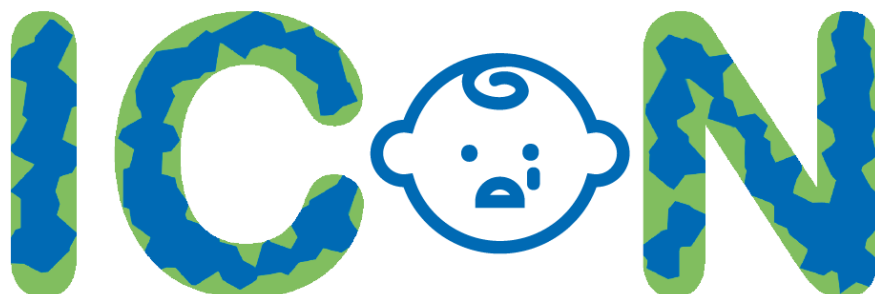


# NEWS UPDATE



## Babies Cry, You Can Cope

**DATE: OCTOBER 2020**

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### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR – JANE SCATTERGOOD

Dear Colleagues,

We now all know that we are facing another lockdown period and what this means for families, especially families with babies and especially those families living in what is sometimes termed 'pressure-cooker homes'. We need to continue to support families and help them cope with a crying baby by continuing to drive forward ICON. We know the incidence of Abusive Head Trauma is rising and if we can reduce that rise our efforts will be worth it!

This month's Newsletter certainly sees a huge amount of activity, not least of which has been the commissioning of ICON by NHSE/I Midlands to join NHSE/I North! Welcome colleagues in East and West Midlands.

It was so good to hear from colleagues at the quarterly National Strategic Group in October and hear about the fantastic and creative work that is going on. We have mentioned Sefton, Cheshire East and Lancashire in this Newsletter knowing there is a huge amount going on elsewhere.

I have been working hard behind the scenes contacting the BBC with a suggestion that we might include the ICON messages in Tiny Happy People, an initiative I was involved with recently.

I have also been reaching out to breastfeeding/infant feeding helplines asking if they will include the ICON message and advice in their interactions with parents who phone for help. Earlier in the year, I contacted the National Breastfeeding helpline and Sue Smith provided some training for their volunteer call handlers which was very well received.

You will see that we have been forging stronger links with colleagues such as SAPHNA, Dadpad and Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust. These are important partnerships which will help ICON become embedded. These partnerships also support our response to the latest research which underlines our 'future focus'. This paper was shared at the last National Strategic Group and is essential reading. It is available along with the other papers for the October meeting on our members portal.

Speaking of our members portal, I hope you have all managed to log on and are enjoying access to a range of materials and updates. A key update is the new 'Train the Trainers' presentation with voiceover and script. This will no longer be available directly through the website so please ensure you can access it via the members portal. If you are having any difficulties, please let us know at [info@iconcope.org](mailto:info@iconcope.org)

Our 'I' is for Infant Crying is Normal infographic will shortly be available on the website so watch out for that. A sneaky preview is provided below.

**PLEASE** take some time to check out the 'Browsealoud' translation function on the ICON website. Instructions are given below. We really need to know if this is something that colleagues will find helpful in maximising inclusivity of ICON.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful parents/families group for their powerful and profound contribution to our Newsletter last month. Reading it has reinforced for me the reason why I am involved in ICON, and I'm sure it has had the same impact on you. It was also good to hear that the parents themselves found something positive in putting the newsletter together. Thank you!

Kind Regards,

*Jane*

# I is for Infant Crying is Normal

Further to our successful 'C' is for Comforting infographic, we are about to make available 'I' is for Infant Crying is Normal. Following the same style it goes into more detail about the normal curve of infant crying and the age at which it becomes purposeful. With input from colleagues and Infant mental health specialists, we think this is another useful tool to keep in your ICON kit bag. You may choose to reproduce the infographic as a poster or keep it digitally to go through with some parents. This will appear on the website in early November.

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



## I is for Infant Crying is Normal

Babies cry for many reasons. They are hardwired to cry whenever they need a parent to help them out because their brains have yet to develop the circuits that allow for self-control or understanding. Crying is meant to be upsetting for a parent, that is Nature's way of making sure they pay attention fairly promptly. A cry might signal many things, discomfort and startle are common examples. Sometimes, though babies cry for no reason at all and sometimes they cry and just cannot be settled. The latter may be upsetting for both baby and parent, but it causes no harm and will eventually cease. After about 5 months the experts say that crying becomes more 'purposeful'. That means **after 5 months of age**, your baby is more likely to be crying for a reason.



The 'Normal Crying Curve' shows how babies start to cry more frequently at about 2 weeks of age. The crying may get more frequent and last longer during the next few weeks, hitting a peak at about 6–8 weeks, sometimes a little later. Every baby is different but after about 2–3 months, babies start to cry less and less each week.

Source: The normal crying curve: what do we really know? Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology. 1980;22(2):169-182.



Even though it is normal for babies to cry more from about 2 weeks, it is still important to check a few basic needs. Check they aren't poorly and try some comforting methods (see C is for Comforting for more ideas about how to soothe your baby). Babies that are born prematurely start to cry more about 2 weeks after the date when they were due to be born.



Sometimes we search for a 'physical' reason for why our baby is crying. Can it be they are intolerant to cows milk? Do they have gastro reflux? All of these are normal things to think about. It might surprise you to know that research has found that most of the time there is nothing wrong with your baby that is making them cry more. They are a new human being getting used to their new environment.



Whether or not there is a reason for your baby to cry, it can be upsetting and frustrating. The crying can really get to you and it can sound worse when you are already under pressure and stress for other reasons. This is all normal. These feelings are sometimes hard to overcome. If you are finding it hard to get over them, getting some support is normal and a positive thing to do for yourself and for your baby.

When you have checked your baby's needs and tried the comforting methods you have found worked before, your baby may carry on crying. This means that their distress and your distress just add onto each other. When this happens, and it will, all you can really do is cope with the crying as much as you can and manage your feelings of stress. Knowing this is a normal phase and that will pass will help you.



It is a good idea to have a think about how you can help yourself cope at this time before it happens. That's better than waiting for it to happen. Think about the following things and you may want to write them down.

- Who can I go to for help with crying?
- What will I do if I need a few minutes to myself?
- What makes me feel better?
- What makes me feel calmer?

**If you think your baby is unwell, contact your Health Visitor, NHS 111 or your GP.**

**Remember the ICON message:**

Infant crying is normal and it will stop

Comfort methods will sometimes help and the crying will stop.

OK to walk away for a few minutes to calm down if the baby is safe and the crying is getting to you.

Never ever shake or hurt a baby.

## ICON social media report

Since 1<sup>st</sup> of March the ICON FaceBook page has reached;

- Male: 36,654 (15% of total reach)
- Female: 198,635 (85% of total reach)

Just to give some benchmark, during the **previous 6 months**, when we were not working for most of that period on the social channels, the total reach of males was 1,565.

Over the last month we have been trying to reach out to dads groups, pages and accounts to hold up ICON as a signpost. Although challenging, the social media report shared at the National Strategic Group demonstrates some signs of progress with a **27% increase in engaging men** over this period. Although the numbers are still far below engagement with women, it is nevertheless, a sign of some level of success. Everything else is on the increase. Of interest is the increase of users from Facebook at 1600%.

## Strengthening partnerships

**SAPHNA.** The first phase of the ICON programme includes primary preventative touch points within the first six to eight weeks of a baby's life when all babies start to cry more. Now that this



phase of the programme is becoming more embedded within the country, we are now keen to push forward with the next phase of the programme which includes reaching out to young people in high school to ensure they get the message so they too can cope with a baby's crying when they are caring for siblings, babysitting or looking after their own children. This has always been a recommendation for

the programme development and now is the time for us to start exploring it at pace. The ICON Executive National Strategic Group is looking forward to working in collaboration with SAPHNA in driving forward this important work to support parents and protect babies.

Sharon White OBE, CEO of the School and Public Health Association commented;

*"The School and Public Health Nurses Association ([www.saphna.co](http://www.saphna.co)), welcome the opportunity to work more closely with the ICON programme. School nurses are ideally placed to raise awareness with our young people yet to become or who are parents, those who have baby siblings or family members and those who may play a babysitting or caring role. The programme provides opportunity for School nurses to better understand the impact of a crying baby and opportunities for prevention, early help and intervention; this will, in turn, enable them to raise awareness in their contact with school aged populations. The resources, including the*

lesson plan, will be usefully used as part of 1:1, family or/and group sessions and are a good fit with the new DfE statutory Relationship and Sex Education/Health Education curriculum in which School nurses have a pivotal role. We look forward to supporting this programme and, more importantly, safeguarding our children, young people and families.” <https://saphna.co/>

**DadPad:** ICON and DadPad have supported each other in the background since ICON was launched in Hampshire in 2018. More recently ICON Founder and Programme



Advisor, Sue Smith has been speaking with DadPad Founder, Julian Bose, to maximise this strategic relationship in the endeavour to support parents and carers of babies. A starting point has been a Q &A with Sue Smith talking about ICON on the DadPad website. <https://thedadpad.co.uk/news/> If you are not already aware of this excellent resource, have a look.

**Alder Hey get the green light to use ICON:** Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust is delighted to be working in partnership with ICON to ensure support is offered to parents and families at critical times. As a specialist children and young people's organisation Alder Hey, has a key role to play in the implementation of ICON, as many babies who are admitted to Alder Hey following their birth or during the first few months of life and as a consequence of a baby's underlying health needs, there may be increased stress on parents/carers which can be exacerbated by the baby's admission to hospital.



## **NHSE/I East and West Midlands commission ICON**

After ongoing discussions with colleagues at NHS England/Improvement in East and West Midlands, it has been formally agreed that ICON will be commissioned across the whole area. Adrian Spanswick, Safeguarding Professional Lead and NHSE/I Midlands has confirmed that funding has been made available and that Midlands Safeguarding Leads have been contacted. He says “Each STP is nominating a professional lead and the first Regional ICON meeting to consider how we will progress the implementation of the ICON programme across both Midlands Region on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020.”

## Lancashire: flexible, creative and staying true to ICON!

Local Midwives have been involved in the launch and delivery of ICON in Lancashire from the outset.



*"We know that for parents and caregivers, comforting a crying baby and coping with infant crying for a long period of time can be extremely stressful. By launching ICON at our hospitals, we hope to provide some comfort to those who might be needing support by offering advice on different techniques that can help. COVID 19 restrictions and social distancing guidance*

*could potentially have a huge impact on options for coping mechanisms when baby crying becomes too much. The potential to ask extended family members or friends to care for baby when things are becoming too frustrating is now not really an option'. Additionally, we are currently at a time of unprecedented uncertainty and stress which could impact on your own emotional wellbeing and stress levels. It is therefore more important than ever that you are thinking about and planning ways to assist in coping with your baby's crying".*

To find out more about ICON and why and when babies cry these videos were produced by Carla Clarke University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay <https://www.uhmb.nhs.uk/our-services/services/maternity-services/postnatal-care> , and Lisa Maddock and Debbie Gibbons Lancashire teaching Hospitals: <https://vimeo.com/425470984>.



### Approaches to training in Lancashire



*"Following the successful ICON launch events in Lancashire a multi-agency training sub group was set up to plan for delivery of the ICON message. As our workforce covers the three local authority areas of Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire it was a priority of the group to make sure that the training we delivered was aligned to, and*

*consistent with projects and work streams delivered by partners across all areas such as the Better Start project in Blackpool. A 7 minute briefing was produced to supplement*



Training for Trainers. These briefings can be used in a number of ways to support training delivery and promote key ICON messages".

## Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership shout about the launch of ICON!

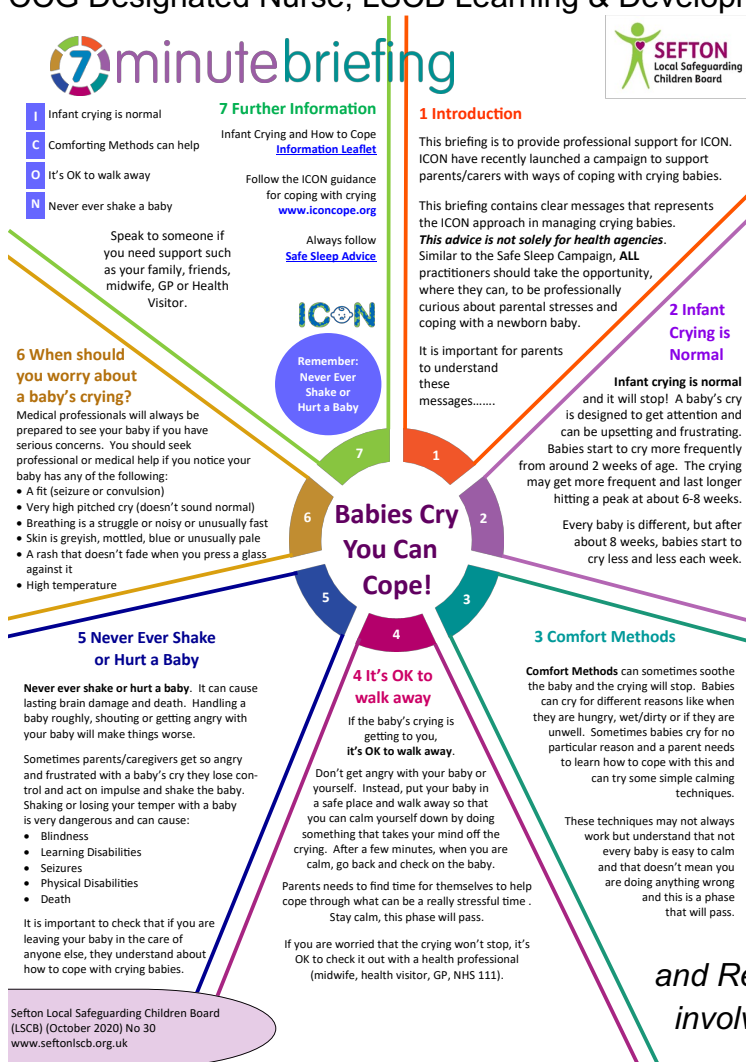
Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership did a fantastic piece on their website about their launch of ICON including comments from the GP Safeguarding Lead for both CCGs in Sefton and the Assistant Director of Safeguarding for Southport and Ormskirk Hospital Trust. It's really good to see local areas getting behind ICON and doing what they can to get the message to parents and carers of babies.

<https://mysefton.co.uk/2020/10/01/sefton-safeguarding-children-board-has-launched-new-icon-campaign/>

Sefton Public Health team have continued to progress the implementation of this programme on behalf of the partnership. A programme implementation group have met regularly to support the progress of the plan with representation from public health, CCG Designated Nurse, LSCB Learning & Development Officer, Named GP, Southport

& Ormskirk NHS Trust (midwifery service), North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (0-19 year service) as key services identified as having core touch points to deliver the message.

The launch of ICON within Sefton took place on 1<sup>st</sup> October and this date will subsequently be promoted within Sefton, on an annual basis, as "ICON Day". Promotion of ICON will continue over the next 12 months. Update meetings have been arranged to take place on a bi-monthly basis. Steve Gowland, who represents Sefton on the National Strategic Group said: "We have been able to secure an exciting promotion opportunity with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service . The promotion will involve ICON posters and images being



*attached to two Merseyside Fire and Rescue appliances (Fire Engines) based within the Sefton area. The appliances will undoubtedly cross into other areas of Merseyside and accordingly have been branded with logos NHS rather than Sefton or partnership logos. The cost of the promotion activity has been covered partly by NHSE and partly by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service itself, as part of its partnership contribution to the campaign.*

As part of the launch in Sefton, Steve and colleagues have produced this powerful 7 minute briefing was produced and is available on the website. Another example of different areas using their creativity to reach out to professionals and the public in a way they know works for their area.

The Executive National Strategic Group always approve materials and the use of the ICON branding. **New brand guidelines will be available from November.**

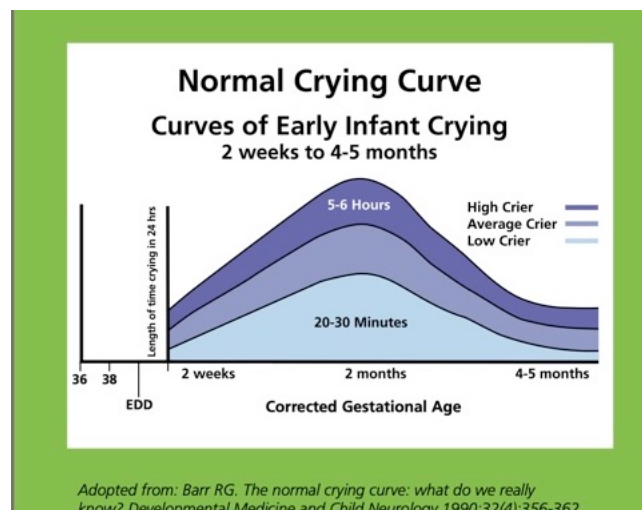
**Cheshire East** As part of the Pan Cheshire launch of ICON, Cheshire East held a webinar in October about ICON. The event was extremely well received and attended by nearly 230 professionals.

## ICON: Premature Baby

It's here! The ICON: Premature Baby leaflet is now available on our website:  
<https://iconcope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ICON-LEAFLET-Premature-Baby-FINAL.pdf>

The leaflet was designed and piloted by Professor of Neonatology Dr Jonathan Wyllie and Senior Specialist Nurse Irene Redpath at James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough supported by the Designated Nurse at North Yorkshire and York, Elaine Wyllie. The leaflet includes an adapted 'normal crying curve' after seeking permission from Dr Ronald Barr, the author of the crying curve.

This is an important addition to the ICON toolkit. Parents who finally get to take their baby home from a Neonatal Unit are often quite anxious at having full time care of their baby for the first time. They often haven't been in touch with professionals to receive the ICON message via normal touchpoints and babies tend not to cry much on the Unit. Many parents are not prepared for the



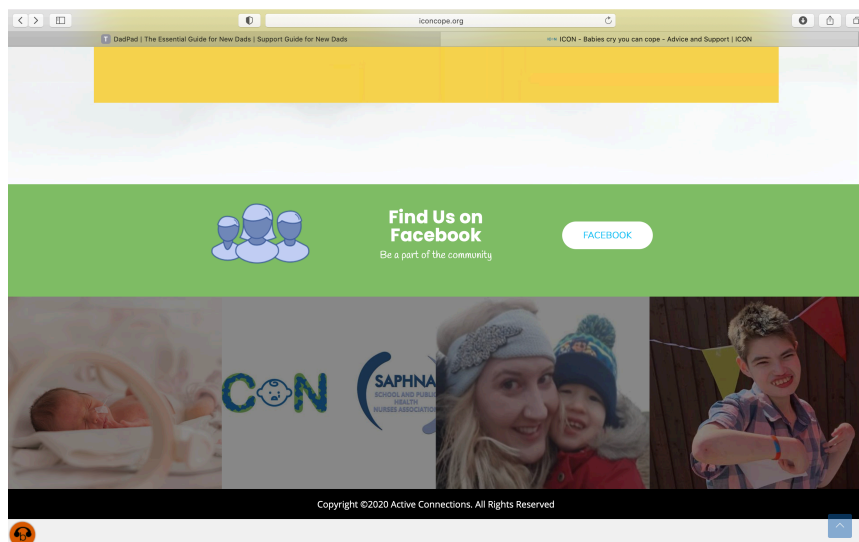


crying which starts 2 weeks after the babies due date. This leaflet empowers professionals on the Neonatal Unit to ensure parents get the same information about how to cope with a crying baby as all other parents

## BROWSEALLOUD

As you know, ICON is not an organisation and doesn't stock leaflets in other languages. Up till now we have always advised different organisations to take the download of the ICON leaflet to a printer supplier of their choice (which might be NHS Creative) and ask for the leaflet to be translated at their own cost. It is always emphasised that, even though a translated leaflet may be available, professionals will still require the services of an interpreter to go through the leaflet with parents.

We have now engaged in a 90 day trial of Browse aloud. This is a digital facility which allows you to highlight text, select the language and have it translated on the screen as



written word and/or have it spoken in the language of choice. To use this facility, you need to find the orange circle with headphones inside which is located at the bottom left hand corner of the screen (you need to accept the cookies message first). This will then make a banner appear at the top

of the screen with a selection of options. Go to the '?' symbol to find out how to navigate your way through the system.

Once you get the hang of it, it is really straightforward. Have a go and let us know your thoughts. If you like it, we can purchase the license.

## And finally ...

An update on the latest research that underlines the ICON approach and future focus is available on the members portal entitled 'AHT evidence and ICON focus UPDATED August 20'. For many of us who are asked questions about the evidence base for ICON this is important reading and draws a lot on the August special edition of the Child Abuse Review.