
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 159 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY MURT, READSHAW, BIZZARRO, R. BROWN, V. BROWN, BULLOCK, BURNS, CALTAGIRONE, SCHLEGEL CULVER, DAVIS, DIGIROLAMO, DRISCOLL, DUSH, FREEMAN, GILLEN, GOODMAN, HENNESSEY, HILL-EVANS, JAMES, KINSEY, LONGIETTI, MARSICO, McNEILL, MILLARD, RYAN, SAYLOR, SCHWEYER, SONNEY, TOOHL, WARD, WARREN, WATSON AND WHEELAND, MARCH 17, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, MARCH 17, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the week of April 16 through 22, 2017, as "Shaken
2 Baby Syndrome Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, The well-being of this generation and future
4 generations depends in great measure upon the ability and
5 dedication of those who devote themselves to make the safety,
6 welfare and well-being of our precious children their highest
7 priority; and

8 WHEREAS, Statistics show that 680,000 children were victims
9 of abuse and neglect in the United States in 2012, and according
10 to the Department of Human Services this number includes 3,565
11 children in this Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, On average, between four and seven children will die
13 every day as the result of abuse or neglect in the United
14 States; and

15 WHEREAS, The leading cause of death and disability among

1 abused children under five years of age is infant abusive head
2 trauma, including the inflicted trauma known as shaken baby
3 syndrome; and

4 WHEREAS, Shaken baby syndrome is one of the most severe forms
5 of child abuse caused by the violent shaking of an infant with
6 or without impact against an object; and

7 WHEREAS, Shaken baby syndrome and other inflicted head
8 traumas occur when a caregiver loses control and shakes a baby
9 or young child, most frequently less than one year of age or in
10 some cases as old as five years of age, resulting in blindness,
11 broken bones, cerebral palsy, brain damage, hearing loss,
12 paralysis, seizures, mental retardation, speech or learning
13 difficulties and death; and

14 WHEREAS, This abuse causes unspeakable pain and suffering to
15 our most vulnerable residents while putting enormous strain on
16 families in all communities; and

17 WHEREAS, On average across the United States, 750 to 3,750
18 infants and young children are diagnosed with shaken baby
19 syndrome every year, with medical experts believing that
20 thousands of additional cases are misdiagnosed or undetected;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Approximately one-third of victims die as a result
23 of direct brain injuries; and

24 WHEREAS, In milder cases, in which babies look normal
25 immediately after the shaking, the child may eventually develop
26 irreversible damage due to the child's injuries; and

27 WHEREAS, The most effective way to end shaken baby syndrome
28 is by preventing such abuse; and

29 WHEREAS, It is clear that minimal contributions to education
30 and prevention programs may avert enormous medical and

1 disability costs and immeasurable grief for many families; and

2 WHEREAS, Hospital-based education programs, such as the
3 nationally recognized Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention and
4 Awareness Program developed by Dr. Mark Dias of the Penn State
5 Hershey Medical Center, provide critically important information
6 about shaken baby syndrome to every parent of every child born
7 in this Commonwealth; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2002, the Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Act was
9 enacted, establishing the Shaken Baby Syndrome Education and
10 Prevention Program; and

11 WHEREAS, The Shaken Baby Syndrome Education and Prevention
12 Program partnered with the Department of Health, and in 2006,
13 Pennsylvania became the first state in the nation to provide
14 consistent hospital-based education in 100% of all birthing and
15 children's hospitals in this Commonwealth; and

16 WHEREAS, Prevention and awareness efforts are supported by
17 national and local organizations, including the Department of
18 Health, the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania, the
19 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy
20 of Pediatrics, Prevent Child Abuse Pennsylvania, the Cynthia
21 Gibbs Foundation, the SKIPPER Initiative, the National Center on
22 Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Children's Defense Fund, the Child
23 Welfare League of America, the Shaken Baby Alliance and the
24 Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance; and

25 WHEREAS, These national and local organizations all work to
26 educate new parents and caregivers and increase awareness and
27 support for victims and their families in the health care and
28 criminal justice systems; and

29 WHEREAS, Prevention and awareness efforts provide critically
30 important information about shaken baby syndrome to parents,

1 caregivers, day-care workers, child protection employees, law
2 enforcement personnel, health care professionals, the general
3 public and representatives of the justice system; therefore be
4 it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
6 week of April 16 through 22, 2017, as "Shaken Baby Syndrome
7 Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania and encourage all residents to
8 observe this week with programs and activities that share the
9 commitment of prevention, awareness, community support and
10 partnerships to protect our children from shaken baby syndrome;
11 and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commend those
13 advocates, organizations and agencies of national, State, county
14 and local governments working continuously to educate parents,
15 caregivers and professionals about the causes, consequences and
16 prevention of shaken baby syndrome and other inflicted head
17 injuries.