

# NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

## NEWBORNS AT HALIFAX REGIONAL SPORT PURPLE HATS THIS WEEK

*Child abuse prevention effort lauds the “Period of **PURPLE** Crying”*

ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC. (April 13, 2010)— **PURPLE** newborn caps replaced the traditional pink and blue on the tiny heads of infants at Halifax Regional this week. The hand-knitted caps, donated by both North Carolina Hospital Association volunteers and a wide array of individual community knitters, are a way to remind parents about the normalcy of early infant crying and how to cope with it.

The program educates parents and other caregivers about a typical stage in early infancy that is frequently misunderstood. Frustration often accompanies normal increased early infant crying, which is a key trigger to shaking. The **Period of PURPLE Crying** also promotes infant/parent bonding, and other crucial parenting skills.

The **PURPLE** program includes individual, in-hospital parent education and research-tested take-home tools; a **PURPLE** DVD and booklet to reinforce key messages so that parents understand this normal crying period in every infant’s life and how to cope with it.

Marion Sharkany, one of the key organizers of the knitting project, is the past president of the NC Hospital Volunteers Association. She immediately jumped into action when she received the call to help.

“My infant daughter cried a lot – sometimes for hours at time. And even though it was decades ago that we brought her home from the hospital, I

still remember the anxiety I felt with her inconsolable crying, the fears that I was a bad mother and the frustration that grew when I was unable to soothe her and didn't know why. If my husband and I had understood the **Period of PURPLE Crying**, we would have felt more confident, relaxed, and happier as new parents."

The North Carolina Hospital Volunteers hand-knitted more than 1,500 caps. They donated them to their local hospitals and shared extra hats with hospitals that did not have an organized volunteer guild.

Halifax Regional implemented the **Period of PURPLE Crying in 2009**, and has educated the parents of more than 700 newborns since then. Nurses from the hospital are enthusiastic about the program, seeing what a difference it can make in the lives of both parents and infants.

"This program has been received wonderfully by parents and grandparents," said Amy Joseph, RN., manager of the Birthing Center at Halifax Regional. "They appreciate the information that our nurses give them on what to expect during this stressful period. We are making this program a point of emphasis for all new families."

"It is very important that new moms be educated about Shaken Baby Syndrome," said Brittany Carter, who delivered a baby at Halifax Regional Monday. "This is my second child, and I know how frustrating it can be when the baby is crying. Sometimes there is nothing you can do to soothe them, but you just need to calm yourself down. Knowing what to expect makes it easier for me to handle."

The project started with the NC Hospital Volunteers Association and spread through a viral social media campaign. United by interest in the **Period of PURPLE Crying: Keeping Babies Safe in North Carolina**, knitters from as far away as Arizona and Alaska have joined the cause.

Said Sharkany, "We deeply thank the 5,000 nurses at 86 birthing hospitals across the state for all they do every day to educate parents about the **Period of PURPLE Crying** and to save lives. They are the real heroes here!"

By the end of 2012, 86 hospitals and birthing centers across NC will have taught the parents of more than a half-million newborns about the **Period of PURPLE Crying**. The project is a collaborative effort of the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, The Center for Child and Family Health and the University of North Carolina Injury Prevention Research Center.

Shaken Baby Syndrome is currently among the leading causes of child abuse deaths in the U.S.

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***The Period of PURPLE Crying: Keeping Babies Safe in North Carolina*** is the largest and most comprehensive evidence-based shaken baby prevention initiative in the country. By changing expectations and social norms about infant crying, the program seeks to significantly reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries that occur when frustrated caregivers shake crying babies. Please visit [www.purplecryingnc.info](http://www.purplecryingnc.info) for more information about the **Period of PURPLE Crying**.

**About Halifax Regional-**

*Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 204 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit [www.halifaxregional.us](http://www.halifaxregional.us).*