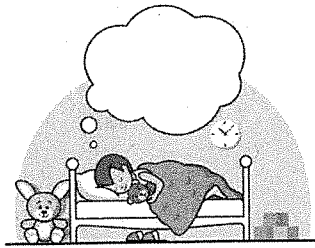


Issue: Prolonged night-time awakenings

"Natural and largely unnoticed normal awakenings actually occur between four to six times a night in all children. These awakenings are not a problem when they are brief and your child is able to fall asleep on his or her own. It is only when these night-time awakenings result in your child crying or leaving his or her bed and venturing into your bedroom that they result in a problem."

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/14296-nighttime-awakenings>



Night time awakenings can be caused by things such as hunger, illness, night terrors, nightmares and fears, as well as at the end of each sleep cycle.

The key here is to boost the child's ability to self-soothe – i.e. to fall asleep without you having to intervene

Try:

Bedtime routines:

- ✓ Establish a consistent bedtime routine where you do the same things at the same time every night in the run up to bedtime.
- ✓ This should take 20-60 minutes and will help your child, over time, develop positive sleep associations which will encourage them to fall asleep.
- ✓ This should be a calm, happy and positive time.
- ✓ No screens!

Wake up times:

- ✓ Consistent waking up times – every day of the week.
- ✓ For very young children (4 and under), any nap times should have consistent wake up times as well.

Bedroom environment & security objects:

- ✓ If your child falls asleep with a nightlight, this should remain on throughout the night. Doing this will ensure they feel more secure should they wake.
- ✓ A soft toy or a blanket can be used to help them self-soothe without the need to have you intervene.

Positive reinforcement:

- ✓ Set out a rewards system for them spending the whole night in bed. Use of sticker charts is a common approach, with an agreed treat once so many stickers have been received.
- ✓ However, don't be fooled into thinking that stickers will work with every child – you will need to work with your child to find out what they want to work towards in order to give them motivation.
- ✓ Be consistent in how you reward – don't be tempted to give in!