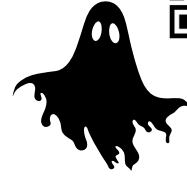


# Parasomnias

## Guidance on the management of night terrors and sleepwalking



### About

- Parasomnias are described as unusual behaviours that occur during sleep.
- The most commonly known parasomnias are night terrors and sleepwalking.
- These will commonly present in children between the ages of 2 years old, up until adolescence, but in some cases, these can continue into adulthood.
- Though night terrors and sleepwalking cannot be prevented, there are things that can make them present more often, such as being overtired, being poorly and having a high temperature, anxiety and having an irregular sleeping pattern.
- Being aware of these factors and introducing changes into your child's bedtime routine may help reduce their occurrence.

### Did you know



- **Night Terrors and Sleepwalking** happen in our deepest stage of sleep. This means that even though the person may appear to be awake, they are completely unaware of them happening and will not remember these episodes in the morning.
- **Nightmares** are different from night terrors. These happen in our REM stage of sleep. When a nightmare occurs the person will wake from their sleep and will be able to remember their bad dream.

### Top Tip Toolkit



- Ensure the bedroom is not too warm, as this can increase parasomnias. The ideal bedroom temperature is between 16 - 18 degrees.
- Try to keep a regular bedtime schedule so that your child is falling to asleep and waking up at roughly the same time each day.
- Screen use before bed can increase night terrors and sleepwalking behaviour. Try to ensure a minimum of 60 minutes of screen-free time before bed.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine and discuss any worries your child may have, downstairs before the bedtime routine starts.
- Don't wake your child if they are sleepwalking or having a night terror. Stay with them and ensure they are safe until they return back to sleep.
- Avoid talking about these episodes with your child the next morning. It could cause them to feel anxious as they will be unlikely to remember them.