

## Causes and Strategies of Sleep Regression

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### DESCRIPTION

Sleep regression is a term that parents of young children are all too familiar with. It refers to a temporary disruption in a child's sleep patterns, typically occurring around certain developmental milestones. This phenomenon can be challenging for both children and their weary parents, as it often results in sleep deprivation and increased frustration. In this article, we will delve into the definition of sleep regression, explore its possible causes, and provide strategies to help navigate this difficult phase.

Sleep regression is a period when a child, who previously had a relatively stable sleep routine, experiences a sudden and significant disruption in their sleep patterns. It can manifest as difficulty falling asleep, frequent night awakenings, shorter naps, or early morning wake-ups. Sleep regressions often coincide with significant developmental milestones such as teething, growth spurts, learning to crawl or walk, and language development.

### Causes of sleep regression

While the exact causes of sleep regression remain unclear, several factors are thought to contribute to this disruptive phase. One potential cause is rapid brain development and maturation, which can result in increased cognitive and physical abilities. As children acquire new skills, their brains may become more active during sleep, leading to restless nights. Another contributing factor is separation anxiety. As infants become more aware of their surroundings and develop a stronger bond with their caregivers, they may experience heightened anxiety when separated, even during sleep. This anxiety can disrupt their ability to self-soothe and sleep independently. Additionally, changes in the child's routine, such as transitioning from crib to bed, starting daycare, or moving to a new environment, can trigger sleep regression. These disruptions can unsettle a child's sense of security and familiarity, leading to sleep disturbances.

### Strategies to manage sleep regression

While sleep regression can be challenging, there are strategies

that parents can employ to help navigate this phase; Establish a consistent bedtime routine; A predictable routine before bed can help signal to the child that it's time to wind down and prepare for sleep. Incorporate calming activities such as a warm bath, reading a book, or gentle music. Create a sleep-friendly environment: Ensure the child's sleep space is conducive to restful sleep. Keep the room dark, quiet, and at a comfortable temperature.

Consider using white noise machines or soft music to drown out background noise. Encourage independent sleep skills: Help your child develop self-soothing techniques by gradually reducing sleep associations like rocking or feeding to sleep. Teach them to fall asleep independently by placing them in their crib when drowsy but still awake. Maintain a consistent schedule: Consistency is key when it comes to sleep. Establish regular wake-up times, naptimes, and bedtimes to regulate the child's internal clock and promote better sleep patterns. Respond with reassurance: During sleep regression, it's essential to respond to your child's night time awakenings with patience and reassurance. Offer comfort without creating new sleep associations that may prolong the regression.

### CONCLUSION

Sleep regression can be a trying time for both children and parents, but with understanding and effective strategies, it can be managed successfully. Sleep regression refers to a temporary disruption in a child's sleep patterns, often occurring around developmental milestones. The causes of sleep regression are multifaceted and can include rapid brain development, separation anxiety, and changes in routine. However, by implementing strategies such as establishing a consistent bedtime routine, creating a sleep-friendly environment, promoting independent sleep skills, maintaining a consistent schedule, and responding with reassurance, parents can help their child navigate sleep regression more smoothly.

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