the Sleep Charity

ADVICE SHEET

Night terrors & nightmares

What is a Nightmare?

- Scary dream
- Child wakes up
- Child remembers it
- Child wants comfort
- Happens later in the night

What is a Night Terror?

- Child screams or moves
- Child still asleep
- Child does NOT remember
- Child won't want comfort
- Happens soon after falling asleep

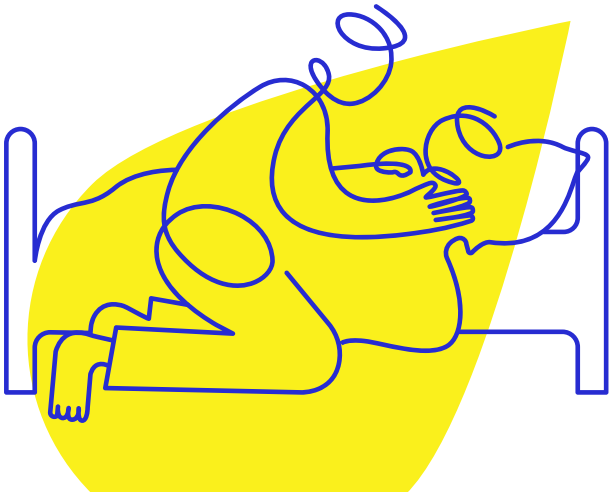
What To Do

Nightmare

- Comfort your child
- Say "It was just a dream"
- Talk about worries
- Don't check for monsters
- Calm bedtime routine
- See GP if nightmares happen a lot or after something upsetting

Night Terror

- Stay calm
- Wait for it to pass
- Step in only if unsafe
- Keep same bedtime
- Keep room cool (about 18°C)
- Try waking child 10 mins before usual terror (for 2 weeks)
- Speak to GP if you're worried



For more information visit
thesleepcharity.org.uk