



## SCARED OF THE DARK

There are many ways you can support a child who is afraid of the dark. see below for some ideas.

- **Use a soft nightlight**

A low, warm light can offer reassurance without fully lighting the room. Avoid bright or blue-toned lights, as these can interfere with sleep

- **Gradually reduce light**

Slowly dim the room over time–this might mean lowering brightness, moving the light further away, or shortening how long it stays on

- **Offer a comfort object**

A favourite teddy, blanket, or even a parent-scented item can provide familiarity and security at bedtime

- **Make the room feel safe**

Do not go and check in the cupboards or under the beds to “prove” that it is safe because this will feed into the fear that there is a possibility that whatever they think is there is real.

- **Stick to a calm bedtime routine**

Repeating the same calming steps each night (e.g. bath, book, cuddle) helps your child feel relaxed and know what to expect





## SCARED OF THE DARK

- **Talk it through**

Give your child space to share their worries. Acknowledge their feelings, while gently reassuring them that they are safe

- **Teach simple calming tools**

Try deep breathing, counting, or imagining a favourite place—these can help them manage fear if they wake in the night

- **Praise their progress**

Notice and celebrate small wins, like staying in bed or coping with less light—this builds confidence over time

- **Model calm confidence**

Your response sets the tone. Staying calm and matter-of-fact helps show your child there's nothing to fear



**ON THE NEXT PAGE SEE  
SOME WAYS TO MAKE  
THE DARK FUN AGAIN**





## MAKE THE DARK FUN

Helping your child see the dark as something fun—not scary—can make a big difference. Try a few of these ideas and see what works best for your family:

### START WITH SIMPLE, PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES

- Flashlight games
- Play games like tag or hide-and-seek using torches—chasing shadows can be surprisingly exciting
- Flashlight storytelling
- Sit together in the dark and tell stories using a torch for dramatic effect (silly > scary!)
- Shadow play
- Use a light to create shadow puppets on the wall and make up stories together



### ADD MOVEMENT AND ENERGY

- Glow stick dance party
- Turn off the lights and have a dance party with glow sticks— instant mood shift
- Glow bowling
- Use glow sticks in empty bottles as bowling pins and a light up ball to play in a darkened room



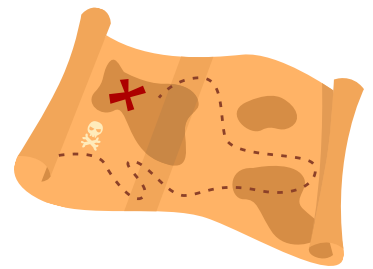


## MAKE THE DARK FUN

### Making the Dark Feel Fun

#### GET CREATIVE

- Glow-in-the-dark crafts: Make artwork or accessories that glow—this helps the dark feel more exciting and less unknown
- Glow treasure hunt: Hide glowing items and go on a hunt using clues or a simple map
- Glow maze: Create a small maze using glow sticks or lights and let them explore their way through



#### EXPLORE THE DARK TOGETHER

- Stargazing: Lie outside and look at the stars—make up stories about what you can see
- Night-time walk: Go on a gentle evening walk with a torch, listening for night sounds and spotting things you don't see in the day

These activities help your child build positive experiences with the dark, shifting it from something unknown and worrying to something familiar—and even fun.

