

These fears are very normal and usually start showing up around the age of two. The reason for this is that a toddler's mind is maturing, their memory is getting longer, and their imagination continues to develop. They are starting to become more aware that there are things that can hurt them. They may have even watched a show or read a book that frightened them.

Top tips

Try and expose your child to the dark through fun activities (not too close to bedtime) such as:

- **Hide-and-seek** in the dark.
- Fun with glow sticks, glow slime, glow in the dark balloons/bouncy balls/paint/stickers.
- Reading in a den or under a blanket with a torch.
- Shadow puppet games in the dark.
- In the dark treasure hunt, especially with your child searching for their favourite things.
- A dark party with family members wearing glow sticks and dancing with disco lights.



You can also try:

- Talking about what it is that is frightening them about the dark and validating their feelings.
- Monitoring what they are watching on TV/devices in the daytime/early evening.
- Reading books about the dark, such as "The Owl Who was Afraid of the Dark".
- Using a small nightlight with a red, orange or yellow glow (not white or blue light).

