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## Strategies for Managing Overstimulation in babies and toddlers

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- Causes of Overstimulation
  - Signs of Overstimulation
  - Tips to manage overstimulation.
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The holiday season is jam packed with opportunity for overstimulation in babies and toddlers. From parties, to travel, scheduling changes and fun: it is the perfect set up for an overstimulated child.

## Causes of Overstimulation

- Environment: Lights, Noise, Temperature, Unfamiliarity
- Change in Routine: Missed sleep or changes in daily routine
- Activity Levels: higher levels of engagement or demand on children

## Signs of Overstimulation in Babies

- Turning Head away from noise and light (usually toward caregiver)
- Clinginess
- Clenching fists/Flailing Limbs
- Loss of interest in independent play

## Signs of Overstimulation in Toddlers

- Increased dysregulation
- Tantrums
- Clinginess or asking to “go home”
- Hyperactivity due to overtiredness

# Managing Overstimulation

## Set the Tone

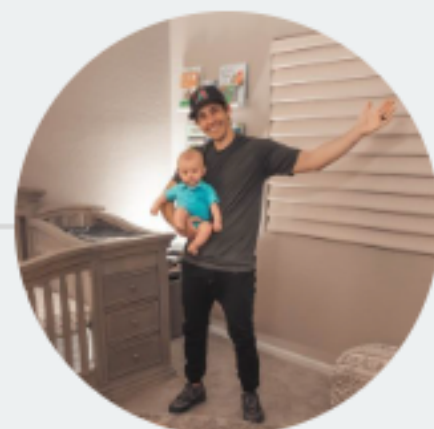
Remember that you, their caregiver, sets the tone. Be mindful of your child's experience, emotions and reactions. The 'holiday season' can be hard even on adults, so remember that this could feel like "too much" for your child as well.

**It is hard to be a little one in a big world.**



## Remove from Stimuli

If possible, remove your child to a new location. Reduce: lights, noise and demands on your little one. Adjust temperatures or clothing if needed to cool your child.



# Physical Contact

Some babies love to be swaddled or snuggled when they are overstimulated, as it helps to calm their nervous system. Other children cannot tolerate touch or feeling confined. Offer touch if your child prefers it, or simply stay near them and present to them if they do not. {Personal note: I have 1 of each. Neither is right or wrong, but learning what your child needs IS important}.



# Breathe

Remember how you are setting the tone? Deep breaths for you can help you remain regulated and can also co-regulate your child. If your child is little they may pick up on your slower breaths and mimic them. If your child is older, you can actively engage slower breathing together by suggesting some deep breaths.



# Fulfill a Need

Once your child is removed from the excess stimulation, you may be better able to determine if their other needs are being met.

Are they hungry? Thirsty? Tired? Hot? Fix it.



# Add Water

Drink it. Take a shower in it. Play in the sink with it. Water is extremely calming for children and adults alike. And many times we really do not recognize our own actual thirst.

When in doubt, add water.



Overstimulation can absolutely be related to overtiredness.

Not sure which one it is?

Check out our quick review of overtiredness here:

**[SIGNS OF OVERTIREDNESS](#)**