The 17-week sleep regression with Cassidy Mason

**Excerpt**

It is consistently every two hours at the moment and we've never had that. And I know that there's a sleep regression that happens supposedly in around four months, but I wondered, could this be that sleep regression coming a bit early and what are the signs and what can I do? Is there anything I can do or is it just one of those things where I'm just going to ride out the wave?**—Cass**

**Meg:** We've been the parenting journey of Cass first time mum to baby Max for 14 weeks. Now this week's challenges centered around the sleep progression that we start to see at around four months. It's also known as the 17 week sleep progression. Cass asks me whether Max is starting his sleep progression early and what she can do about it and how long it's likely to last. Cass also shares this week's highs, including Max, starting to laugh, explore objects with his mouth. And we talk about the best toys for babies of four to six months old. Keep listening for this week's mostly highs and a couple of lows through the eyes of Cass and Max.

Welcome to sense by Meg Faure, the podcast that's brought to you by Parent Sense, the app that takes guesswork out of parenting. If you are a new parent, then you are in good company. Your host Meg Faure is a well-known OT Infant Specialist and the author of eight parenting books. Each week, we are going to spend time with new moms and dads, just like you to chat about the week's wins, the challenges and the questions of the moment. Subscribe to the podcast, download the Parent Sense App and catch Meg here every week to make the most of that first year of your little one's life. And now meet your host.

**Meg:** Hello, mums and dads. it is so good to have you back again. And I am loving our weekly chats with real mums, exploring the weekly highs and lows of parenthood. And as you know, each week, I'm joined by a parent, and I share my years of experiences as an OT and an author of eight parenting books with moms who've really got their own sense. And this week, as we do many weeks, we have Cassidy joining us. And it's always such a pleasure to hear about Max's journey. We've been tracking the little Max from the week after he was born and had quite a tricky birth. So if you haven't heard about that, start actually had a fabulous birth, but not a great first week. So if you haven't heard that episode do go back and listen to it, it's episode two. And we've been tracking Max every single week and Cass brings her ideas and her thoughts and her questions. And we kind of are following her parenting journey through actually what most of you'll be going through as well. So what Cass experiences each week is very typical in the week for that baby. So most babies smile for instance, at six weeks, Max actually did it a little early, but Max now is 14 weeks old, Cass, and we’re just loving following your journey. So thank you for being back with us.

**Cass:** Oh, thank you. No, it's great to share it. And it's a wonderful documentation of Max's first year or weeks and that sort of thing, looking back and listening to them is so lovely.

**Meg:** Yeah, it is it really special? I mean, you mentioned to me that when you listened back to that very first week, you realized how much anxiety there was as a first time mom.

**Cass:** And it was really interesting for me listening to that because I sounded really hard in my voice I felt, and I think it was because I was just coping. I'd been, it was such a stressful first week and you can't let the emotions get the better if you've just got to get through it. But I then could hear when I listened back in my voice, how I'd kind of gone into this quite hard coping world. And how, as time's gone on, well, I think I sounded a bit more relaxed.

**Meg:** Well, I think as we both are discovering or you discovering, and I certainly know as a mum of three, each week is different. And sometimes like, when you just, when you think you're on top of it and now you can be relaxed and you know what you're doing, they're going through a little curve ball and they just change the routines or they start waking up at night again, or they get grizzly. And so that's part and parcel of parenting going through all of these different stages and so on.

**Cass:** Definitely. But one thing I, I am learning as that time goes on is that it is usually just a phase. I'm seeing more and more evidence. We spoke a few weeks ago about, he was really fussy when he was eating. I was really struggling with his day feeding and that's past, he's now actually seems to be going through he wanting food nearly all the time. And just now I sort of was looking at the cot thinking you can't be hungry, but you've got a clean nappy you've just woken up. We were really grizzly and I picked him up and he started rooting from my boob through my jump collar, and I was like, oh, okay.

**Meg:** That's what it is.

**Cass:** Yeah, so he's making up for lost time I think.

**Meg:** It's so interesting that you say that. And I just want to pick up on it is that noticing that things are not permanent and that it's just a phase. And I think sometimes when you're the middle of something it feels like it's going to be like that for forever. But actually, knowing that it's a phase, that babies will move through, it is actually very, very important as a new mom. So I always heard this in psychology that you should always finish a problem with a statement like for now or for today. So Max is really grizzly for today or for now, and when you finish a state sentence like that, it just increases the awareness in yourself and the consciousness that actually these are phases that they do move through.

**Cass:** Definitely. And I think it, it does make it so much easier and talking of phases, his current phase is we…Now I was going to ask you actually, if there's a chance, this is the upcoming sleep progression that is happening because as you know, Max has always done that longer stretch at the start of the night; he went through quite a nice period of doing seven to eight hours as that longer stretch. He now can't really do more than four in that initial stage. And then he is currently waking up every two hours, not necessarily for…I'm not feeding him every two hours, just having to resettle him. So for example, last night he woke up and I just picked him up, gave him a bit of a wind and then put the dummy in and resettled him. And he did fall back to sleep quite quickly, thank goodness because I know that doesn't happen for a lot, but it is consistently every two hours at the moment and we've never had that. And I know that there's a sleep regression that happens supposedly in around four months, but I wondered, could this be that sleep regression coming a bit early and what are the signs and what can I do? Is there anything I can do or is it just one of those things where I'm just going to ride out the wave?

**Meg:** Yeah, brilliant. I love that question. So first of all, I think in any parenting advice, and this goes for the advice that I give as a parenting expert and any other parenting expert, people like to latch onto things that become rules. So here's an example, 17 weeks sleep progression it's it has become a thing that is a rule, like all babies at 17 weeks have the sleep progression. And of course that hangs over every mother's head from about 10 weeks wondering that, how am I going to cope with this? The other thing that's interesting and I'll come back to 17 weeks sleep progressions. And it's actually one that came up this week from somebody, a nurse actually phoned me, and she said, have you heard about these things called leaps? And of course, I've heard about leaps because many people have, but leaps are exactly the same things don't happen textbook. And often we kind of latch on and we say, well, they're grizzly, and therefore it must be a leap. Or they wake up at night and therefore it must be a 17 week sleep progression. But the truth is that nothing really is cast in stone. And I mean, even developmental milestones, like I mentioned the milestone of sleep, of smiling, which is a fairly hardwired milestone, even that doesn't always happen on exactly six weeks. It can happen between four and seven weeks. So by and large, everything that you've heard happens within the context of a baby's life and therefore flexibility. So the 17 weeks sleep progression can most certainly start earlier and we do see little ones start from about 14 weeks onwards going through that.

And so let's talk about the 17 week sleep progression and let's talk about, first of all, what causes it, and then secondly, what we can do about it? The fact that he is working after four hours and then two hours there after probably does mean that this is it. And it isn't going to necessarily last to 17 weeks, but what happens now is very instrumental in what happens long term. So there was research that I've mentioned before in one of our podcasts, by Anders, where he looked at good sleepers and they found that good sleepers established their good sleep between five and seven months. And so it is quite a pivotal life stage for establishing good sleep habits, which doesn't really help us makes us more anxious because now there's all lot of pressure , but there are a couple of reasons why babies do it. So as I always just start with the basic needs and the first basic need is obviously nutrition.

So always start with ruling out health, obviously before nutrition. So that would be something that reflex that could cause a baby who has been an otherwise good sleeper to suddenly become a poor sleeper. That is definitely something that always hangs at the back of my head. So if a little one for instance has reflux and is positing, or you just notice that they're swallowing more after a feed, then they did before. So in other words, they finished their feed and they kind of look like they're swallowing down a bit of milk curds afterwards that can be reflux. And most reflux is completely fine for them to get through, but for some babies that'll cause them to wake up regularly at night, if it causes an esophagitis or a little irritation on their esophagus. So step one, rule that out. And the other one, just in terms of health, because of all the bugs that are flying around at the moment is if they've had a snotty nose that can sometimes also cause a little bit of glue air, it's not an ear infection, it's just pressure behind the eardrum and that can also cause them to work more regularly.

So starting with the basics with Max, you're going to want to rule out those to health level. Once those have ruled out, then we go into the basic of nutrition. And nutrition. what's difficult is that when they do start to wake up that regularly, it's very hard to settle them any other way, number one. And number two, at the back of our head, we're going, well, maybe they're hungry. And obviously number three is that you cannot introduce solids at this age. It's too, too young. And so we can't start to think, okay, they're hungry Therefore they need solid. So therefore milk is the solution. So my suggestion with that is to try to still maintain, not offering a feed before 11 or 12 at night, and to keep that long stretch. And so then you will be using strategies and this is for babies who gaining weight well, which I know Max is. And for moms whose babies are not gaining weight well, you would maybe have a feed before 12, but for Max, he is gaining weight well, he doesn't need to go back to four hourly feeds at night at all. And so I would be pushing him till 11 or 12, and I'd be doing that with water at this age. So offer him a little bit of water, maybe the first time he wakes, you can try with patting or dummy, but the second time he wakes, if it's before 12 as well, offer him water and he'll protest a little bit. I like to offer water in a bottle that you would normally offer milk in. And I also like to offer water that's kind of at warmish temperature, so Luke warm.

So what I would do is I'd actually boil the water before bedtime, pop it next to your bed.
It'll cool down by the time it's 10, o'clock check the temperature obviously, but it will be cool enough and just offer that cool boiled water or Luke warm boiled water, and see if you can get them through to 11 or 12. And that's when otherwise thriving, healthy baby, who's going through this patch. And then the next time he wakes, which let's say is then 12, you would offer a feed. Now, the reason for that is that he's still too little to go for very long stretches without milk at night. Some babies do by the way, but for many babies they don't. And especially that he's not on solids and this is all the way through till six months of age, where if they're not on full solids and in other words, good protein and so on, we can expect for them to wake at least once at night.
So that would, as they get older, it'll move from 12 to 1, to 2, to 3 and so on. But for now, if that's happening between 12 and 1, I would give them the feed. And then again, I would expect three hours. And so if he wakes again, I would then try and see if I can push him through to the next feed of three hours.

 The other thing that's important to say with feeds is that sometimes if there's a lot of very regular day feeds happening, it actually impacts night feeds. So what sometimes happens is when they're going through this patch, we think, okay, they they're demanding feeds every two hours in a day. And so we increase that because we think, well, maybe it's a growth spurt, maybe that's what's happening. But that very frequent feeding during the day actually doesn't necessarily fill them up properly and can cause them to actually wake more regularly at night. So I would still be aiming for your three and a half hours in the day, three to three and a half hours, and then going for that one stretch of six hours in the evening. So till 11 or 12, you know, five to six hours and then offering water before that.

**Cass:** Okay. So for example, last night he woke up at 11 having gone down at 6:30. So that was four and a half hours. What would you suggest? Because that's sort of that in between stage of the water-milk situation.

**Meg:** Was that the first time he woke?

**Cass:** Yeah.

**Meg:** First time he woke up probably will offer comfort rather first.

**Cass:** Okay.

**Meg:** And then give him the first…And then he'd probably go through till half past 12 and then, or one even, and then offer the next one then.

**Cass:** Okay. So don't offer the milk feed at four and a half hours?

**Meg:** No. No.

**Cass:** Okay.

**Meg:** No, I wouldn't offer the milk feed at that time.

**Cass:** Because he is feeding then and really feeding. But yeah, he used to be going a lot longer obviously without needing a feed.

**Interlude**
If you enjoy my podcast, I would like to share one of my favorite podcasts with you, The Honest Hour. Christina Masureik is mom to two boys and a third little boy on the way. She's an American expat living in Cape Town, South Africa, since 2008 and decided to start sharing her experiences in parenting since 2017. Having grown up in a dysfunctional family environment in her own childhood, which led to her adoption at the age of 10. Christina is passionate about finding purpose and presence in parenting as well as exploring our own opportunity for healing and personal growth. As we navigate the world of parenting our own children, Christina believes in ending the trauma cycle and that in parenting our own children, we can learn how to re-parent ourselves. So pop on over to Christina's podcast, The Honest Hour.

**Meg:** No, I think for all of the mums going through the 17 week sleep progression, the first thing is that you just need to be very conscious of not falling into the trap of feeding at every opportunity. And a couple of things, because the third thing that happens with the 17 week sleep progression, which is probably the bigger piece, is that it's actually a developmental shift rather than a nutritional shift. And that developmental shift is that they need to learn to self soothe. And the concept of self-soothing is it's complicated in that babies under this age, really can't self soothe very well because they've got all those reflexes; they’ve move their hands away from midline, they've got their AT&R reflex, and then they've got all their basic needs and their sensory needs, so they don't self soothe. From this age, it's now a process of coaching them towards self-soothing.

 So self-soothing is not something where you say right tonight, you're going to self-soothe, I'm not going to respond, so get on with it on your own. It's definitely not. So it is coming alongside them like you would with a five year old who you teaching to read or a 17 year old who you're teaching to drive. You don't just let them loose on the road. You really sit with them and take them through it. So it's leaving him for very small increments of time when he wakes. So when he wakes, listen, and I know you're very good at doing that Cass where you just listen for five minutes before you respond to him at night and sometimes they're surprises and resettle themselves. And then when they haven't done that going in and trying other strategies, like for instance, patting turning them on their side, stroking their head, bringing their hands to midline. Those are all good strategies that he can use independently aside from stroking his head and then the dummy.

So let's talk about the dummy because one of the things that was probably at the back of your mind is what happens if I'm starting dummy habits. And you know, that's why I say before you go in with the dummy, try the other strategies where you can just pat them, bring their hands to midline, re-swaddle if they're little enough, he's not, turn them on this side if that's their preferred sleeping position. So try all the other strategies. And then if that doesn't work, pop the dummy in. Now obviously with the dummy, we do run the risk of that becoming a habit. And that's why I don't like the idea of dummies throughout the night. So we don't go like dummy at 11, 12, 1, 2 in order to get them to five o'clock in the morning, because otherwise we do get developed habits, but for one dummy in between each feed, that's absolutely fine.

**Cass:** Okay. Yeah, because yesterday, last night and this is kind of been the pattern, he woke up at 11, did a good feed and then he woke up two hours later, but I didn't offer him the boob. I picked him up. He did do a burp, which he never really used to, but he did a burp. And then I did put the dummy in and put him down. He went straight to sleep and the dummy came out quite quickly, but he was asleep by then. But then that was the only time he needed the dummy in the night, because he then woke up two later, but by that stage it had been four hours since his last feed. And so I gave him another feed and then he went through till six.

**Meg:** That's perfect.

**Cass:** So, and the thing is, I know that it's still not that bad. That's the equivalent of two feeds in the night and an extra wake up for winding…

**Meg:** Correct.

**Cass:** …Which really isn't that bad at all, but it is compared he was down to one wake up…

**Meg:** Yeah

**Cass:** …Nearly at the end of the night, anywhere at three o'clock, he was sort of going through from seven till three.

**Meg:** And that's classic sleep progression stuff because we kind of get them there and each night look, the trend had been getting better and better and the trend is pulled back and that's why it's a regression. And you know, so you would've had some…And I know from the podcast, you have had some bad nights in between, but the trend was good and that's why this is frightening because it's gone backwards and we’re sleep deprived, and we’re thinking, oh, I can't go back to the way I was 12 weeks ago because I can't do this journey again because it's so exhausting. And you will have nights that are worse than just the two feeds, but actually the two feeds are correct at this age. And what you'll find is that within the next month or six weeks, you'll probably want to introduce solids and that'll shift it out again. So for the meantime, now you're probably looking at an average of two night feeds, some nights you will only get one and some nights you'll end up having to do three, which will be very frustrating nights where he just weren't settle. And I think having that sort of expectation will help you to cope emotionally with it because it's also the emotional toll that comes in now.

**Cass:** Yeah. And the other thing that I've really focused on is seeing the changes in him in the day. So I'm seeing his developmental changes. He started actually laughing now, which is a really exciting time. Daddy was giving him bath time and he was making funny faces and there was a real chuckle coming through, which was really lovely.

**Meg:** That's wonderful.

**Cass:** He's started putting…When he has something, he puts it to his mouth so that he's got a teething toy that we now give him, even though he's not teething, but he loves to put it in his mouth; anything just goes straight into his mouth, which is a new development.

**Meg:** Brilliant. Cass, I mean, on that, it would be quite nice for us all to hear. Tell, tell us Max's top four favorite toys right now. So in the current stage, what are the four things that you think that all mums should have for their little ones?

**Cass:** So, okay, it depends on the time of day, but he loves his bath time finger puppet, finger puppets in general actually, but we have some flannel ones at bath time which he just loves.

**Meg:** Love it.

**Cass:** He's got a toy on his play arch, that's a monkey with a face. Now, whether it's the face, I don't know, but he loves the monkey. As soon as he sees the monkey, it's like, he's been reunited with his best friend.

**Meg:** I love it.

**Cass:** And then, I mean, I wouldn't know if he necessarily loves the toy, but he loves this giraffe teething toy. it's sort of in the shape of a giraffe, I'm not sure…

**Meg:** Sophie.

**Cass:** Okay, there you go.

**Meg:** And we all love Sophie. I'll tell you about Sophie

**Cass:** And he's loving sort of putting that in his mouth and chewing on and discovering it. And he makes really funny faces when this sort of head goes in and that's sort of texture on the top of the head that he's, but he's not used to, but it's really he loves that. And he also loving books, really engaging with books. You can open a book on the first page and his face will just light up and he's got one where he's discovering the ocean, any book. And then there's another one that's got a line, and there's this one page where this lion cub is with his daddy lion and the daddy lion's doing a massive yarn, and every day you he’ll have me on that page, he just finds it so funny, I don’t know what on that page is making him laugh, but he loves that particular page.

**Meg:** I love it.

**Interlude**
This episode is brought to us by Parent Sense, the all in one baby and parenting app that help you make the most of your baby’s first year. Don't you wish someone would just tell you everything you need to know about caring for your baby; when to feed them, how to wean them and why they won't sleep? Parent Sense App is like having a baby expert on your phone, guiding you to parent with confidence, get a flexible routine, daily tips and advice personalized for you and your little one. Download Parent Sense App now from your app store and take the guesswork out of parenting.

**Meg:** So I've written down all of your, those toys. And I want to just go through them one by one. By the way, I mean, you've literally hit the nail on the head with the toys for a four to six month old, those are literally perfect. So let's look at each of those. So first of all, the finger puppets, that was always one of my kids' favorite ones. And I love the ones with gloves. You can't often find them because sometimes you get the individual finger puppets, but with the glove ones, you can do so much more. And what's great about those is that it actually improves not just their verbal skills, but they auditory is and language as well. Because inevitably when you've got a finger puppet on your hand as an adult, you're going to tell a story about it.

So this is what the duck says, or this is the monkey and so language and visual skills fabulous for finger puppets. So that's a great one. Faces, you know, newborns are totally wired for faces. In fact, I don't know if you know about this research Cass, where they took a paper plate and on this paper plate, they drew three circles in a configuration of a triangle. So two at the top and one at the bottom and they showed it to babies, newborns, and obviously that's a face configuration, two eyes and a mouth and the babies were fascinated, interested, didn't take their eyes off it , really wanted to engage. And then they turned the paper plate upside down, so one dot at the top, and two down at the bottom, just a triangle, no face. And they lost interest immediately. And so babies are absolutely hardwired for faces. So the fact that he's focusing in on the monkey on his little mobile is spot on. And so that's certainly something that we definitely see little ones because they are socially wired. And we know that Max is very socially wired. So it completely makes sense.

Then Sophie to the Giraffe, well, we all love Sophie the giraffe. I don't know how they got it right. I mean, it's a massive company now. It came out of France and they got it right, they got it spot on because babies worldwide absolutely love Sophie, the Giraffe. It's a great texture. It's soft. I think the fact that it's got long neck means that they can kind of get their little hands around the neck piece, but the fact that it's got little feet coming out and also ears and a nose means that they can get their little mouths around interesting bits and pieces. And so a Sophie the Giraffe is an absolute essential in any four to six month old toy repertoire, for sure.

And then a couple, and then of course you mentioned the books and of course books are just so important. We actually also with our little ones started reading them stories at night, every single night, from the time they were four months old, it was part of our bedtime routine. Clearly they don't understand anything. They're not even really able to yet turn pages or anything, but they just are hearing language and seeing language association with pictures. So, and then also having part of a bedtime routine, so that's fine.

**Cass:** I was just going to ask on that because I didn't…He's really engaged in the day when we're looking at books, but I didn't know, was it too much sensory sort of overload just before bed?

**Meg:** Yeah. It's a really good question. So certainly not before four months, because that's a time of day when sensory overload is at a peak, but if he's had a good rest; so let's say his awake time is actually what it should be, and he's had a good rest kind of in the later afternoon, which some days will happen some days won't, but on the days that it happens, then I would actually use a book as part of bedtime routine. I would be less animated with it maybe, and just put it in as part of a bedtime routine and then watch what happens because if it wires him and he's over stimulated, then remove it again. But between four and six months, you will start to bring it in as part of a bedtime routine.

**Cass:** And when is…? Because he has his bath and then would it be before his feed do the bath?

**Meg:** Yeah, yeah. So you would change him; you'd remove mobile from over his cot…From over his changing mat at that time. And then do your little story together in the dim and then play your lullabies and then, give him his last feed and then off to bed.

**Cass:** Okay. And I mentioned last week about feeding to sleep, which I've confirmed, we're not feeding him to sleep, but sometimes during the winding process in the middle of the night, his head will get heavier and heavier and he does fall asleep during that winding. So I'm not always able to put him down so drowsy in a way in the daytime, he's getting really good at self-soothing, takes him about 10 minutes after he is put down, as long as I get my timing right. But at night should I be trying to avoid winding him to sleep or should I be waking him after winding or is it okay?

**Meg:** So I would just pull back the time that you're actually winding him so that it's less comforting. So I mean a winding process by this edge can be very short. I mean, even if you recall it as a newborn, I said limited to five minutes and that was because we didn't want to over-stimulate them. But at this age you can put it back to two minutes. Generally, they’re very good at this age of just bringing it up on their own. And you know, I would experiment with a trump tonight. If he wakes after 15 minutes uncomfortable with the burp, then just pick him up and put him back down again. And the next night, you know you've got to wind him for longer, but by and large, by this age, winds are really not a problem for them.

**Cass:** Oh, that is such…Honestly that when I am so tired in the middle of the night, I keep checking how long has it been? And invariably, I check at two minutes, three minutes, my eyes are getting heavy…

**Meg:** Definitely pop him down from tonight. I would definitely do that. And see…

**Cass:** Okay, great.

**Meg:** …How he does. It's a little bit like teething, like teething gets this terrible wrap for getting all the blame for everything that goes wrong. Cranky baby, going off food, poo nappies, waking up at night, and it's actually not so because teething really only takes a night or two around the eruption of the tooth. And it only happens after six months as we've discussed before. And in a similar way, winding actually is the same in that we think we've got to chase these winds at all costs. And you know, moms will say to me, my baby's such a windy baby, I've got to chase the wind for 45 minutes at night, particularly moms of newborns. But actually, often if we just experiment with it and just stop winding them, they actually get absolutely fine. And by the way, for your next baby, you won't be winding that long because you've got a whole lot of other stuff that's going on. So yeah, I would definitely pull it back a little bit now.

**Cass:** Okay, great. Yeah, because he does tend to, even in the day he tends to do a couple of big burps quite quickly and then nothing's really happening after that. So that does sound like it makes absolute sense. But I agree with you, everything you see sort of, if you don't wind them, you'll be up all night and things like that. So definitely that's great.

**Meg:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Cass:** So that is going to be tonight. I can't wait.

**Meg:** Do you manage to fall back asleep immediately once you've finished a feed at night or does it take your time?

**Cass:** No, I do. So if he's being a bit grizzly, then I'll just sit and watch, but usually I can, I'm similar to him; once we've done what we need to do, we go back to speed.

**Meg:** So one of the tips for moms who don't, because that does happen, especially for those of us when we go back to work, we start to like tick all the boxes for work in the middle of the night, which is very frustrating and I love rescue remedy. And you can, it's pretty widely available worldwide and rescue remedy is great. You know, I used to take three drops as soon as I got back into bed, straight after a feed because it just would help me to switch off and kind of stop the worrying mind.

**Cass:** I think at the moment I'm so tired it's not still, luckily we are actually having to stay with my parents at the moment, and so my mom and dad take him in the afternoon and I get an hour sleep, which is a massive game changer.

**Meg:** You know, I tell you, it's one of those things that you know, people get very frustrated and you see memes all over the place of like people get irritated when you say, “Sleep when the baby sleeps.” Because people like, no, I'm not going to do that. And it's irritating when people say that. And so I hate saying it to new moms, but the truth is that actually just one sleep a day, just one like sleep cycle, 45 minutes to an hour and a half is just enough to get you through. And I do believe in day sleeps.

**Cass:** Yeah, I do struggle to sleep in the day. So that is, you know, when I go up it does take me a while, and I think if I was only…

**Meg:** Try the rescue remedy

**Cass:** Yeah. If it was the only for 45 minutes that I would have to, yeah. I definitely will when I go back home. I think that's going to have to be a must, but yeah, that's been the week so far. The other thing I have noticed is he is making so many more noises now and including communicating, he never really communicated if he was upset or angry, or bored, or hungry, sort of. I had to play a bit of a guessing game because he was…But he's starting to…I mean, if Max doesn't want something to happen, boy does the whole house know about it. Which I'm really enjoying; he's really communicating with us. And so that's been a development and the great thing that happened yesterday, which I'm really excited about was I was having, we were having cup of tea and a piece of cake and he was looking at me really watching me eat and drink, which is a really exciting time because I know that he is starting the path towards weaning.

**Meg:** Correct, absolutely. It's one of the social signals we look for. So when we start to look for weaning and we'll talk that about that in couple of weeks’ time, but we look at motor reasons, we look at reflexes, we look at nutritional needs, and then the other one is we look at social and social is exactly that; watching things go to your mouth. So you'll find when you're sitting with him at the table, when you're eating a Sunday lunch or whatever it is, he'll watch you take that chicken bone up to your mouth, and that's really how weaning does start. And I recall with my first born, I was quite an anxious mom, I wanted to do things by the book. I did not want to introduce solids before four months. In those days that was, thank goodness the advice; it swung to six months at some point, now it’s back at four months. But that stage, it was four months. And I'll never forget being at a Christmas lunch, no, not a Christmas lunch, a Sunday lunch with my mom-in-law, and she's an incredible granny. And he was sitting…James was sitting on her lap and she had a drumstick and she just handed it to him and it had no meat on it, it was just the drumstick bone, and he started to gnaw on it, and of course I completely panicked, don't give him solids at this age. But actually I think if you went back kind of 300 years, that's exactly how weaning would've started. Not actually eating anything, but just gnawing on a drumstick bone. You know, so it's wonderful that he started to notice that. And it's amazing that he's showing you the language as well, because it's such an exciting stage when they start to babble and actually be able to communicate with new songs.

**Cass:** And it's really useful.

**Meg:** Yeah, that's true.

**Cass:** I'm learning a lot about him.

**Meg:** I mean, it's interesting until this stage you've had to rely on watching his signals, which it can be a little bit of a guessing game.

**Cass:** Yeah, and the clock.

**Meg:** And the clock, exactly. And that exactly, Cass, perfect that you pointed that out, that those two things become your friend because you need to try and work out what could he be saying exactly? What is he ready for?

**Cass:** Yeah.

**Meg:** Well, Cass as always, I have loved our chats. I love the way we documenting little Max’s development through the year, it's very special and thank you for sharing with all the other mums too.

**Cass:** Thank you so much, Meg.

**Meg:** Lovely to chat. Cheers, Cass.

**Cass:** Thank you, bye.

**Outro**
Thanks to everyone who joined us, we will see you the same time next week. Until then, download Parent Sense App and take the guesswork out of parenting.