

# Episode 76

**Meg:** Welcome back, moms and dads. I am super excited for you to join me here today. It's Meg Faure. As usual, we are going to be talking to, well, sometimes we speak to a mom and sometimes we speak to a professional, another baby [00:01:00] expert. And today we've got our favorite guest back with us, Cassidy. She is mum to little Max.

**Meg:** And for those of you who have not been following Cassidy's journey, it is really an absolute must. And particularly if you've got a very little baby. Cass and I spoke for the first time when Max was just a week old. She had gone through his birth and we have literally, and he was actually in ICU at the time, which was a whole nother story.

**Meg:** That was a bit of a curve ball. And we've been speaking ever since. So welcome back, Cass. As usual, it is absolutely wonderful to have you here with us.

**Cassidy:** Thank you for having me back. It feels like a while since we last chatted, but yeah, because Max is now 18 months. So...

**Meg:** Yeah. Isn't it incredible? I mean, it's hard to think that we've been following his journey for so long. And it's super exciting because Max is going to be a big brother.

**Cassidy:** yes, we're going to go through it all again.

**Meg:** Well, we'll have to take up on what it's like to juggle the balls of two kiddies. Cause that's a whole nother story.

**Cassidy:** I think it's going to be fascinating to see how different they are, because you [00:02:00] never get two the same from what I understand. So...

**Meg:** yeah.

**Cassidy:** makes me quite nervous because Max has been actually really good in the grasp of things.

**Meg:** Yeah. No. And they very often are super different. I mean, in fact, just before Max was born you attended the baby sensory personality course. And moms, if you haven't done that, it is worth doing. It's inside the parent sense app

called. Baby sensory personalities, and I can remember us really hoping and praying or you hoping and praying that he would be a settled baby.

**Meg:** And yeah, maybe just for reference, has Max been a settled baby? What would you say now that you know him well?

**Cassidy:** Now that. Not only now I know him well, but now I've also seen friends who have had other babies. I think as a baby baby, he was definitely settled definitely a settled baby. But I think as he has grown, he's becoming a sort of settled social butterfly.

**Meg:** Which is exactly what they do. So

**Cassidy:** so he, I mean, even this morning we were at the florists and he was leaving and he's high fiving everyone as he was leaving [00:03:00] and just saying bye as he walked out of the door.

**Meg:** Sweet. It's very precious. But you know that that is how it often works. I don't know if you can remember when we did that sensory personality talk that, the sensory profile where settled babies and social butterflies belong is actually the same threshold. So the threshold is very high for sensory information.

**Meg:** A lot can be going on that won't faze them. And so they end up being super settled and then at some point their sensory system wakes up and goes, hold on, there's a whole lot of exciting stuff out there. I need to engage. I need to be part of it. And they become much more social. And so he is that settled stroke social butterfly, which is very precious.

**Cassidy:** it's exhausting.

**Meg:** Totally exhausting. Oh my gosh. And you are at the most exhausting phase. I think I told you, in fact, I remember telling you that my hardest stage with all of my kids was nine to 18 months because they are busy and they have got, they don't understand the limitations. So you can't sit down for one minute.

**Cassidy:** and you don't understand them. That's another really, he talks [00:04:00] away, but I've gotten very, I mean, I'm getting better at understanding his own personal language, but it's challenging because there's no communicate, you know, no two way communication. More importantly, there's no negotiation.

**Meg:** His way or the highway?

**Cassidy:** So, I mean, we have certainly started having temper tantrums, which is awful because you have to try really hard not to laugh. Which, I know that sounds incredibly cruel, but he really does not need me laughing in that moment. But sometimes they are the most ridiculous. We went to Waitrose yesterday, and this is something I've really noticed has been recent, which has been a real wake up call for me.

**Cassidy:** I think I always assumed, he's a baby. So... He's not going to remember places and what happens in those places. So for example, the other day we walked past a field and honestly, it was about four days before we'd walked past that field and there'd been a tractor in it. And he's obsessed with tractors. And we walked [00:05:00] past the same field four days later, and he started pointing to the field, making tractor noises. He knew that that field that had been a tractor, he wanted to see the tractor again. And that was my first moment where I thought he's starting to remember places. And recognize places, even having just seen them once.

**Cassidy:** And the other day we went to Waitress and we walked past the handheld scanners that they have in the shop and we obviously always get a scanner when we go, but I was just rushing in grabbing something and rushing out the meltdown that we were not getting a scanner because he likes to hold the scanner while we go around the shop.

**Cassidy:** Although he also, as we go around and I pick up a new item, he shouts at me to scan it.

**Meg:** yeah. No

**Cassidy:** Luckily, I'm not a thief, but if I was, that career would be over. So

**Meg:** No, I mean they,

**Cassidy:** started to recognize things.

**Meg:** and it's quite incredible because, he's 18 months old and he's a bright little boy, so you that it actually shouldn't surprise us that he is doing that because babies are incredible. I mean, little babies. And there's [00:06:00] some fabulous science experiments that have been done with this where they showed babies for instance, a whole lot of cups with a ball underneath a certain cup.

**Meg:** And when babies, when you put the cup down on the ball and you lift it up in the balls there, the babies are happy. You put the cup down on the ball.

And if the, if you pick it up in the ball, isn't there. They can trick the babies, the babies become quite distressed by things that where there isn't the logic that they're expecting.

**Meg:** And so they start to form these little rules in their mind of what they expect. And they start to do it really, really young. I mean, they are truly little scientists.

**Cassidy:** Yeah, and then as we were coming back to the car, once I dealt with that particular situation, distraction, distraction, as we were coming back to the car, we walked past the trolleys and that was another. But we haven't used a trolley and we're leaving waitress. I haven't sat in the trolley

**Meg:** You upset his paradigm.

**Cassidy:** this other mother walk past to hear me going, I'm just Max.

**Cassidy:** We're not going in a trolley today. We'll go in the trolley next time. And it's just, you know, but so there is a form of negotiation, but it's just yeah, [00:07:00] he understands everything I say. I just don't necessarily understand everything he's saying

**Meg:** how many

**Cassidy:** or why.

**Meg:** And how many words does he have out of interest?

**Cassidy:** Do you know what? I've never actually counted them. And also, okay, let's, let's start by talking actual words or words that I know

**Meg:** No, words that you know what he's saying, yeah.

**Cassidy:** He's probably got quite a lot in his repertoire now. He says hot and cold, finished, bye, hello. He's got names for everyone. Tractor is also,

**Meg:** it's

**Cassidy:** we know tractor.

**Cassidy:** And then he's got noises, but like he'll do all. So when he sees an animal, he'll do all the right. Noises for the right animals and things like that. So,

**Meg:** That's wonderful.

**Cassidy:** and he, the, we taught him sign language for please and thank you quite early on. And it's a bit frustrating because I now know that he probably could say please and thank you.

**Cassidy:** But when you say, say please and thank you, he just does the sign language. I don't know. I'm sure that will come.

**Meg:** It will,[00:08:00]

**Cassidy:** And he started whenever you ask him, what color is this? Everything's blue. So if I'm trying to show off.

**Meg:** colors, Cass, I do have to tell you.

**Cassidy:** If I'm trying to show off, I just put a blue thing in front of him and ask, what color is this?

**Cassidy:** And everyone goes, wow,

**Meg:** He's a genius. That is fabulous. Well, he's coming up now for a language explosion, which starts usually at around 18 to 19 months. And when the language explosion comes, it's just incredible. The words just tumble out day after day. There's just a whole lot more new words coming out. So, he will be, I mean, certainly by the time he's two, he's going to have a very, very wide repertoire of words.

**Cassidy:** Well, this morning he was honestly just chatting away and he has such a serious face when he's telling me something, and so I just have to look at him and go. Really?

**Meg:** Well, you know, I love that you mentioned that because that's what we call serve and return. And, serve and return is just so critically important. And if anybody's interested in it, go and Google it go and have a look at the Harvard Center for the Developing Child. They've got a whole [00:09:00] lovely section on, on serve and return, and we'll probably tag it in the show notes as well.

**Meg:** But serve and return is where somebody says something and then you wait. The other person replies, and there's these responses. So it's kind of like a tennis ball going backwards and forwards between players. But I think what often happens, and this is where communication can go wrong, is when parents are not actually listening out and trying to make sense or not giving air time to their children.

**Meg:** And this is certainly isn't a guilt trip on any parent because I'm a parent of three. I know what it's like to not give my children air time. And actually when they're teenagers, to get into a lot of trouble for not. Giving them airtime, like you're not listening. So I mean, we've all done it, but it is, if we can parent consciously and try and find those connections and find those words, and if he says a word that is really not quite similar to more, but it's kind of supper time and you think it might've been more than actually repeat that more, so that he actually gets that sense that you're listening and you're saying something back to him. And then you're listening to him again to see if he'll then say it back to [00:10:00] you.

**Meg:** And that's how you're going to start to see that language explosion.

**Cassidy:** And actually, that brings me on to something that I've wondered in the past because I read somewhere that if you say, cause obviously most things we say, can you say whatever? And then he'll say, and it won't sound anything like the word, but he's tried. And I read somewhere that you shouldn't correct them.

**Cassidy:** Like that is that they are trying to say, you shouldn't say no, no, it's whatever. But then. The other part of me thinks, but then I'm not teaching you that that's not how you say it,

**Meg:** interesting. Yeah, it's very, very interesting. The right approach is to correct but to, not correct them to tell them that they've done it incorrectly, but just to reiterate it correctly. So, if he says, for tractor, you say, yes, that's a tractor.

**Cassidy:** Okay.

**Meg:** You know, so you're saying, yes, you've got it so that he doesn't feel like he's getting things wrong, but I definitely do think it's important to start the articulation going correctly.

**Meg:** And actually, interestingly, I look back, I have the benefit [00:11:00] of hindsight now with, , having adults and older children older teenagers and

adults where I do think that there were times when I didn't correct their grammar because it was so cute and I wanted it to stay just like that.

**Meg:** And actually it ended up being things that disadvantaged them later on when they got into the school going age. So I do think correcting them is correct. Another debate that comes up is whether or not you should use diminutive words like kitty instead of cat or, things like that. I mean, that's a bad example because kitty is fine, but there are words when, where we kind of, use words that really aren't words for things, like woohoo for a dog, and that's not a dog, and I do think that we should rather be correcting children and saying, speaking correctly.

**Meg:** So that's not to say that we shouldn't use baby talk. I suppose here we would differentiate between baby talk and using incorrect words and then baby talk and parent tease. So, baby talk in parentees is that slightly high pitched voice that we use with our little ones. Like, come here, my love.

**Meg:** Oh, you're looking so gorgeous today. These kind of, that kind of sing songy, slightly high pitched voice [00:12:00] is a really good thing for little ones because it's attractive to their hearing. It attracts them in, it helps them to listen to you. But what isn't fabulous is to go hello, my coochie, coochie, coochie, coochie, and make a whole lot of words that are not actually words.

**Meg:** Then, rather use the proper words, but use a tone that's attractive.

**Cassidy:** Okay. And it brings me another point about tone. Because we are also at the stage where we are having to, and I use the term discipline loosely, but I know we've recorded in the past where we've spoken about discipline not being the right thing, but we are at an age now where I am having to And I'm trying very, very hard to do the ABC approach on nearly every single one.

**Cassidy:** But the issue with Max is that I will give the choice. And I'll always try and do something I don't think he wants.

**Meg:** yes

**Cassidy:** one that is not what he's doing, but is preferable. And for example, he got some [00:13:00] new building blocks the other day, and he was throwing the building blocks, and we tried to discourage him throwing his toys.

**Meg:** Yes.

**Cassidy:** So I was saying, I know that you're, because he was sort of, he does it when he's a bit overexcited or if he's, usually when he's excited or frustrated is when he starts to throw things. I said, I know that you're frustrated, but we don't throw our toys. So you can either, you can play with the toys and stop throwing them or I take the toys away.

**Meg:** Mm hmm. So

**Cassidy:** He helped me pack up the toys.

**Meg:** the discipline worked really well.

**Cassidy:** And now, for example, we also have a timeout area that he can go and chill in. Sometimes we do it as part of a discipline and sometimes it's just if he's getting upset, I say, let's go and sit on timeouts and just have a bit of time so that it's not always. Horrid place. It's just for him to go and calm down. And the other day I said something like you, you know, the choice was you have to stop doing that or you'll have to go and sit on time out because there wasn't [00:14:00] really another option. And he just took himself to time out.

**Meg:** So interesting. It's so

**Cassidy:** he always takes himself. He's quite happy to do the thing that I think is quite under.

**Meg:** Well, you know, it's quite interesting. I mean, first of all, a lot of people listening to this will be fascinated by the fact that you have a time out for an 18 month old because it is little for an 18 month old to have a time out space.

**Meg:** I think it's very important to make the point that timeout is used in two situations. And I Cass I know that you and I have spoken about this, but I think for reference for other moms, it's important to talk about it. So timeout can be literally a time out, like just give me time out. And that is very, very important for little ones, which is why I love the fact that he does have that.

**Meg:** And potentially that's exactly what he needed in that moment was just to go to timeout to sit quietly and to actually just spend some time on his own. Without any other form of negative discipline. So I don't think the fact that he sent himself off there or took himself off there is actually not a negative.

**Meg:** It's a positive. It doesn't mean the timeout's not working. It means that it actually [00:15:00] is working because he's going there. And interestingly, I

mean, it's not for all children and there'll be lots of moms listening to say, there's no way my kid will do that. But my firstborn was very like Max. In fact, people used to be quite fascinated with the fact that I would say to James, you absolutely can't do that.

**Meg:** So, you know, timeout. Should be used in one of two circumstances. One is when they're totally overstimulated and need time out. And the other one is where they're doing something that is such a firm boundary that can't be crossed. Like in the case of James, that time, I think he was breaking something in the kitchen or he was hurting one of the dogs and, I could see it was going to be a dangerous situation.

**Meg:** And I said, we're going to time out and he actually went quite happily. And then he would sit there and I never had a rule around him coming out. If he wanted to come out and he calmed down and he had said, sorry, and things, and he moved on from what he was doing. It wasn't punitive and it just worked as a reset.

**Meg:** And so if that's how it's working for Max, I think that's perfectly positive, because what you're ending up with there is that either he's going because he's overstimulated or he's going because he actually needs a reset. And when he comes out, he's moved on from the behavior.

**Cassidy:** And the times [00:16:00] that I use it are actually when I can identify he's overtired or he's overexcited. For example, we had somebody round and he'd been absolutely fine. And then daddy walked into the room and he got really excited that daddy was in the room. And so we were all there together.

**Cassidy:** And he just started picking up anything that was in his sight and just like chucking it, but it was just like, I've got so much excitement. I don't know what to do with it. He even, he's got a little mini Hoover. He let pick the Hoover up. And I was like, Oh my gosh. So I had, so I took him and I sat with him in timeout and I just took him away from the situation.

**Cassidy:** I said, let's just go and sit in timeout. And he came back and he was absolutely fine. So I do try to use timeouts. And if I'm using it in an ABC approach, I try and use it in the times when I know him leaving this, if he can't stop doing what he's doing, then it's because he's overtired or something. And he actually just needs to leave the situation.

**Cassidy:** But there are other times. [00:17:00] When, and I suppose when you talk about him being too very little for a timeout, there are other times when it

is, like you were saying with James, what is the alternative? Because he's not listening to no, he just can't do that. And there isn't really a choice here. There isn't an ABC available.

**Cassidy:** How do you stop an 18 month old doing that?

**Meg:** Well so I want to actually pick up on two things you've spoken about. The one is the ABCs, because there will be people who don't know what those are. And I'm going to come back to that, but I just want to really center on something that you've said that is so, so important. We've only got a few limited things that we can do to stop negative behaviors and kind of 50 years ago, that would have been a smack, , and it would have been, it would be in corporal discipline.

**Cassidy:** And there are times when I understand why people felt they had to do that.

**Meg:** Yeah, exactly. And so, because you, you can go there in your head for sure. And so. Comparing something like timeout, which is a separation and a removal from a situation to something like a smack, it's an utterly obvious thing for anybody who's even listening to this, that that is preferable. And so I can't think of any reason why using timeout, if they're if they are cognitively at a point where they can understand it and Max certainly is at 18 months, and he is quite advanced in terms of the way his thought processes work. I mean, I've, I've seen that, you'll get other little ones at [00:19:00] 18 months, a lot younger. And I had three children, all very different in that respect. But he is able to get it together. He feels better once he's been in and out of it.

**Meg:** And he also doesn't feel like it's coming from you in a way that's done out of extreme anger , and is damaging because he wouldn't just be popping off there. So I think the fact that it works, the fact that you're doing it is perfectly all right. And I think, for moms who listening and are feeling at their wits end about the 18 months old behavior, and they're going to be every single one who's got an 18 month old will be feeling like that.

**Meg:** This is a really good option because it is something that just removes them from the situation. And it can be used to extinguish behaviors without the negativity of something like corporal punishment or anything. So.

**Cassidy:** I try at the end of it, and as you say, we're similar, he doesn't have a set time that he has to sit there or anything like that. Although if he sometimes

just gets up immediately and comes back, I'll go and take him and just be like, no, no, we're doing time now.

**Meg:** yeah

**Cassidy:** but then at the end of it, I try and go down to his level and tell him why.

**Cassidy:** [00:20:00] That was, why he went there in a very calm way and just said, you know how you can't do that. And then he gives me a hug. We say, you say, sorry, I'll give a hug.

**Meg:** And that's also very important, any form of discipline, however, it materializes has to be met with acceptance and love and cuddles and co regulation afterwards. That's very, very important, and I think that's where there are these different attachment styles that get spoken about in psychology.

**Meg:** And when you get the negative types of attachment styles, and it's often because children don't know how to read their parents and they're never certain that when they come out of that time out, are they going to be ignored? Are they going to be, further chastised? So, and I think it's very important that we move on from emotions quickly.

**Meg:** Once we've sorted out what once they've had their time out, it is back to love and cuddles and connecting emotionally with them. It is very important. And that doesn't mean that there isn't another option for discipline like love and cuddles and destruction. You spoke about it like when you walked out of the shops and he wanted that trolley and he's throwing a temper tantrum. You're not going to put him in timeout for that. You're going to [00:21:00] distract him and try and get him to move on to something else quite quickly once you've spoken him through it. So timeout is not for everything, but it certainly is for breaking things, for hurting people, for damaging things that, ,timeout is a very good option.

**Cassidy:** But I think also it sounds like, when I'm talking about it, it sounds like I'm doing all the right things, but he's still not, like, he'll still always throw. I'm still not getting through to him that we don't throw.

**Meg:** So one of

**Cassidy:** him throwing in that moment, but he will pick something up and throw it again two days later or a day or whatever, whenever that mood is.

**Cassidy:** So is that just something we just have to ride out? He will just continue to throw things while he can't process emotions, or is there something I can do to stop that?

**Meg:** I think we also need to go back to why he's doing the throwing. There's potentially one or two reasons. One is that he's looking for attention. And the other one is that he's looking for sensory input, which is like, he's super excited, doesn't know what to do with his body. So I'll throw, and that's very, very common that if my emotions exceed what I'm able to manage, I then move into a physical movement, which [00:22:00] is what toddlers do.

**Meg:** And they might bite another child, hit another child, throw a ball, or throw something. And so I think we've got to understand that there could be a sensory aspect to this. And so maybe another potential option is to actually have a little basket of balls in the room that when he starts to throw something, we say, Max, ABCs. So let's talk about the ABCs now, because it has come up. A stands for acknowledge. B stands for boundary. C stands for choice. So I know you're excited to see dad. That's our acknowledge. These are boundary. We don't throw blocks because it will hurt somebody. We don't throw the truck. We don't throw the vacuum cleaner because we'll hurt it. So you've got a choice. We can either go into timeout or you can throw a ball and then you give them something that is socially acceptable. And, I think. Having that kind of socially acceptable balls, shall we go outside and throw a ball for the dog? We can throw something, so they're knowing that actually it's feeding is need for on the sensory level for the throwing, but he's just doing it in a socially acceptable way.

**Meg:** So we don't throw blocks, but we do throw balls and they will, you'll be able to start to categorize like that as well.[00:23:00]

**Cassidy:** You mentioned actually in there, hitting.

**Meg:** Hmm.

**Cassidy:** And it's something that has started if he's, for example, the other day. He needed a nappy change and he was playing downstairs. He'd done a poo. So daddy picked him up So come on, let's go and change your nappy. He didn't want to go upstairs and change his nappy.

**Cassidy:** So he hit daddy in the face or we've had occasions where he has been picked up By my sister who we haven't seen for a week and she's really pleased to see him, picks him up. He's sort of going, Oh, I'm not ready for you to come

and pick me up. I've just woken up. And so he hit my sister, I can identify what's causing him to do it, but it's all very well being able to say that, but there's, how, how do we explain it?

**Cassidy:** You just don't hit, I understand what you're going through and how you're, what you're trying to do, but that doesn't mean it's okay.

**Meg:** Yeah. So immediately.

**Cassidy:** obviously a no

**Meg:** Yeah. Hitting's an absolute no. So immediately put him down and go down on his level. Look, there are two aspects to this. One is that if he's just woken up and your sister's picked him up [00:24:00] and she's in his face and it's just all too much for him, I think that there, it's very important to recognize his state and say to him, I can, I can see you just waking up.

**Meg:** Come to mommy for a cuddle and then you can go back. So I think there are aspects where you don't really want to go into necessarily discipline where actually that was a fairly challenging situation for him. But daddy changing his nappy is not a fairly challenging situation. He needs to go upstairs and have his nappy changed.

**Meg:** So I would immediately put him down if I was daddy and take his hands and put them together at his midline and you're down at his eye level. So you're holding his hands, you're at his eye level and you say, We don't hit. And so you immediately go in with no. And then I know that you want to play with your toys.

**Meg:** We have to change your nappy. Now we can do it upstairs, we can do downstairs or we can take your toy with us. Find a toy? We'll take with us to go and change your nappy. So find a middle ground that he can live with. But the immediate reaction to something like hitting, it does have to be quite a stand still in your tracks. And this is going to be something that will come up. And I can tell you that when [00:25:00] you and I chat in six months time, and we have a little sibling, that this is going to be something that comes up because hitting a sibling of three weeks old, who's got an open fontanelle is an absolute no, no.

**Meg:** And it is something that comes up with these little ones. So, because he's overexcited because Everybody's paying him or her attention, whatever it is,

there's going to be a situation like that. So we do need to nip those ones in the bud and then potentially, yeah, try and get a distractor that he'll accept.

**Cassidy:** Yeah, we are starting to try the kind of introduction of, I mean, he knows that there's a baby in mommy's tummy and he gives kisses and cuddles to the baby and whenever, if I, if I like, am getting changed as soon as my tummy's on show, he'll be like, baby . He's gonna be really confused when it's no longer just mommy's tummy. And yesterday we were with a friend and they had a baby and I sat with the baby in front of Max and he didn't seem to bat an eyelid yet, but obviously that will change. So we're [00:26:00] trying to ease the whole transition and let him know and keep talking to him, but we definitely will have to speak before, before the baby arrives for all the strategies.

**Meg:** Yeah. Cass, before we finish off how's his sleep going? Cause 18 months, we can often have to see a little sleep hiccup. Oh, we have seen a sleep hiccup.

**Cassidy:** I'm so tired. Okay. Sleep has been one of those things where he's definitely gone through a regression, but there's also quite often something... We've had a lot of movement. So we've moved house twice in the last few months. We've been away on holiday in that time. The heating is broken in our new house,

**Meg:** Oh, no!

**Cassidy:** it's so we've had lots of challenges which haven't helped the sleep thing.

**Cassidy:** But On nights that I still can identify that, on nights I can identify what the issue is, I'm not too worried, but there have [00:27:00] been nights where seemingly there is no issue. I'm literally trying to find as much wood as possible because it does seem to have got a bit better, but there was a period where we were up for...

**Cassidy:** Two hours in the middle of the night, and he just, we could not leave the room. I tried to do, I tried to go right back to what I did when he was four months old. And do the controlled crank, going in, shushing him, calming him, then walking out, leaving him a few minutes, going back. Three hours later, Alex found me sobbing on the

**Meg:** Oh,

**Cassidy:** landing floor because I was so tired and it anymore.

**Cassidy:** And it got to the point where we were almost having to fall asleep on the floor next to the cot holding his hand. But it would still take two hours for him to settle and it just... was exhausting and relentless. And then the next night he possibly could sleep through completely. And there just seemed to be no rhyme or reason why some nights he was doing it and some nights he wasn't.

**Meg:** [00:28:00] Yeah. So, okay. So a couple of things, as always with sleep, we always start off with the basics and the organic. So let's just stick with the organic for this. So we start off with health. He's 18 months old. He's exposed to animals. Has he been dewormed?

**Cassidy:** No,

**Meg:** Okay. So deworming is something that needs to happen now at this stage, and we're not looking for big fat tapeworms and horrible big things.

**Meg:** We're looking for tiny little things called pinworms, and they are tiny, innocuous, and they really are something that's super common and it's interesting because when mothers hear worms for the first time they freak out like how can my child have worms but actually all toddlers will have worms and particularly if there's animals in their vicinity but even if they're just digging in a sand pit at a park they're likely to pick up worms.

**Meg:** The FDA in America has approved the deworming medications from two years old but in South Africa as an example in Red Cross Children's Hospital We deworming for from as young as a year old. So there's nothing wrong with deworming. All you do need to do is just go into, well, there's two options for deworming.

**Meg:** One is an over the [00:29:00] counter medication and the other one is a prescription medication. You need to ask your doctor for the one and the other one you just get over the counter. I would deworm him. How does the worm thing work with sleep? So what happens is that the worms deposit little eggs that travel down the elementary canal and they actually hatch on the anus at night.

**Meg:** And I mean, this is disgusting, but actually, literally I've seen it where you can actually. Shine a torch on the anus in the middle of the night, and you can actually see these little things. And they, and they're not, they don't cause any nutritional problems. They don't cause any major health problems and they just need to be dewormed.

**Meg:** So step number one, a hundred percent, you do need to deworm him. Okay. So that's the first thing. Second thing is diet. Cause that's also forms part of the basics. We need to make sure he's having a robust diet. Toddlers. It can be tricky. Is he eating fresh air and love or is he a good eater still?

**Cassidy:** no, he's a very good eater.

**Meg:** Okay, great.

**Meg:** He's always been a good eater. Well, traditionally, mainly been a good eater. So that's great. He's probably going to go through a picky eating stage at some point, but don't worry about that, but that's great. And just make sure he's got nice iron in his diet as well. And some nice fatty acids and oily [00:30:00] fish as well.

**Meg:** So those two things work quite nicely. So that's his diet and his health. I mean, other than that, the only other health things that I would point out that often happen around this age are snotty noses, which then lead to glue ear. And what happens there is that the, all the thin, snotty white clear mucus that runs out the nose.

**Meg:** On a normal day, on a snotty day for a toddler, because they all have them, then starts to clog up, it runs into their eustachian tubes, and which is all connected to their sinuses, and then it can't get back out, it clogs up, and it becomes a bit thick, and it causes what we call glue ear, and that can cause them to wake at night, and that just needs a little bit of a decongestant.

**Meg:** So those are the two main health things that you need to work out is if he's got glue ear and if he needs to be dewormed. And I would start there because going into sleep training or anything like that without having done that is, is pointless. The next thing we always look at obviously is the sensory, what's going on in his sensory world.

**Meg:** And so it's important that he's having his day sleep and I'm going to come back to day sleep just now.[00:31:00] Even though little ones can start to think about dropping their day sleep between two and five years old, it's a very wide range of normal, but we do want them to have a midday rest and also just not completely overstimulating him, particularly at the end of the day is also important.

**Meg:** Then we move on to sleep hygiene. So that's something that you and I should also be doing. No blue light before bedtime. So that's no TV after 4 p. m.

and no screens. We want to make sure that he's got good sleep hygiene as well, dark room, all of that type of thing.

**Meg:** And then his day sleep routine is really important. And this is often where the problem comes. So if he's having, Two hours or more, but if he's having two hours of midday sleep, sometimes that'll disrupt nighttime. And we'll see it. It's similar to when I spoke to you about cusp ages at nine months and 12 months. What happens is they either fight bedtime.

**Meg:** So instead of falling asleep, happy at seven, they push it out to eight, or they pull morning forward. So instead of waking at six, they wake at five or four, or they do a two hour stint in the middle of the night. [00:32:00] And so for that, you need to pull his midday sleep back to 90 minutes. And see how that makes an impact.

**Meg:** So if I were you, I would start there. I wouldn't be going down the whole route of any controlled crying or sleep training or anything. I would just be starting with the basics because he, you probably get it right without anything else. The only other thing I would like to mention is just separation anxiety, because it comes around about this age that they develop an imagination.

**Meg:** And particularly as language comes, their brains start to kind of see things pictorially in their mind. And so where before babies don't have nightmares, now suddenly they do. So it could be that he's waking up and something looks scary in the room, even though there's nothing there, the old story of the dressing gown on the back of the door tap thing.

**Cassidy:** But I mean, he can wake and it's a sudden scream like he's, it sometimes does sound like he is absolutely terrified.

**Meg:** Is he awake when you, when you walk in then.

**Cassidy:** Yeah, completely. Like he, as soon as you walk in, he's climbing into your arms. And he's like trying to

**Meg:** Yeah. So then, [00:33:00] so then he's having nightmares and that'll also be a problem. So have you got a nightlight now?

**Cassidy:** We used to have one and then he now has always been in pitch black. But we do have have one.

**Meg:** What we always say about nightlights, there's no nightlights when they're babies, because except when you're breastfeeding, obviously you need a bit of light, but other than that, no nightlights because it just alerts them when they wake up, but from this stage, we now do start to have a nightlight again, and that's for imagination.

**Meg:** So that's the other piece that you can look at doing as well as just having a little nightlight and then just, when he wakes, just handling it with deep pressure, putting your hands on him, stroking his head, comforting him until he falls back to sleep. And using something like white noise can also help you with getting him back to sleep at that time.

**Cassidy:** So, because when we go in, he is literally crawling onto us, trying to get out of the cot. And so we've been bringing him into the chair. The only way to quieten him down is to just sit with him in the chair. But I always have in the back of my mind, mind, I don't want him [00:34:00] to fall asleep in my arms because I don't want that to become a habit, but actually if he's not right on the verge of sleeping and I try and put him down, then we're not gonna, we're not getting anywhere.

**Cassidy:** He'll two minutes later be screaming again.

**Meg:** So I would be giving him love and cuddles and comfort and then putting him back down and then actually sitting with him with a chair, right next to his cot, with your arm through it, stroking his head rather than sitting in the chair. Because it's just going to be easier for you in the long run.

**Meg:** You don't really want to getting into the rock to sleep and holding to sleep too much because it can cause habits and particularly the new baby coming. It's not really what you want. So I would take him out. I would give him love and cuddles. I would comfort him. I would then put him back down and sit with him and say, mommy's going to sit with you and just put your hand through and just stroke his head until he falls back asleep as well.

**Meg:** And give him that comfort.

**Cassidy:** That's a really good point you say there as well, because I know when they're babies, we don't talk to them when we go in, but he understands things now, so I'm not, I've not [00:35:00] known, do I speak to him or do I go with the silence?

**Meg:** No. You give him comfort. Did you have a scary dream? Was it not nice? Come. Mommy's here. Would you like some water? Give him a little sip

**Cassidy:** Yeah, he downs water every time. We always take the water. I don't know if he's just doing it to be like, look, there was something.

**Meg:** No, so, so I would definitely give him a little bit of water and then just sit down next to him and just stroke his head.

**Meg:** And in that water, I would put about three or four drops of rescue remedy as well. Just, just calms him down at this age. There's a lot going on for them and also the amount that he's learning at the moment that also causes them to wake at night and to have the dreams. There's a lot of reasons as you can hear.

**Meg:** I mean, we, I mean, we've just spent like. Five, 10 minutes going through a lot of reasons. So it's kind of going back to the tick boxes. If you've done the sleep sense course, which I think you have so any other mom, if you haven't done the sleep sense online course, which is inside the parent sense app, go and do it.

**Meg:** It'll take you through all those principles again, kind of step by step.

**Cassidy:** yeah, because it does feel like we've always done everything by the [00:36:00] book

**Meg:** And now,

**Cassidy:** we've done all the sleep sense stuff. And now, but as I say, I do think it's improving, but it's just unfortunate we've had these heating issues. So it's been really cold and trying to sort all of that. There's just always been something. But, and just before the heating broke, the radiator in his room started making really loud noises suddenly in the middle of the night, which would have scared him for sure. So anyway, we're hopefully going to fix the heating after the weekend.

**Meg:** Shame,

**Cassidy:** when it starts getting really

**Meg:** I know I was about to say, next week's going to be lovely and warm, so you're not going to need it anyway, but Murphy's law. Cass, as usual, I have loved chatting to you and I know our moms really love hearing your stories

because it articulates so much of what they're going through as well. So thank you for joining us again.

**Meg:** It was a fabulous session and enjoy your gorgeous boy and we'll chat to you closer to the birth of number two.

**Cassidy:** Indeed. Indeed. Not long. Thank you.

**Meg:** Wonderful. Thanks for the chat, Cass.

**Cassidy:** Bye.[00:37:00]