



# GRADUAL RETREAT METHOD

The gradual retreat method is based on the idea of a parent distancing themselves from a child little by little until they no longer need their parent or carer to be present for them to fall asleep.

This method can be used for children of any age and is based on the parent or carer adopting different degrees of physical closeness to help the child get to sleep.

The aim of the technique is to keep moving on to the next degree of physical separation every few days until the parent or carer is out of the room.

For example:

- Lie on top of the bed covers
- Sit up in bed
- Sit with your feet over the edge of the bed
- Kneel on a cushion next to the bed holding the child's hand
- Move the cushion away from the bedside a little
- Move halfway to the bedroom door
- Move just inside the bedroom door
- Move just outside the bedroom door
- Move along the landing until the parent is in their own room

Every 4<sup>th</sup> night, the parent or carer should move to the next degree of separation resisting pleas from the child to return to their previous position.

This technique can be used effectively with a rewards system.