

Overprotective Parenting in the Short Term

Fears about leaving your baby

Your worries as a parent are so intense that you have difficulty leaving your child alone or in the care of another person. As a result, your child does not have the opportunity to learn how to be away from you.

Example: Parent is unable to rely on a babysitter.

Example: Baby does not learn how to fall asleep at night alone.

Worries about physical health

You are preoccupied with protecting your child from possible illness or injury. Child may realize that this is a way to get attention from parent. Child develops a pattern of headaches and stomach pains during times of stress.

Example: Parent is in the pediatrician's office more often than necessary.

Example: Parent continues to check on child at night, even when child is much older.

Difficulty encouraging your child's development

You sometimes treat your baby or child as less capable than they really are. You have difficulty encouraging your child to take steps forward in their development.

Example: Parent limits or avoids "tummy time" because baby seems uncomfortable.

Example: Parent is worried about transitioning to solid foods or limits child's participation in activities.

Difficulty setting limits

You feel guilty about your child's NICU experience. You compensate by being extra kind or lenient. As your child grows older, you find it difficult to set limits or to say "no." Child becomes rebellious.

Example: Parent feels they always have to respond to their infant's needs, rather than helping infant adapt to parent's needs too (such as feeding or sleeping schedules).

Example: Parent feeds infant whenever they cry instead of trying to comfort.

Example: Parent has difficulty making child go to bed at an appropriate time.