

Recommendations for supporting young people who stammer:

- Set up 'special times' for 5 minutes each day, where you join in with your child's play. During this time, give him your full attention and let him take the lead. Avoid asking him questions or showing him how to play. Instead let him start the conversation and listen carefully to what he is saying rather than how he says it.
- During the day, give the child time to start and to finish his sentence. Avoid giving him advice, just give him time.
- Slow down your own rate of talking to convey to all children that there is plenty of time, and to provide a model for the child to copy. Speaking slowly may help them to slow down without drawing attention to the stammering by directly asking him to slow down.
- Encourage everyone to take turns in conversation at home, by praising times when this works well. Play turn taking games and discuss how this is similar to taking turns in conversation. It is important that the child who stammers learns to listen as well as to talk.
- Encourage confidence through praise. Tell him what he has done well and then give it a label e.g. "thank you for tidying up, that is very **helpful**", "I love the horse you have drawn you are very **artistic**".
- Model a positive response to problems or accidents to show them that it is ok to make mistakes.
- Encourage the development of good social and communication skills (looking at people when talking to them, listening carefully, smiling and nodding, taking it in turns to speak) to help to build confidence. Speaking is only a small part of communicating.
- Give the young person time to complete what they have to say without being interrupted or feeling rushed.
- • Finishing off sentences is usually unhelpful as it reduces self-confidence and increases frustration, especially if the person chooses words different from those intended by the stammering young person.
- Take a slightly longer pause between what the young person has said and your reply - this slows the overall speed of the conversation down and allows for thinking time.
- Slow down your rate of talking to convey to all young people that there is plenty of time, and to provide a model for the young person to copy. Speaking slowly oneself is likely to help the dysfluent young person without drawing attention to the stammering by directly asking them to slow down.
- Focus on what the young person is saying rather than "how". It is important the content of their message is focused on, and that the young person feels that what they say has value and that others want to listen to them.
- Young people who stammer often lose eye contact when stammering and it's helpful if parents and teachers don't look away but give the same eye contact as they would if speaking to a young person who is fluent.

- o British Stammering Association: <https://stamma.org/>
- o The Michael Palin Centre: <https://www.whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=25406>
- o Action for Stammering Children: <https://actionforstammeringchildren.org/>
- o www.stammeringineducation.net (online training resource for schools staff)
- o www.stammeringineducation.net/expertparent (advice for parents)