

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICES

Helping your child to talk

STUTTERING



What we know

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Children do not always grow out of stuttering by themselves but can be helped by speech and language therapy

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Research has shown that the best results come from treating children in their pre-school years, but help is available at any age

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Parents play an important part in the treatment of stuttering

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Treatment is simple, effective and enjoyable for parents and children

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What you should do:

Talk to your Health Visitor, GP, Teacher or School Nurse

or contact Just One Number on 0300 300 0123

or

read more about stuttering on the British Stammering Association website

www.stamma.org

What will happen at the speech and language therapy appointment?

- The speech and language therapist will ask you about your child's development, general health and speech
- The speech and language therapist will play with your child and listen to them talk
- You may want to bring a recording of how your child speaks at home
- The speech and language therapist will discuss how you can help your child at home and whether they may benefit from regular sessions

Stuttering or **stammering** mean the same thing. It is a speech disorder which causes problems in the co-ordination and flow of speech.

Children may:

- **Repeat** e.g. mu-mu-mummy, I can't – I can't – I can't do it
- **Prolong sounds** e.g. Ca _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ an I come too? Shhhhhhhall I put it here?
- **Block** e.g. there may be silence as the child tries to speak
- **Give up** trying to speak at all
- Use head and facial movements to help them when words get stuck

Stuttering usually begins in young children, perhaps as soon as the child starts to speak. It may start gradually or suddenly and in some children it comes and goes. While many children will grow out of their stutter, about a quarter may continue to stutter into adulthood. It is more common in boys than in girls.

Things to remember

- True stuttering is a speech disorder. It is rarely the result of trauma, anxiety or emotional problems. It is a not a normal part of a child's speech development
- Situations where your child is excited, competing for the chance to speak, or upset may make the stutter worse, but **they are not the cause of it**
- Stuttering tends to run in families so it is not unusual to find more than one member of the family who stutters. However, this is not because your child is copying someone else but because the stutter may be inherited. They found the gene for stuttering in 2011.
- Parents do not cause stuttering and it is not caused by nervousness or lack of confidence.