



SLT Top Tips for supporting Fluency

Stammering/ Dysfluency is a breakdown in the flow of speech. It can present as:

- Repetitions of individual sounds or whole words,
- Prolongations/stretching out sounds,
- Blocking/getting stuck on sounds,
- Facial tension, extra body movements, disrupted breathing, or
- Avoidance of some words or situations

Research shows that up to 8% of children will experience dysfluency at some point in their lives. It is common for children between the age of 2- 5 years to go through a period of normal non-fluency while their language skills are developing. Many children achieve normal fluency within a few months of starting to stammer but others might need some extra help.

Here are some **strategies** for helping support your child's fluency:

- If possible, try to have **5 minutes** each day of **one to one time** with your child where you can talk and play together in calm and relaxed setting.
- **Slow down your own rate** of speech and **use short, simple sentences** when you are talking to your child.

- Show your child you are listening and **maintain natural eye contact** if they are stammering.
- Give them **extra time** to talk **without interruption** and avoid finishing off their sentences for them.
- Don't tell your child to slow down or take a deep breath if they are stammering.
- Try not to ask your child too many questions. Give them time to answer **one question at a time** and balance your questions with comments during conversation.
- Try to ensure **everyone gets a turn** to talk during family conversations.
- Give your child **praise** for the things they are doing well in communication.

- If your child is stammering speak to your Speech and Language Therapist for further advice.

- Useful information and resources can be found at:
www.actionforstammeringchildren.org and www.stamma.org