

Does your child stammer?

A guide for parents

Developed by Peterborough
Speech and Language Therapy
Children's Centres Team



Stammering... what's that?

Children stammer in slightly different ways:

- Some get stuck on starting words: 'M...ummy'
- Or repeat the first sound in the word over and over again: 'mu...mu...mu...mu...mummy'
- Others repeat whole words or stretch the sounds in words: 'I...I...I...want mmmummy'

Stammering can come and go.

When does it happen?

Learning to talk takes time. Two to five year olds often stumble on words. In fact one in twenty children will stammer at some point during this stage. So if your child is one of those who do, DON'T PANIC!

It might happen more when your child is tired, excited or feels rushed.

**Stuttering and stammering...
they mean the same thing**

Contact information

The British Stammering Association

Parent's helpline: 0845 603 2001

www.stammering.org

Speech and Language Therapy Department

Werrington Health Centre

Skaters Way

Werrington

Peterborough

PE4 6NB

Tel: 01733 758298





Don't talk for your child

Always let them have their turn to speak, but don't make them talk if they don't want to.

Stay happy

It's really important that your child stays happy about the way s/he talks. Try not to talk about any worries you may have when they are listening. Don't worry if s/he can't say words properly yet, that will come later.

Show you're interested

Look at your child when s/he talks, then s/he knows you're interested and won't rush.

Busy... Busy...

If you're busy and can't give your child your full attention, say you'll spend time with them later when you will listen (but don't make promises you can't keep).

Lots of praise

Boost your child's confidence by praising all the things s/he can do.

Go slow

Don't tell your child to stop or slow down. Keep your own talking slow and calm. Wait for a few seconds before responding to what your child says.



There are lots of ways you can help your child. It's really important that everyone who looks after your child knows what to do, so maybe show them this leaflet too.

8 top tips...

Don't finish off sentences

If your child is stammering, do make sure you let them finish what they are saying. Just wait and listen. Don't interrupt.

Make time for one to one play

Try to make time in the day to play together. Let your child be in charge of choosing what you both play with. Listen to whatever s/he wants to say.

Use the same sort of sentences your child does. Keep them short and simple.

When should I get help?

Children can be helped a great deal by a Speech and Language Therapist, so get in touch if your child starts to stammer. You can do this by asking your Health Visitor, Doctor, local Children's Centre or your child's pre-school (if they go to one) to refer you or you can even contact the Speech and Language Therapy Department directly if you wish.

