



## SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO STAMMER

- Show your child that you are interested in what they are saying, not how they are saying it. Listen closely; give good eye contact, positive body language and facial expression.
- Allow them time to finish what they are saying – don't finish for them.
- Slow down your speech, include more pauses, count to two before responding to them. This gives them a positive example. Don't tell them to slow down – show them. Children often try to 'match' the speed of the person they are talking to.
- Reduce the number of direct questions. Make sure you give your child time to answer before asking another question.
- Give them responsibilities and tasks to increase their confidence. Be careful of giving tasks that require lots of talking / listening though - this may create more pressure.
- Try to arrange some quiet one-to-one conversation, following the child's lead, that is, don't ask questions.
- If the child is obviously upset / frustrated by a moment of stammering, acknowledge it, for example:  
"I know talking is hard sometimes, sometimes I get stuck on a word too. I don't mind if it takes a while".
- Be alert for subtle signs of bullying, teasing, mimicking, etc. Encourage other children / family members not to make fun of the stammer.
- Give as many opportunities as possible to be fluent. Singing, acting, reading (alone or in unison) are all talking activities that tend to be more fluent.
- Discuss openly with your child what strategies they find helpful.
- Seek every opportunity to build your child's self-esteem and give them chance to shine.
- Don't feel awkward or bad in the situation. Stammering is not a social disease - there are worse things!