



Sandwell Speech and Language Therapy

Stammering: Parent/Carer Information Session

Quiz



True or false

There are three types of stammering

Stammering can run in families

Children sometimes stammer on purpose

Stammering is very variable

We can teach children to talk differently to stop stammering

Parents can cause stammering

Do children grow out of stammering?

Who is more likely to stammer – boys or girls?

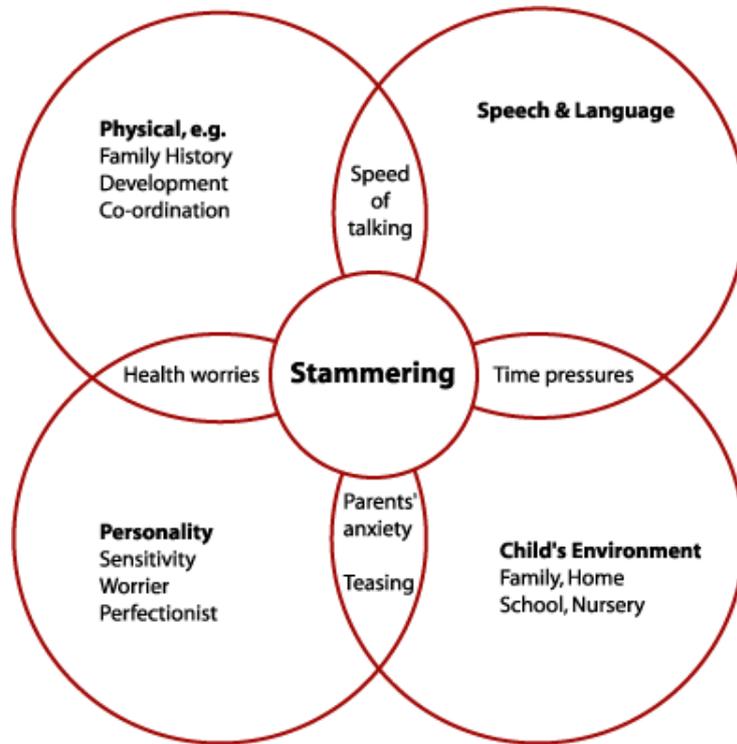
Which of the following celebrities stammered...

- Ed Sheeran (singer)
- Tiger Woods (athlete)
- Julia Roberts (actress)
- Winston Churchill (politician)
- Isaac Newton (scientist)
- King George
- Noel Gallagher (Singer)
- Ed Balls (politician)
- Bruce Willis (actor)

What affects your child's fluency?

Multifactorial Model

We don't know what causes stammering. What we do know is that it is not caused by parents. We also know that it is likely to be affected by a number of different factors.



Framework of Stammering

Children's physical skills

Gender, Family history or their neurophysiological development

Children's speech and language development

Difficulties in learning language or learning to talk very early can both affect stammering

Children's emotions and attitudes

A child's personality affects how they react to the stammerer and this can be shaped by the adults around them

Children's environment

Adult's reaction to their stammerer, Big events or changes, Busy schedules and Family communication styles – i.e. turn taking

WHAT AFFECTS YOUR CHILD?

When is your child MORE likely to stammer?	When is your child LESS likely to stammer?
<i>Rushing to tell me something</i> <i>Excited</i> <i>Angry</i> <i>Upset</i> <i>Frustrated</i> <i>Competing</i> <i>Tired</i>	<i>Relaxed</i> <i>One to one / in a small group</i> <i>Feeling calm</i> <i>Around certain people</i>



Day to day advice

It can be uncomfortable listening to a person whose speech is disrupted by a stammer but try to show you are at ease and are ready to listen

Avoid telling them what to do – don't say 'stop / slow down / think about what to say'

Avoid guessing the word or finishing sentences - it is very tempting, but you may get it wrong or it may just make the person feel cross!



Try to show that you are not in a hurry - a sense of urgency builds tension

Slow down your own speech & pause more to reduce the speed of the conversation



Listen to what your child is saying and not how they are saying it

Keep easy eye contact

If your child's looks distressed reassure them and gently acknowledge what is happening 'I can see that was a bit hard for you but I'm listening'



Questions - make sure to use one at a time and not too often

When asking about their day wait until a time when they are calm (rather than on the way home in the car)

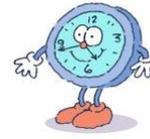
Discuss the above advice with friends and family so everyone knows how to support your child

If your child mentions their speech reassure them that lots of people can be a bit bumpy sometimes and let them know they can talk to you about it



With older children ask how you can help them or what they would like you to do

Special Time



For younger children:

Focus on a quiet indoor game rather than reading a book, watching TV or playing a lively outdoor game. When your child has chosen what to do, go to a room where you will not be disturbed and deal with any obvious distractions such as radio or TV.

- Be explicit and tell your child it's their special time so they learn to look forward to it
- Play with your child for 5-10 minutes, giving him your undivided attention
- Focus on what s/he is saying rather than how s/he is saying it.
- Talk about what you are both doing with the toys (like a commentary) using a slow calm voice
- Avoid asking questions and try not to test their knowledge of colours / names of things

For older children:

It can be more of a challenge to find 1:1 time as children get older and want to do their own thing. However it can be even more powerful in supporting their fluency and also allows them time to talk to you about any worries they may have. As children get older it is important to allow them to speak to you about their speech and any worries they may have about it.

- Be explicit and tell your child you want to spend some 1:1 time with them and see if you can agree on activities together.
- Consider going for a walk, building / making something or doing some cooking together? Try to avoid screen time as there is not much talking involved with this

If you have other children, it is important to give them their own regular 'Special Times' as well on an individual basis.

Aim to do 'Special Time' at least **3 times a week** to allow your child to benefit from it.



TURN TAKING

Often, in families:

- Everybody talks at once
- People interrupt one another
- No one listens
- One person does all the talking
- People are afraid of interrupting the stammering child.

When this happens:

- Everyone is competing for time to talk
- Everyone tends to talk quickly
- You have less time to plan what to say
- It is harder for the stammering child to take the time they need!

How can I improve my turn-taking?

Watch! Listen! Wait! To ensure that your child has finished speaking before you start to talk.

Count to two in your head before responding to your child's speech

How can I support younger children with taking turns?

1. Begin with very structured games (building a tower / pop up games / board games) and practise taking turns for two minutes with an adult playing too
2. Slowly increase this to five minutes and then ten minutes
3. Encourage the children to play alone but stay close by and offer lots of praise for listening
4. See if they can play the same game alone for ten minutes without any help
5. Try less structured games such as bubbles / cars / outdoor play; you may have to reduce the time again and start by playing with them

How can I support the whole family with taking turns?

Play games where you talk about whose turn it is and practise waiting, e.g. board games or building something as a team

Praise each other for listening or have a points chart!

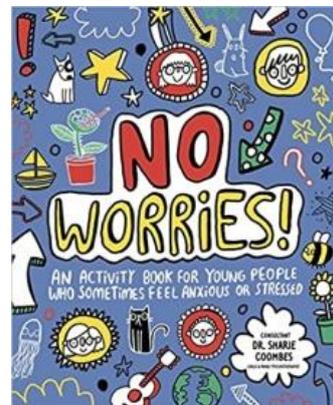
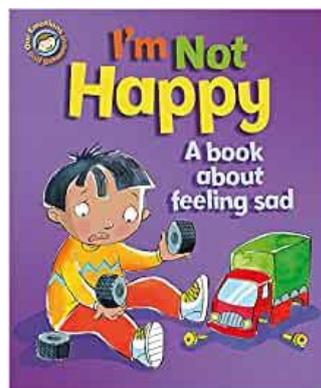
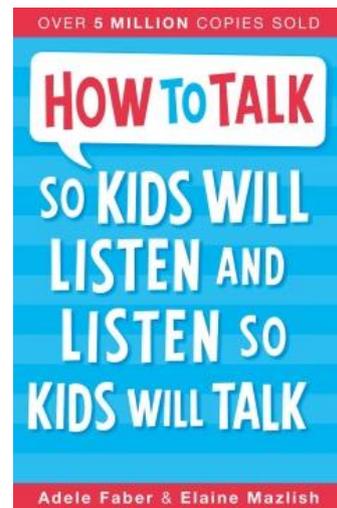
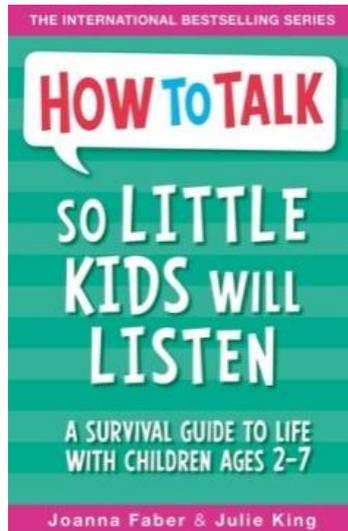
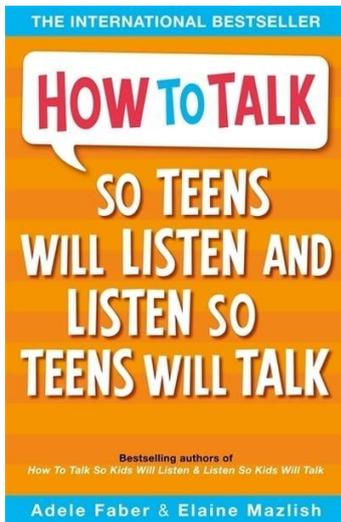
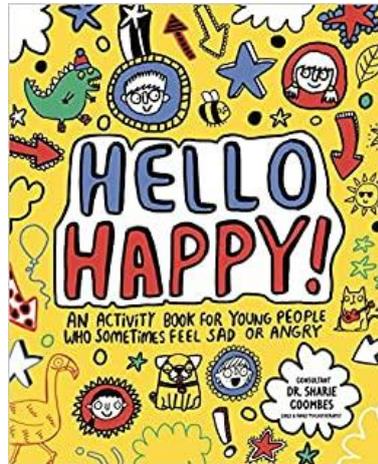
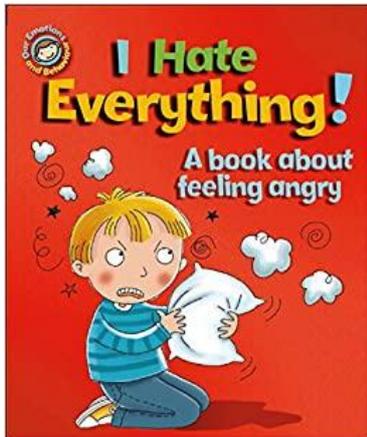
Play the microphone game and then use the 'microphone' at times when it is harder to take turns, e.g. during arguments



Microphone game:

- Choose a microphone, e.g. a pencil, a spoon and put it in the middle
- When somebody wants to talk, they pick up the microphone and then nobody else can talk or interrupt; they are listening
- When the speaker has finished, the microphone is put down in the middle for the next person to pick up
- You do not have to go in a set order but everybody has a chance to speak, and nobody should take all the turns or have long turns
- Practise talking about things you like, what you did that day, or tell a story as a group (a few words each)
-

Books:



Need more Information...

Michael Palin Centre: <https://michaelpalincentreforstammering.org/>

Stamma: <https://stamma.org/>

Videos for parents of children who stammer:

<https://stamma.org/news-features/videos-parents-pre-school-children>



Penguin: Stammering Support

Free App with more information about stammering and daily five minute activities to help you to support your child (6 years and under)



- If you have chosen to have some therapy at this stage you will receive a letter once your child reaches the top of the waiting list.
- If you have chosen not to have therapy at this stage your child will be discharged but please feel free to contact us at any point if this changes or you would like to talk to one of the team about anything.

Contact us: 0121 612 2345

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