

Speech and Language Therapy Advice Stammering

How to help the child who stammers

At times everyone's speech can be a bit bumpy as we can get excited and talk too fast, or start hesitating if we are nervous. Some children's speech begins to be bumpy more frequently and we notice it is different.

The following suggestions are strategies you can use to help your child speak more smoothly.

- **Slow down your own speech rather than telling your child to slow down**
Pausing and taking your time can help your child feel less rushed.
- **Give your child time to finish their own sentences**
Try to maintain natural eye contact when your child is having difficulties. Don't finish your child's sentences for him as this can be frustrating
- **Look at your child when you are talking to them - get down to their level**
- **Use short and simple sentences**
- **Try not to ask too many questions**
Always give your child plenty of time to answer one question before asking another. Keep your sentences short and simple and instead of asking questions, simply comment on what your child has said, thereby letting him know you are listening.
- **Take turns talking, try not to interrupt your child**
This can help encourage a more relaxed speaking environment
- **Rhythm and familiar language is often easy**
Activities such as singing and nursery rhymes will help them practice smooth speech

- **Your child is probably unaware that they are having problems talking**
If they are having a bad day don't expect much talking from them.
- **Be encouraging if your child gets upset about her speech, just as you would if she was upset about any other difficulty**
You might say something like "Don't worry, talking can be tricky sometimes when you're still learning."

If you are concerned about your child's speech contact Wolverhampton
Speech and Language Therapy Service

For more information visit the following websites:

The British Stammering Association -www.stammering.org

The Michael Palin Centre - www.stammeringcentre.org