

Types of stuttering

<i>Type</i>	<i>What is it?</i>	<i>What is happening?</i>
Repeat	Repeating a sound, syllable, word, or phrase.	I am going too fast.
Prolongation Long	Getting stuck on a sound.	I am pushing too hard.
Block Stop	No sound comes out.	I am pushing too hard.
Combo	A combination of other kinds of stuttering.	I might be going too fast, or be pushing too hard.
Noisy breathing	I am breathing in a strange spot, getting stuck on my breathing, or making noises when I breathe.	I am tight in my lungs, neck, or voice box.
Filler Interjection	Adding extra words or sounds. <i>Um... like... actually... so... yeah... whatever...</i>	I am trying to avoid stuttering out loud. I am trying to go too fast.
Changing words Circumlocution	I am changing what I say to use different words so I won't stutter.	I am trying to avoid stuttering out loud.
Avoidance	I stop talking.	I am trying to avoid stuttering out loud.

When should I refer for speech therapy?

Speech therapy does not cure stuttering, but can help make talking easier. Sometimes an SLP will work with a student directly; other times working with parents and teachers to change environmental factors is best. Refer to an SLP if you notice any of the following:

- A high number of word or sounds repeated, especially if there is tension in the mouth, neck or throat.
- “Blocking”, when the student is trying to talk but no words come out, or facial grimaces while talking.
- Frustration because the student gets stuck and cannot say what they want.
- Avoiding talking in class or with peers, reluctance to answer questions, or “shyness” about sharing ideas.



Resources

National Stuttering Association
<http://www.westutter.org/>

Stuttering Foundation
<http://www.stutteringhelp.org/>

American Speech Hearing Association
<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/stuttering.htm>

For more information, contact:

Stuttering: Questions and Answers for Teachers



www.MsPetersenSLP.wordpress.com



What is stuttering?

Stuttering is the disruption of fluent speech. People who stutter “get stuck” on words, phrases or sounds. They may repeat these words or sounds multiple times. They may “block” and not be able to say anything at all. Stuttering is involuntary; the person who is stuttering does not have the ability to stop stuttering. It is not a choice, or something caused by bad habits.

What causes stuttering?

Stuttering is a multifactorial disorder, which means it is influenced by many different things. It has genetic causes, which we know because stuttering tends to run in families. Stuttering can be triggered by emotions, stress, or particular situations, but it is NOT caused by these things. Stuttering is not caused by parenting style, bad habits, or babytalk. It is neurological, and involuntary.

Is there a cure?

There is no cure for stuttering. Children who begin stuttering after age 4, or who continue stuttering beyond preschool, are classified as having a persistent stutter and will not grow out of stuttering. Speech therapy can help a child or adult speak more easily, but cannot cure the underlying condition. Persistent stuttering is permanent.

Does stuttering stay the same over a person’s lifetime?

Stuttering is unpredictable, and impacted by many factors. It can be triggered by strong emotions (feeling excited, nervous, or scared), by particular people, by specific words or sounds, by life changes (moving, new baby in the family) or even by growth spurts or puberty.

Stuttering severity is often cyclical, so stuttering might be mild for a time, then increase and be moderate or severe, then come back down to mild or even imperceptible. These cycles are normal, and can happen at any time during a person’s life.

Speech therapy can help get stuttering under control, and support a person who stutters as they manage their stuttering.

What can I do for my student?

- **Listen attentively.**
Don’t interrupt or say words for your student.
- **Avoid competition among classmates when speaking.**
Make sure everyone has lots of time to express their thoughts .
- **Model a slow, relaxed speaking style**
with short phrases and pauses in between thoughts. This helps reduce pressure on all students to speak quickly.
- **Be honest.**
It is okay to acknowledge that your student is struggling with his/her speech. Talking about stuttering openly can help reduce anxiety about stuttering.
- **Accommodate.**
Students who stutter may prefer not to be called on unexpectedly in class, or may be nervous about public speaking. Accommodations such as giving oral presentations in a small group, or giving written answers instead of oral answers can work. Ask your student what will help them the most. Every student is different, and so is every stutter!

Stuttering Questionnaire for Parents

Student: _____ **Date:** _____ **Parent completing form:** _____

When did you first notice your child stuttering?

Does anyone in your family or extended family stutter?

What makes your child's speech better? What makes it worse?

How do you feel about your child's stuttering?

How does your child feel about her/his stuttering? Is she/he aware of the stuttering?

What do you think caused your child to stutter?

Have you talked about stuttering with your child?

Do you do anything to help your child when she/he stutters? What helps?

Have there been any stressful events or changes in your family recently? (eg: new baby, relocation, family changes). Have these changes impacted your child's fluency?

Please list any medications your child takes on a regular basis:

Are there any other health or learning concerns for your child?

Below are some examples of stuttering/disfluent speech: (check all that apply)

- has frequent interjections (um, like, you know, well-um, etc)
- repeats the beginnings of words (b-b--ball, p-p-puppy, da-da-daddy)
- repeats whole words (I-I-I, he-he-he, we-we-we)
- repeats phrases (I want to- I want to- I want to go, and then- and then- and then we went)
- prolongs sounds (Sssssaturday, nnnnnnobody)
- blocks or gets stuck and is not able to get the sounds and words out. (tension is noticed)
- revises phrases – (starts to talk, then stops, then starts over again- sometimes changing the words)
- has unusual breathing patterns
- has unusual face or body movements (i.e., head nods, eye blinks/eye movements, facial grimaces)

Describe:

My child is disfluent or stutters when she/he: (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> feels upset | <input type="checkbox"/> talks with friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feels excited | <input type="checkbox"/> talks on the telephone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feels nervous | <input type="checkbox"/> reads aloud |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feels tired | <input type="checkbox"/> talks with adults |
| <input type="checkbox"/> answers questions | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talks with specific people: <i>(please list)</i> | |

Stuttering Questionnaire for Teachers

Student: _____ **Grade:** _____ **Date:** _____ **Teacher:** _____

What situations are most likely to trigger this student to stutter? Circle all that apply.

Asking questions

Answering questions

Talking with peers

Talking with teachers

Reading aloud

Oral reports

Other: _____

How often do you notice this student stuttering?

Weekly

Daily

Hourly

Other: _____

Do you do anything to help your student when they stutter? What helps?

Does this student appear to avoid talking in your class?

Do the other students notice that this student stutters? How do they react? Is the student aware of these reactions?

Does the fluency problem distract from what the student is trying to say?

My student is disfluent or stutters when s/he: (check all that apply)

feels upset

answers questions

feels excited

talks with friends

feels nervous

reads aloud

feels tired

talks with adults

talks with specific people: *(please list)*

Below are some examples of stuttering/disfluent speech: (check all that apply)

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Describe:

Overall academics:

	<i>below grade level</i>	<i>at grade level</i>	<i>above grade level</i>
reading			
writing			
math			

Comments about academics:

Please return this form to _____ . Thank you!

Fluency Speech Sample Analysis

Each speech sample should be at least 100 words or 200 syllables.

Fluency Speech Sample 1		<i>Percentages</i>	
# of total words/syllables:	# total disfluencies (TD):	TD divided by words/syllables:	
			Percentage disfluent
# prolongations:		Prolongations / TD:	SLDs
		Percentage of prolongations	
# syllable repetitions		Syllable repetitions / TD	
		Percentage of syllable repetitions	
# word repetitions		Word repetitions / TD:	SLDs
		Percentage of word repetitions	
# blocks		Blocks / TD:	
		Percentage of blocks	nSLDs
# phrase repetitions		Phrase repetitions / TD:	
		Percentage of phrase repetitions	
# revisions		Revisions / TD:	
		Percentage revisions	nSLDs
# interjections		Interjections / TD:	
		Percentage interjections	

Fluency Speech Sample 2		<i>Percentages</i>	
# of total words/syllables:	# total disfluencies (TD):	TD divided by words/syllables:	
			Percentage disfluent
# prolongations:		Prolongations / TD:	SLDs
		Percentage of prolongations	
# syllable repetitions		Syllable repetitions / TD	
		Percentage of syllable repetitions	
# word repetitions		Word repetitions / TD:	SLDs
		Percentage of word repetitions	
# blocks		Blocks / TD:	
		Percentage of blocks	nSLDs
# phrase repetitions		Phrase repetitions / TD:	
		Percentage of phrase repetitions	
# revisions		Revisions / TD:	
		Percentage revisions	nSLDs
# interjections		Interjections / TD:	
		Percentage interjections	

Normative information:

- Children who stutter produce $\geq 10\%$ disfluent words
Typically fluent children produce $\leq 10\%$ disfluent words
- Children who stutter produce $\geq 3\%$ SLDs
Typically fluent children produce $\leq 2\%$ SLDs
- Children who stutter produce $\geq 3\%$ SLDs/TD
Typically fluent children produce $\leq 2\%$ SLDs/TD

Normative data from:

Ambrose, N., & Yairi, E. (1999). Normative Disfluency Data for Early Childhood Stuttering. *Journal of Speech Language and Hearing Research*, 895-895.

Speech strategies: stuttering

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>How to do it</i>	<i>Why it works</i>
Breathy speech	Add extra air in your voice.	Reduces tension.
Blending Continuous phonation	Keep your voice going all the time. Blend sounds together smoothly. Let your mouth and voice glide through your words.	Reduces tension, slows down your speech.
Easy start Easy onset	Start the first word of your thought with a very relaxed, slow voice. The rest of your sentence will be normal speed.	Reduces tension.
Easy stuttering	Let yourself stutter! Repeat the first syllable of your word or phrase on purpose, with a relaxed mouth and throat.	Easy stuttering reduces tension, and makes stutters shorter and less noticeable.
Eye contact	If you are having a hard time with your speech, keep looking at the person you are talking with. Don't look away.	Helps the other person know that you are still talking with them, and can keep them from interrupting you.
Finger strategy	Run your finger under the words while you read them out loud. Keep your voice with your finger.	Reduces rate. Helps with pacing, and helps keep your mouth and your eyes moving together.
Long starts	The first word of each sentence is sssslow and sssstretchy.	Reduces tension.
Mushy Mouth Soft sounds Light articulatory contacts	Speak using "soft contacts" on consonants. Your lips and tongue barely touch when you talk.	Reduces tension.
Phrasing	Take breaks for breathing and pausing. Add a pause in between ideas, when you need to breathe, if you are about to stutter, or when you need to think about what to say next.	Reduces rate. Gives extra time for your mouth to make the sounds. Also helps add expression to reading or speaking.
Pull-out/Slide	Freeze on the stutter. Relax the part of your speech machine that is tight or pushing. Keep going with the word.	Reduces tension.
Speed scale	On a speed scale of 1-10, aim for "the zone", which is around a 3 or 4. 1-2 is too slow, and 6 and above is too fast.	Reduces rate. Going at a steady rate helps keep your mouth and your brain together.
Stretchy words	Stretch your words out looooooong, especially the words which are making you stutter.	Reduces rate, reduces tension.
Time-out	When you start to stutter, pause for 3 seconds, relax your mouth, and begin again.	Reduces rate, and reduces tension.