

Fluency Strategies

(For School-Aged Youth)

Remember:

- Keep talking slow and easy
- Give child lots of time to talk

Currently, children are working to develop their speech, language, and motor skills. They may experience and manage a variety of feelings and new emotions in their daily life. This is often challenging for a child, and **stuttering** often occurs when a child's internal 'workload' is high.

The following strategies are recommended to ease a child's 'workload' and to help them speak more fluently:

1. Be Patient

- Listen calmly and patiently. Give child the time to speak and avoid interrupting or filling in their words. Providing your undivided attention shows them that you are listening and increases their confidence to speak.
- Avoid instructions such as "slow down" or "start over", as these words may be perceived as negative or impatient.

2. Go Slow

- Speak using a slow, relaxed rate of speech (e.g. pause 1-2 sec. before each sentence or thought) to set the conversational pace and remove pressure to respond quickly.

3. Use Simple Language

- Choose ideas and vocabulary that are appropriate for your child's age.
- Avoid run-on sentences by presenting one thought at a time and pausing between ideas.

4. Make Talking Easy

- Remove pressure to talk by asking fewer questions. Try commenting on their interests to advance the conversation and wait for child to choose to talk.
- Ensure that only one person speaks at a time – wait and allow child to take their speaking turn. Do not correct speech or grammar and never punish stuttering.

5. Make Time for Talking

- Set aside a few minutes each day to allow for one-on-one time. Talk to child using these strategies in an unhurried and undistracted environment.

6. Other Strategies

- Reduce busy schedules/rushing.
- Encourage good turn-taking habits.
- Support good health and sleep habits.
- Promote experiences that build confidence.

Praising your child for their successes and attributes has a positive effect on communication skills!