

## OTHER THERAPY

# OTHER THERAPY

In the first appointment, the therapist will ask about your child's speech and language, their health and development, interests and personality.

They'll observe your child and discuss the concerns you have and how you can help.

They may recommend that your child's needs are reviewed in a few months' time or offer some therapy. There may be a wait between the first appointment and therapy. The type of therapy could be individual, family-based or in a group with children of a similar age.

Therapy is likely to include developing a good understanding of stammering, developing communication skills and confidence, managing thoughts and feelings around stammering, and helping so that talking feels easier.

## GROUP THERAPY

Alternatively, we've listed some UK courses for young people below. Some may need local Clinical Commissioning Group funding.

### City St George's University, London

Five-day courses for ages 13-17 every July in London. Email: [stammeringintensive@city.ac.uk](mailto:stammeringintensive@city.ac.uk)

### The Fluency Trust

Residential courses in Devon for ages 10-17. Courses combine intensive speech therapy with outdoor pursuits. Visit [thefluencytrust.org.uk](http://thefluencytrust.org.uk)

### Talking Out

Residential courses combining therapy with outdoor activities, plus online courses. For ages 11-18. Visit [talkingout.co.uk](http://talkingout.co.uk)

# HERE TO HELP

STAMMA runs online **support groups and workshops for parents**, where you can chat and share experiences. We also have a **Minecraft Club** for children. Email [familysupport@stamma.org](mailto:familysupport@stamma.org) for details.

Contact us on our helpline or webchat to talk through any concerns you have about your child and stammering. We're here to listen and provide support.

We can also help you find details of your local NHS service and talk you through how best to support your child. If your child is 14 or older, they can call us to have a chat and gain confidence in using the phone.

**Helpline: 0808 802 0002**  
**Webchat: [stamma.org/help](http://stamma.org/help)**  
**Email: [help@stamma.org](mailto:help@stamma.org)**

Mon-Thurs 10am-2pm; 4pm-8pm  
Free. Confidential. Anonymous.

**Visit our Facebook Group** - Space for Stammering, moderated by STAMMA. This closed group provides a space for people to share experiences, ask for advice and talk openly about stammering.

Continue to get the help, information and support you need. Meet others and keep up to date by becoming a member, it's free.  
**[stamma.org/join](http://stamma.org/join)**

## STAMMA

The British Stammering Association  
Box 140, 43 Bedford St, London WC2E 9HA  
Office tel: 0208 983 1003

Reg. charity nos: 1089967/SC038866

STAMMA



**Stammering, also known as stuttering, is quite common in school-age children. Around one in every 12 children will stammer at some point.**

**It doesn't have to be a barrier.**

# STAMMA



Around 8% of children will start stammering between the ages of two and five. Some may start stammering later.

## CAUSES

You haven't done anything wrong. It is not your fault if your child starts stammering.

Stammering is primarily neurological, which means there's a slight difference in the way the brain is wired. It can also be hereditary. Around 60% of people who stammer have a relative who stammers or used to stammer.

Many children will stop stammering naturally or with speech and language therapy. Some will continue to stammer as they get older. It's difficult to predict what will happen next. Stammering may come and go, disappearing for weeks or months before reappearing.

Stammering is individual and each child will have their own behaviours. Examples of stammering include:

- Repetition of sounds or words, eg "G-g-go away!" or "When, when, when is playtime?"
- Stretching sounds in a word, eg "I like that ssstory".
- Blocking of sounds, when the child's mouth appears ready to speak but no sound comes out for several seconds, eg "----I got a book".
- Stopping speaking half-way through a sentence.
- Signs of facial tension, eg around the mouth.

Your child might become self-conscious about their stammer and do things to try and get the words out. These could include pushing sounds out with extra force, foot-tapping, blinking or jerking their head.

Children who stammer might start to feel embarrassed and worried about their stammer and try and hide it. They might start to speak less or change a word to one that's easier to voice.

## HOW TO HELP

You have an important role in your child's development, as you can influence the environments around them. How you respond to your child will affect how they feel. If you're feeling anxious and upset about their stammer, they might start to feel that way as well.

Try to talk with your child about their speech whenever they want to. Openness and a relaxed attitude will give the clear message that they are so much more than their stammer.

Here are some things you can do to help. Share these with the people in your child's life such as their teachers and grandparents:

1. Praise your child for what they say, not how they say it.
2. Give them time to say what they want. Don't finish their words or sentences for them and model this to their siblings.

3. Don't tell your child to slow down or take a breath. But slow down your own speech.
4. Even if you feel anxious when your child is stammering, try not to show it. Keep natural eye contact and remain calm.
5. Describe stammering using neutral language. For example, "he's stammered more this week" rather than "his speech has been bad".

For more resources on how you can support your child visit [stamma.org/parents](http://stamma.org/parents).

## BULLYING

Teasing and bullying for stammering is not acceptable. If your child tells you it's happening, make sure their school is aware and is addressing the issue.

Being able to talk openly about stammering can be the best defence against teasing or bullying. If the child's reaction is 'It's just a stammer, so what?', bullies have less to work with.

## THERAPY OPTIONS

You can get speech and language therapy for your child on the NHS. You can normally contact them direct yourself. Find details of your local NHS service online by searching for 'children speech and language therapy' and your location. Contact us if you need support to find them. Otherwise, go through your GP, health visitor or school staff.

You can get a free assessment for your child from **the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering** (funded by Action for Stammering Children). Phone their helpline on 020 3316 8100.

Private therapy is an option, but you have to pay for it. Visit [asltip.com](http://asltip.com) to find a private therapist. Find out if they have experience working with children who stammer before booking an appointment.