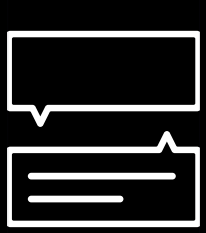
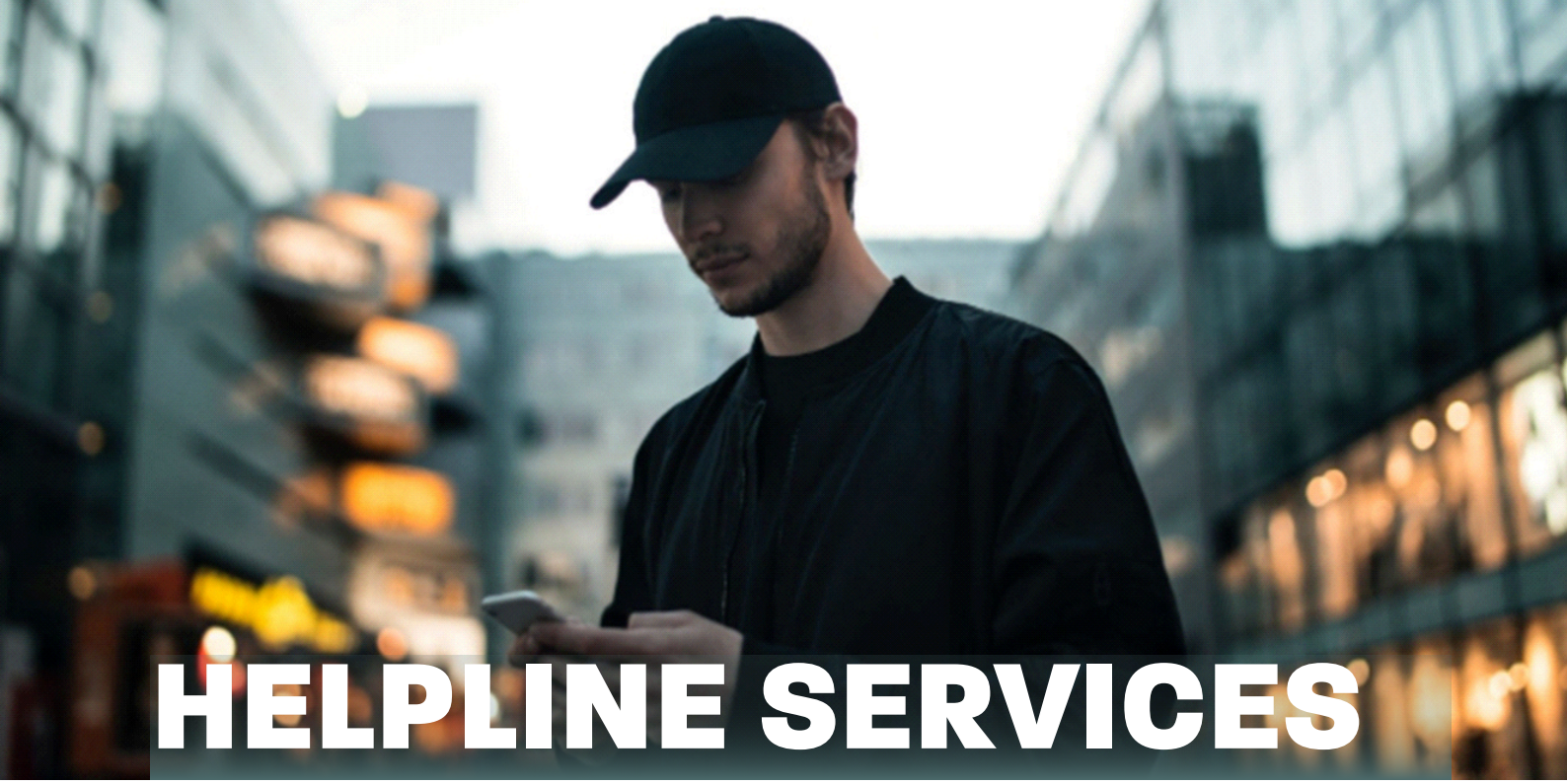
2025 HELPLINE SERVICES REPORT

STAMMA



Compiled by Elisabeth Wright, Kirsten Howells & Jane Powell
@STAMMA. Charity registration numbers 1089967/SC038866



HELPLINE SERVICES

STAMMA offers support and information via phone, webchat and email. We also provide an extended support service for those with a specific issue or concern that warrants a more active involvement from the team. This is likely to involve call-backs and research.

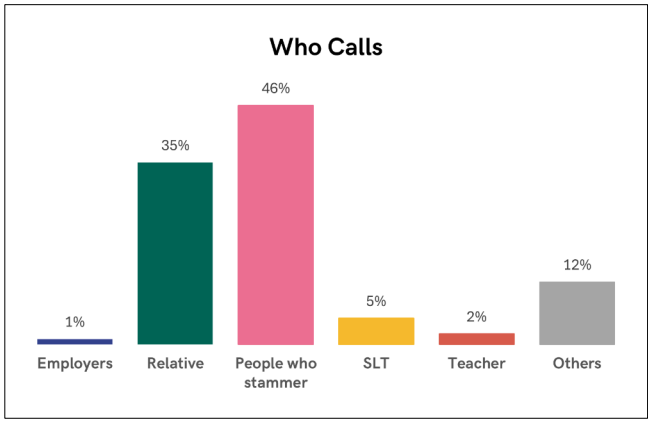
The helpline and webchat services are open Monday-Thursday, 10am-2pm & 4pm-8pm. Each shift is covered by two volunteers. The helpline email account is monitored 2-3 times each week. The service is staffed by a team of 30+ fabulous volunteers, many of whom stammer themselves.

WHO CALLS & WHY

35% of contacts were from parents or grandparents, mostly of pre and primary school age children, about how to support and respond to their child at home; how to access speech & language therapy; and how to navigate transitions to primary or secondary school.

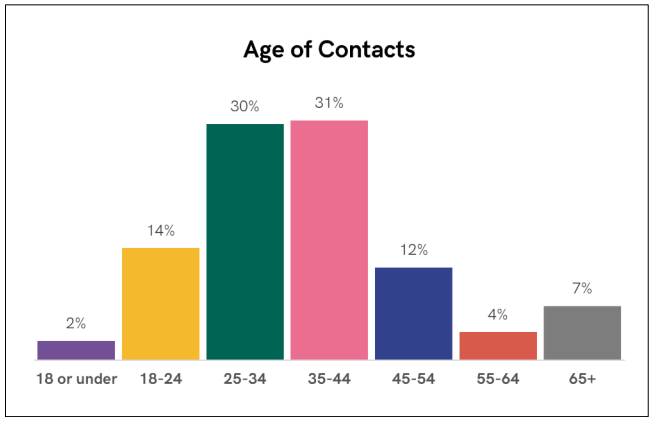
46% of contacts were people who stammer. Commonly, they'll ask about therapy and how to access NHS services, or to explore the pros and cons of alternative options.

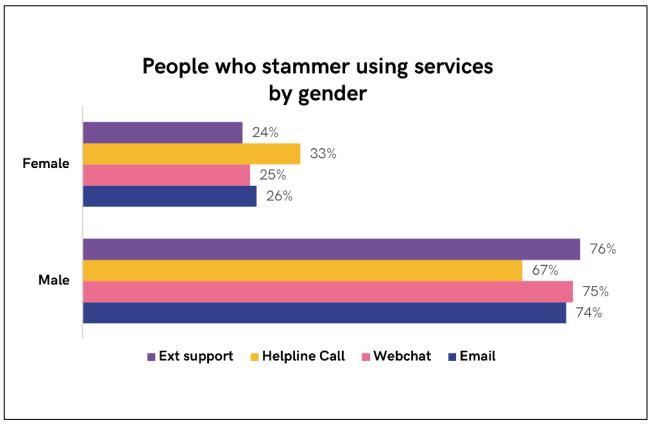
Many conversations involve some degree of emotional support, even if the caller got in touch



for another reason. Lots of callers are interested in connecting with others who stammer.

People who stammer make greater use of the written channels (webchat and email), whilst parents are the biggest users of the helpline. Professional contact, typically from Speech & Language Therapists (SLTs), teachers or employers, is more likely to come via email.

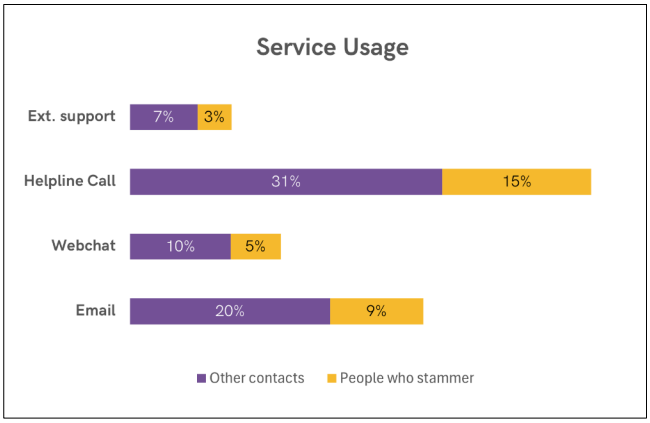




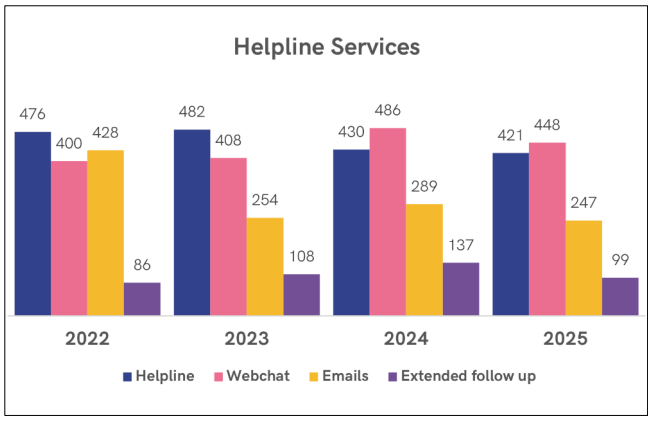
Most callers are aged 25-44; where people are commonly parenting young children who are starting to stammer, and professionals navigating early-career transitions.

Age seems to be a factor, both in terms of who is reaching out for support and which channel they prefer to use. For example, 70% of the people who use webchat are aged under 35, compared with 49% of those who call the helpline.

The data reveals a significant 'Gender Flip' between groups. While the majority of people who stammer contacting the service are male (approx. 70%), the demographics for people who don't (parents, grandparents and professionals) are predominantly female (approx. 63%).



This suggests that while stammering is more prevalent in men, female relatives and educators are the main 'seekers' of support and information for others.



CONTACTS BY PHONE

We took 99 hours of calls over 2025 and saw improvements in missed calls during opening hours, with an average "strike rate" (calls connected) of 84%, up from 81% in 2024.

WEBCHAT

Webchat overtook phone calls as the preferred method of contact in 2024 and remains the case. Performance is exceptionally high, maintaining a 4.5 user rating across both years. The number of days without webchat activity fell by 10%, suggesting more consistent engagement.

EXTENDED FOLLOW UP

There was a slight fall in Extended Follow-up, largely due to the departure of a particularly experienced volunteer in June. Her skillset allowed for a volume of complex work that is difficult to replicate. However, a new volunteer is now in place and doing well.

EMAIL

The dip in email numbers is in part due to reporting inconsistencies, where some team members neglected to submit case forms. The actual contact volume is likely to be higher. A monitoring programme is now in place to ensure 100% compliance with form submissions.

To address the slight dip in overall contact volume in 2025, we are exploring how to remind members that the helpline service is there for social connection and emotional support, not just for information or emergencies.



WEBCHAT AVE RATING FOR 2025: 4.5

CASE EXAMPLES

Concern	Action
Parent of pre-school child wanting support.	Gave details of local NHS service Super Penguin app and STAMMA help for parents pages.
Parent of pre-school age child concerned they are showing signs of a stammer.	Signposted to the STAMMA Parent Support Group and help for parents pages, as well as info on tics and stammering; mentioned our Family Day event and strategies.
Grandparent of pre-teen who is moving to high school soon; wants to get him appropriate support, and onto SEND register. Ongoing case.	Several emails back and forth to try to get correct support. Family have now sent a complaint to school, after STAMMA tried to get in contact with school SENCo but no return call after 2 attempts.
University student who stammers.	Signposted to Advocacy Service and sent their email. Shared document on stammering, discrimination and the law, also sent links to the website and email for STAMMA Legal.
Person looking for support for conversations and job interviews.	Long chat about their feelings around stammering. Signposted to Stammering Self-empowerment programme, Toastmasters, stammering groups. Talked about disclosure and voluntary stammering.
Person anxious about job interview next week – how to disclose and present as someone who stammers?	Talked about disclosure and how to present a stammer in a positive way. Signposted to the STAMMA Employment Service.
Caller asked if there is any way to avoid using the phone at work. Mentioned that his stammer started later in life and that he had a bad experience with an SLT.	Advised to see GP about late-onset stammer (and sent GP letter download). Informed about reasonable adjustments at work, sent details of relevant web pages. Spoke about how to disclose stammering to employer or when on the phone.
Employer looking for support for team member who has returning stammer and becoming withdrawn.	Enquired further. Provided general information about stammering, employer guidance support and Employment Service contact details etc.

FEEDBACK

"I received a great service. I was given contact details I was looking for and the call handler was also going to begin a dialogue on my behalf; to begin finding an answer to the question I need answering."
Female, age 55-64

"Very helpful to get quick guidance and relevant link for help. Thank you."
Female, age 25-34

"Was really useful, even for a quick query."
Female, age 18-24

"Very helpful chat and avenues to pursue, many thanks to [volunteer]."
Female, age 65+

"Brilliant advice and help from the person who helped. Really nice and understanding."
Male, age 18-24

"Helpful advice given. Great to have a webchat feature with a real person at the other end!."
Female, age 45-54

We don't always get it right, though;

"Helpful to an extent but just gives websites".
Male, age 18-24



STAFFING

Staffing requires about 30+ trained volunteers at any one time. They're a brilliant team, the beating heart of the helpline services. Every volunteer has a connection to stammering, whether as a person who stammers, a parent of a child who stammers or professionally, as an SLT or student SLT.

The volunteer team are supported by Kirsten and Lee who manage supervision, training, team meetings and one-to-one support; and Beth who coordinates the rotas and is the administrative wind-beneath-the-wings of the service.

We moved into 2025 with a big recruitment drive for helpline/webchat volunteers which proved successful, especially thanks to our new Volunteering Lead. Several volunteers stepped back in 2025 but we have recruited more to fill permanent weekly positions on the rota. This has become significantly easier to plan since the start of the year, and we are recording fewer shift cancellations and swaps.

A new group of 15 completed their training last year and have started taking calls.

TRAINING & COMMITMENT

We expect turnover among the volunteers but ask for a 12-month commitment. Volunteers on the helpline services complete a structured, online training programme at their own pace - which is likely to take about 8-10 hours in total. Following the training, there are practice helpline calls and webchats. The training covers listening and technical skills, as well as signposting information and resources.

There's also an ongoing voluntary training programme to ensure everyone has up-to-date information about the range of support available for people who stammer and to explore in more depth aspects of managing helpline conversations.

MEETINGS

Team meetings take place monthly - once in the evening and once during the daytime. Volunteers are expected to attend at least 5 team meetings per year, and many attend each month.

The team meetings and the helpline WhatsApp group help maintain a sense of camaraderie, of being part of something larger than oneself. At team meetings, we share STAMMA news, and spend time discussing calls and chats, and learning together.

Our blend of non-mandatory training and discussion of calls/webchats at team meetings continued to work very successfully throughout 2025. Team meeting attendance statistics have been consistently good .

Over 2025, we hosted guest speakers:

- **Iain Wilkie,** 50 Million Voices
- **Anita McKiernan,** City St. George's University
- **Paul Brocklehurst,** Stammering Self-Empowerment Programme
- **Rachael Wakefield,** Stammer in the Woods.

STAMMA

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