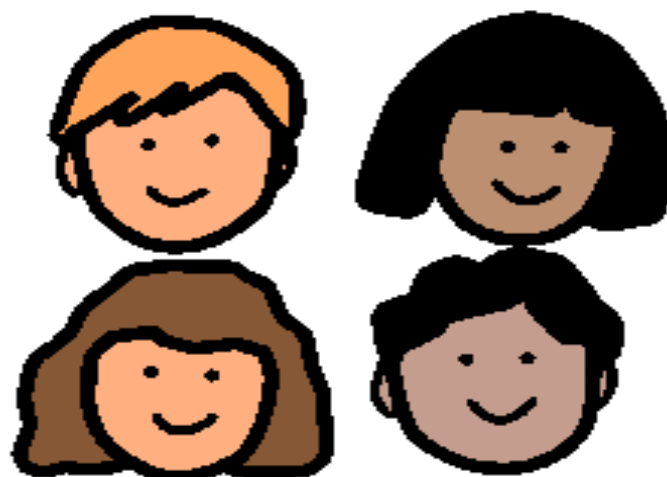


**Early Years  
Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)  
(for 0-5 year olds)**



Supporting your child's  
fluency at home

April 2020

## The Pack

This home programme pack has been designed by Speech and Language Therapists and is based on the most up-to-date research on communication development in the early years.

## How-to-use this pack

1. Take a look at the **top tip**
2. Each top tip has an **activity** idea you could try
3. Think about how you can use the top tip in other **daily routines** (e.g. snack time, playtime, bath time etc.) to increase the opportunities for your child to learn throughout their day
4. ... and finally keep it **fun** and keep it **going!**

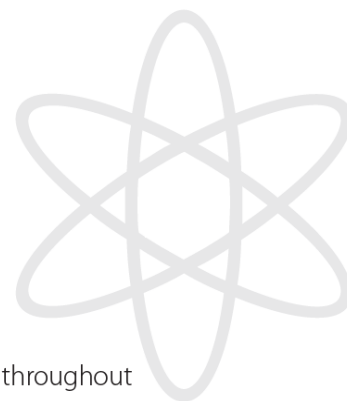
**The most important thing you can do is to show your child that you are interested in what they are saying, not how s/he says it.**

Try to maintain natural eye-contact when your child is having difficulty talking. Don't finish off sentences yourself- this can be very frustrating for your child.

Click on this link for video advice from the Michael Palin Centre:

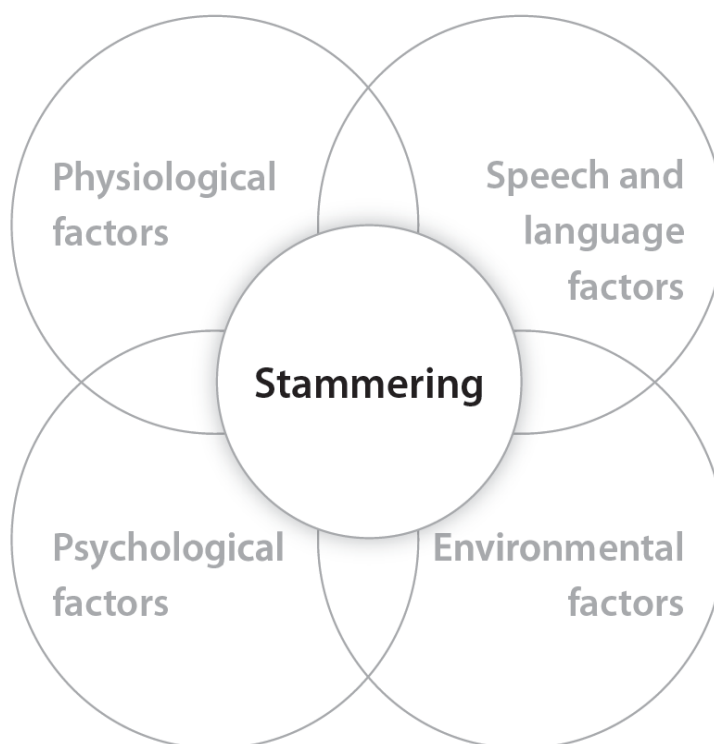
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTpckAufNDE&list=UURwsZ9kC-7gUithldzcAq0A>

# General facts about stammering



- ✿ Stammering has been around for centuries and, throughout history, many famous people have stammered, such as King George VI, Marilyn Monroe, Winston Churchill and, more recently, Rowan Atkinson, Bruce Willis and Tiger Woods.
- ✿ It occurs across the world and it is more common in boys than girls.
- ✿ Stammering tends to start between the ages of two and five, at a time when speech and language are developing.
- ✿ Research has shown that about five per cent of children start to stammer and one per cent continue to stammer into adult life. That means that approximately four out of five children will overcome the difficulty. Research is helping us work out which children are most likely to persist and what sorts of therapy may help.
- ✿ Stammering is a complicated problem because there is no single cause of stammering and no simple cure.

## ***Multifactorial model***



# Tip 1: Have One to One Times

## Activity

**Name of activity: one to one times** (when your child is not competing for your attention). If possible these should be daily for 5 minutes.

**You will need**.....toys or activities your child likes.

- Reduce distractions e.g. turn off the TV.
- Give your child your undivided attention.
- Follow your child's lead in play.
- Aim for a relaxed and fun experience for both of you.

**You could also try this tip ....**when you are together in the park, at the playground, in the bath or in any activity that you and your child enjoy together

**The most important thing is that your child has your undivided attention for just 5 minutes**

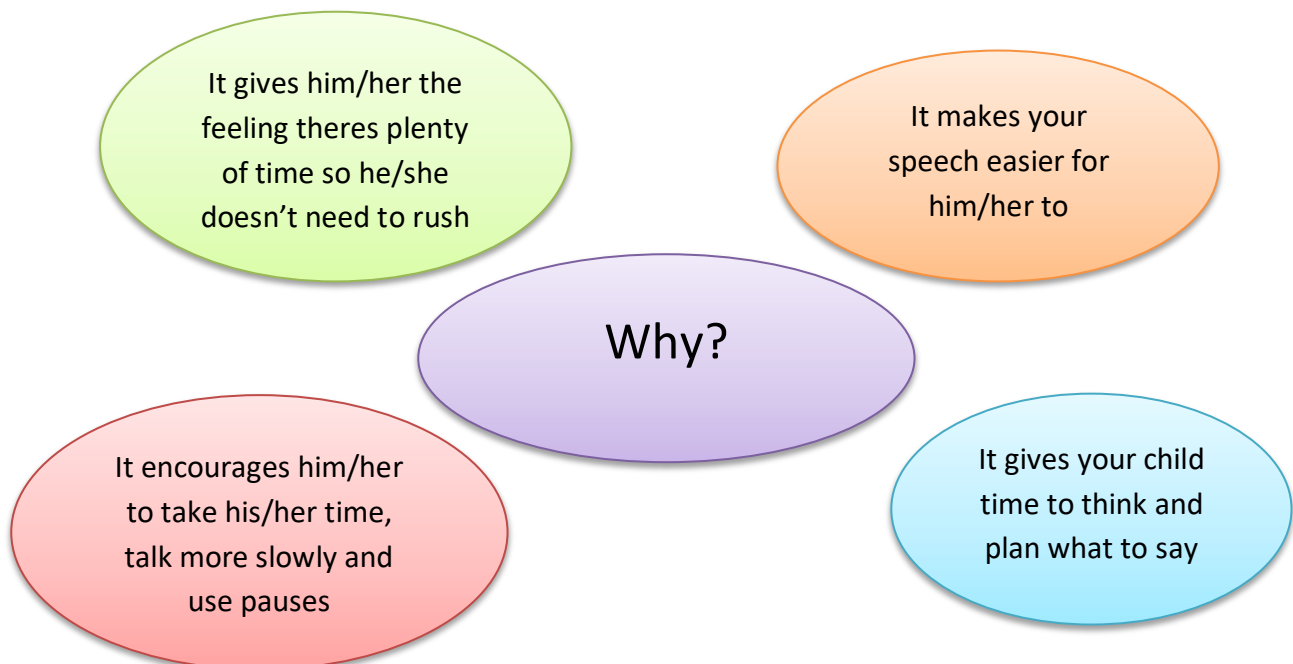
**In your one to one times also :**

- Maintain natural eye contact
- Give your child lots of time to start the talking and respond to you
- Use short simple sentences
- Ask fewer questions



## Tip 2 : Slow down your rate of speech and use pauses – see ‘My rate of talking’ handout in the Resources Section to help you evaluate your own rate of talking

It can be tempting to ask your child to ‘slow down’... the  
best way to help your child slow down and use pauses is  
for you to model this for him/her



Generally, when a child speaks more slowly and  
uses pause, it is easier for them to speak fluently.



## Tip 2 continued.... Slowing and pausing.....

**So what so you need to 'do more of'... or 'do differently' in order to talk slowly and make use of pauses?**

- Listen to your child's talking when he/she is relaxed and calm
- Try to talk at about the same rate or a little more slowly
- Try to pause before you say something as well as between sentences
- Try recording yourself to listen to the speed you and your child are both talking – this can help you decide if you need to make any changes
- Even when speaking slowly, try to make sure your voice still sounds interesting and as natural as possible

**Talking slowly can feel strange at first – it takes practice!**

### Activity: Song bag

**Talk More Slowly with familiar rhymes** - Practice making your own speech slower (but keep it natural)

#### You will need...

- song cards or objects in a basket/bag to represent different songs
- you can find song cards here:  
<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/nursery-rhyme-cards-t-l-545>

#### What to do.....

- Let your child choose a song by selecting a card or toy from the bag
- Try saying or singing the rhyme a little more slowly than usual
- Tapping or clapping the timing can sometimes help you keep the right pace
- Respond to your child with a slower pace.



**You could also try this tip / activity with .....Story / picture books**

If you keep practicing you should start to notice that you are also talking more slowly in everyday relaxed routines and situations e.g. mealtimes, bath time.

See if you can talk more slowly in more busy situations e.g. getting dressed and ready for nursery!

## Tip 3: Keep a 'Praise Log'

See 'Praise Log' in the resources section for printable version



### Activity

**Name of activity:** Make up a praise log (see Resources Section for printable version)

- Write down what you praised, what you actually said and what your child did/ said afterwards.
- Research shows that children (and adults) gain confidence when they are praised.
- We need to give 6 positive comments/praise to each question or instruction as we attach much more weight to negative comments.
- Practice finding things your child has done well and give praise and positive attention as much as possible.

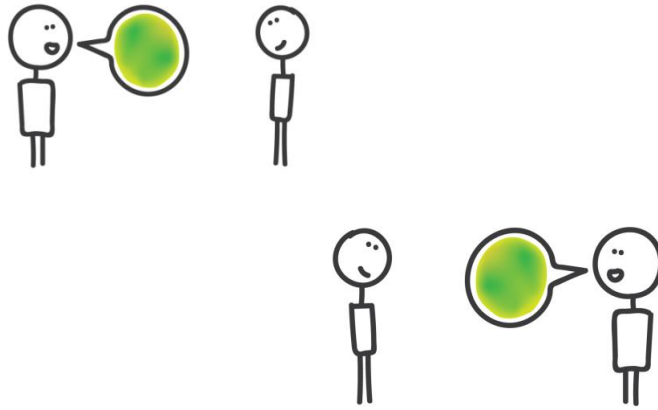
**You will need...** a notebook/ sheet of paper and pen

**You could also...** See if other members of the household could become aware of praising as much as possible.

### How can I give praise that is meaningful and effective?

What kind?	Example	Benefits
<b>Social praise</b>	Hug, smile or kiss	Avoids your child becoming dependent on praise (a praise junkie!) where they may stop trying to succeed as they already have your attention
<b>Noticing</b> – look out for successes!	It may be something quite small	It's easy to get caught up in noticing where your child did not manage to do the thing you hoped/expected. Noticing the little successes will help both you and them feel positive about movement in the right direction
<b>Specific praise</b>	"good sitting" "good listening" "I like how you chose pink for that cloud"	Your child knows exactly what it is that they have done well, so that they are more likely to do it again in the future.
<b>Meaningful Praise</b>	Don't make something up for the sake of saying something positive	Your child will know if you don't really mean it!

## Tip 4: Take Turns to Talk



**Activity: Making Turns Explicit at Mealtimes.** By making turns explicit we make speaking situations less pressurised for our child.

**You will need...a special object to hold in turn**

When the family is together, e.g. at mealtimes, have a special object that whoever is speaking holds e.g. a special stone or a shell or even a salt/pepper pot!

Mark the turn with 'It's Ali's 's turn now'.

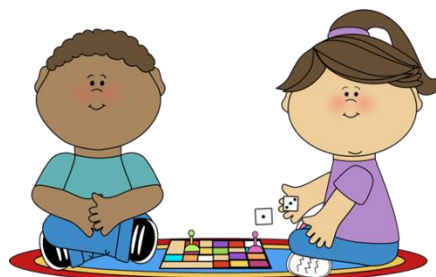
**Activity : Make a ludo game.** This game has lots of turns when the concept of taking turns can be emphasised and the language 'my turn', 'daddy's turn' etc can be modelled and practiced.

**You will need...** a pen and paper , a dice, markers.

Mark out a 'road' or track and number the squares. Have a start and finish. Mark some squares as 'Roll again' or 'Go back 2 spaces'. Have fun making your game. The youngest player rolls the dice and moves their counter the number shown on the dice. Use the language 'my turn', 'your turn', 'Ali's turn' etc. to mark the turns explicitly.

**You could also try.....**

- making turn- taking games such as snakes and ladders
- marking turns in games such as building brick towers, physical games such as kicking or throwing balls and beanbags
- You can use any activity where there are two or more people!





## Tip 5: Balance Comments and questions

See 'Balancing Comments and Questions' handout in Resources section to help you evaluate your use of comments and questions

Commenting on what your child is doing lets him know that you are interested

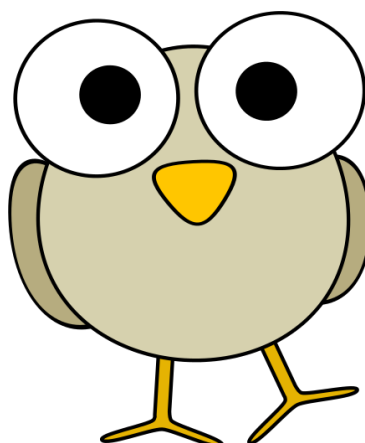
When you make comments your child can respond in their own time and won't feel the need to rush

**WHY?**

When you ask a question your child may feel they have to say something – he/she has to think of and answer and plan it in his/her head – this can be tricky when you are busy playing!

Making comments on what your child is doing will help develop your child's language as you model words and sentences

Comments are good for starting conversation – this will give your child something to talk about



??

## Tip 5 continued..... comments and questions...

**So what so you need to 'do more of'... or 'do differently' in order to have a balance between comments and questions?**

**It's OK to ask questions, but before you do.....ask yourself....**

- Do I really need to ask this question or am I 'testing' my child/checkign their knowledge
- How complicated does the answer need to be?  
Some questions only need simple answers e.g. "What's teddy doing?" or "Do you want an apple or a banana?"  
Others require much more complex answers e.g. "What's going to happen if you put that marble there?"
- Could I change the question into a comment? e.g. "What's dolly doing could become: "Dolly's having a bath!"  
Sometimes we ask questions with just the ending ....  
e.g.  
"You like dogs, don't you?" or " he's running, isnt he?"

.....You can turn these into comments by just taking the ending off!

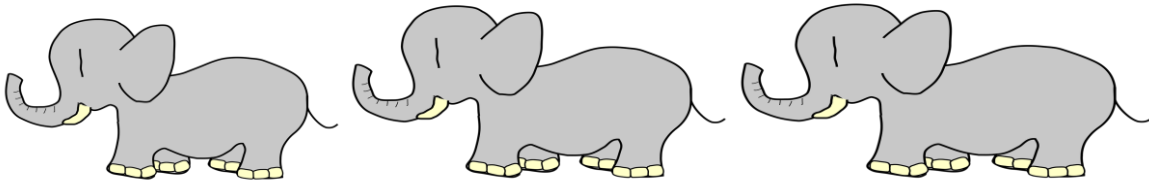
If you are going to ask your child a question remember:

- Ask one question at a time
- Keep the question simple
- Give your child plenty of time to respond

**It's ok not to speak – the silence gives your child time to think...**



## Tip 6: Talk About the Stammer (Don't let it be the 'Elephant in the Room')



### Activity: Be open about the stammer...

- Talk about your child's stammer in the same way you would acknowledge if the child had a physical difficulty.
- Acknowledge the stammer in a matter- of fact way e.g. 'That was a hard to say' or 'a bit bumpy!'
- It is often helpful to use the child's words to describe their difficulty with talking so if your child says "my words are stuck", you can also refer to "when your words get stuck.."

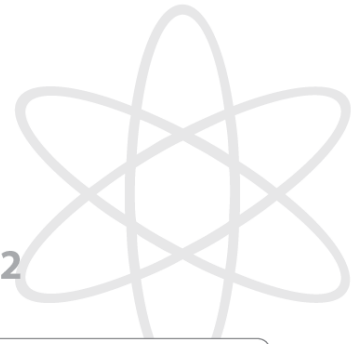
**You will need....** No materials necessary

**You could also....**ask other family members also to acknowledge the stammer in a similar matter- of – fact way



# Resources

# 'My rate of talking and use of pauses' handout 1 of 2



## Think

When I am playing with my child, what speed or rate does he typically talk at?

Do I talk as slowly as my child or do I go faster?

Do I make use of pauses when I talk?

His speed: Slow / Moderate / Fast / Variable \_\_\_\_\_

My speed: Same as his / Slower / Faster / Variable \_\_\_\_\_

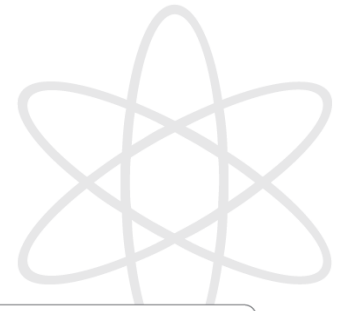
My pauses: Hardly ever / Sometimes / Often \_\_\_\_\_

Why might it be helpful to think about my rate of talking and make use of pauses when talking to my child?

What do I need to 'do more of', or 'do differently' in order to talk a bit more slowly and make use of pauses?

You and your child do not necessarily speak any faster or slower than anyone else. However, a child who stammers usually finds it easier to be fluent when he speaks more slowly. Each child seems to have a different rate at which he is able to achieve fluency. You can help your child to take his time when talking by modelling a slower rate and using pauses, particularly if you naturally use a faster rate than your child does.

# Praise log



What you praised	What you said Describe what it is you are praising, then add a praise word: 'That's very ... of you.'	What your child did afterwards
<i>Putting his toys away</i>	<i>I noticed that you've put all your toys in the toybox. That's so helpful.</i>	<i>He smiled and said 'I'm getting good at that now.'</i>

With acknowledgement to: Faber, A. and Mazlish, E. (1980) *How to Talk So Kids will Listen and Listen So Kids will Talk*.

# 'Balancing comments and questions' handout 1 of 3



## Think

When I am playing with my child, do I mainly make comments on what he is doing, or do I mainly ask him questions? Or do I already have a balance of comments and questions?

Here are some examples of comments and questions to help you decide:

<i>'What colour is this car?'</i>	Question
<i>'Oh look, dolly's going to bed'</i>	Comment
<i>'That's a good idea, putting those animals in there'</i>	Comment
<i>'Where are you going to put that piece?'</i>	Question
<i>'You look as if you're having lots of fun'</i>	Comment
<i>'Why are you giving dolly a drink?'</i>	Question

Why might it be helpful to have a balance of comments and questions when playing with my child?

What do I need to 'do more of', or 'do differently', in order to have a balance of comments and questions?

Adults often find it easier or more natural to ask questions than to make comments. They feel that by asking a question they are more likely to get a response.

We usually ask questions:

- ✿ To get some information
- ✿ To get a conversation going, particularly if a child is not saying very much
- ✿ As a way of suggesting what to do next
- ✿ To show how much a child knows
- ✿ To encourage a child to learn new things

## Websites

### Useful websites:

- British Stammering Association <http://www.stammering.org/>
- Michael Palin Centre <http://www.stammeringcentre.org/>

### Social Media and self-help:

- Parents can connect with other parents of children who stammer through [BSA Facebook page and group](#). Parents particularly like the privacy of the closed Facebook group.
- **BSA Helpline:** The BSA helpline is a confidential service where parents can ask, talk about and explore any issues of concern about stammering. Call **0845 603 2001 / 020 8880 6590** or email on [info@stammering.org](mailto:info@stammering.org). The helpline is open **2pm to 5pm** on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. There is no one on shift during the mornings. BSA encourages people to leave a message to get a call back from an advisor during the afternoons. The helpline is run by people who stammer and who understand stammering.

You may also find the following websites helpful:

- ❑ Our speech and language therapy website: <https://www.clch.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy-children>
- ❑ **NSPCC's** 'Look, Say, Sing, Play' campaign' with the following link <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/look-say-sing-play/sign-up>
- ❑ **Vroom:** Boost your child's learning with **Vroom's** fast and fun tips to your phone or via email. <https://www.vroom.org>
- ❑ The **Hungry Little Minds** campaign provides lots of ideas that can help boost your child's learning. [www.hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk](http://www.hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk)
- ❑ **Local Offer website:** (search "SEND local offer with the name of your borough"). This website has lots of useful information for parents about local help for children with additional education and/or health needs
- ❑ **Parent forums:** Contact for support if your child has additional education/health need
  - Parents Active (Hammersmith & Fulham) [www.parentsactive.org.uk](http://www.parentsactive.org.uk)
  - Full of Life (RBKC) [www.fullloflifekc.com](http://www.fullloflifekc.com)
  - Make it Happen (Westminster) [www.wppg.org.uk](http://www.wppg.org.uk)
- ❑ **The Communication Trust:** for what to expect at different ages [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk)
- ❑ **ICAN:** a children's communication charity [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

### CLCH NHS Trust

The speech and language therapy service is provided by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust. For more information visit [www.clch.nhs.uk](http://www.clch.nhs.uk) or call us on 020 7266 8777