

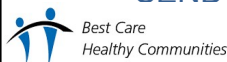
An Introduction to Stammering



Children's Speech and Language Therapy

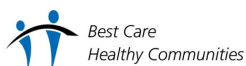
17.03.21

Tamsin Ruane and Annie Loftus
SEND Locality Speech and Language Therapists



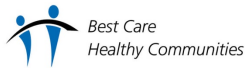
Aims

- What is stammering?
- How common is stammering?
- What can I do to help?
- When and how should I raise concerns?
- Where can I find more information?



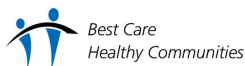
What Is Stammering?

- Almost everyone will experience some dysfluency
- When dysfluency occurs so often that it interferes with talking or causes distress to either the speaker or the listener, this can be a stammer
- We consider:
 - Severity
 - Frequency
 - Impact



What Does Stammering Feel Like?

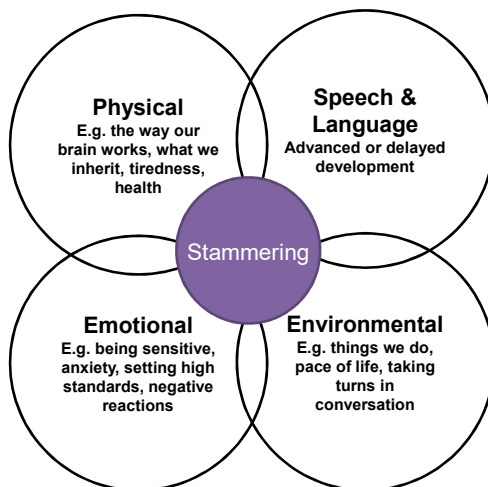
<https://vimeo.com/239094673>



What is Stammering?

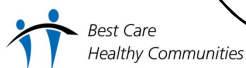
Not one specific cause.

Lots of different factors influence a stammer.



A stammer will be different for all children and can change over time.

A stammer can have a big impact on self esteem and confidence.



Demands and Capacities

Demands are placed on a child/young person to speak faster or more fluently e.g. competing to take a turn in a conversation, answering tricky questions, explaining something quickly

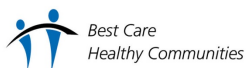
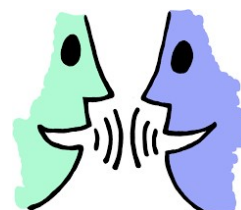


The child/young person's **capacity** to talk is influenced by their cognitive ability, speech and language skills and emotional/social maturity

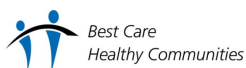


Stammering Behaviours

- Whole word repetitions (WWR)
- Part word repetitions (PWR)
- Prolongations
- Blocking
- Tension in face/jaw/mouth, or additional body movements (e.g. arms, legs)



Stammering Feelings

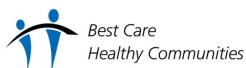


Overt vs. Covert Stammering

A stammer can be **overt** or **covert**

- Overt = others will hear and notice dysfluencies
- Covert = others may not hear and notice dysfluencies as the person uses strategies such as word avoidance or substitution, circumlocution, situation avoidance

Feelings and emotions of those with a covert stammer will be similar to those who have an overt stammer.



We All Know People Who Stammer...



Prevalence



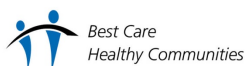
- **1%** but with evidence on covert stammering more like 1-3%
- 3:1 ratio boys: girls
- 8-10% in early years (most normal non-fluency)
- Incidence is the same globally in every language



Risk Factors

- Family history
- Time since onset
- Stammering getting worse over time
- Gender
- Language difficulties or advanced language
- Type of stammer e.g.
 - whole word repetitions = normal non fluency
 - concomitant movements = risk

Is it 'normal non-fluency'?

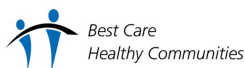


Strategies

There is no 'single cure' because there is 'no single cause'.

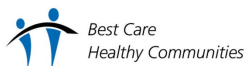
We can support a child or young person to:

reduce the impact of their stammer and
help them to **manage how they feel** about
themselves and their stammer.



General Strategies

- Show you are listening and interested.
- Avoid telling them to e.g. 'hurry up', 'slow down', 'breathe', 'start again', 'think.'
- Encourage good communication skills from the child/young person and those around them e.g. turn taking to reduce interruptions.
- Give specific praise to build confidence.
- Take notice of how a child/young person reacts to their stammer. If they are aware of it, acknowledge it and ask them what helps them and what they would like you to do/say when they stammer.
- Use the language they do to describe when they find talking difficult ('stuck', 'stumble', 'bouncy', 'jumpy', 'smooth').



School Strategies

Taking the register: Offer a choice of different responses (verbal and non-verbal) to the whole class.

Reading aloud: Reading in unison with peers may improve the child/young person's fluency. Working in small groups can reduce feelings of anxiety.

Speaking in front of a larger audience: The child/young person should never have to speak, but should be given the opportunity to do so if they wish.

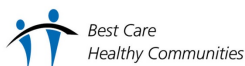
Exams: Make reasonable adjustments for oral assessment sections.



Offer opportunities to chat: Be available. Stammering may impact on readiness to bring things up in a full classroom environment.

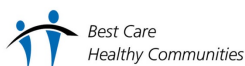
Celebrate other achievements: Just because talking is difficult, doesn't mean they don't have lots of other great skills.

Deal with teasing: If noticed, discuss how to deal with it with the child/young person. Can cover it more widely in general discussions about bullying/differences/things we all find hard or easy.



SaLT Role: When to Refer?

- Before referring to SaLT, reflect on the known risk factors and put strategies in place
- Children who stammer have priority access to SaLT
- SaLT may offer indirect intervention (e.g. supporting parents/families) or direct intervention (e.g. fluency techniques, understanding stammer)
- Advice Line: 0121 466 6231
- Website: www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-SLT
- Drop in sessions with locality SaLT



External Organisations

Lots of advice and information available:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xpm9pFzGtVY&feature=emb_title

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=je7mlAzyD7A>

<https://actionforstammeringchildren.org/get-involved/stambassadors/>



Best Care
Healthy Communities



The
Michael Palin
Centre
for stammering



Websites

The British Stammering Association (BSA) STAMMA

<http://www.stammering.org/>

Help Line: 0845 603 2001

Action for Stammering Children (ASC)

<http://www.stammeringcentre.org/>

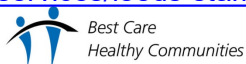
Tel: 020 3316 8100 or email: info@stammeringcentre.org

The Michael Palin Centre

<https://michaelpalincentreforstammering.org/>

The Stammering Support Centre

<https://stamma.org/get-support/therapies-courses/specialist-services/leeds-stammering-support-centre>



Best Care
Healthy Communities

Questions?



Feedback

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Sencofeedbacktraining/>

Thank you!