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- NHS hospitals and clinics
- GPs
- Social care

Following the principles within the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), MCH processes your data for purposes of:

- provision of health or social care or treatment
- medical diagnosis
- preventative or occupational medicine
- management of health or social care systems and services, carried out by, or under the supervision of health professional or another person, who in the circumstances owes a duty of confidentiality under an enactment or rule of law

Who to contact

Children's therapy

t: 0300 123 3444

medch.childrenscommunity@nhs.net

Our privacy notice is available at medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/privacy/

If you would like to view or request a copy of your patient record, please contact us at medch.dataprotection@nhs.net or on 01634 334640. In most instances this service is free and we aim to provide the requested information within 1 calendar month. More information can be found by visiting:

medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/information-about-me/

Medway Community Healthcare provides a wide range of high quality community health services for Medway residents; from community nurses and health visitors to speech and language therapists and out of hours urgent care.

Customer care

Please send any comments about Medway Community Healthcare services to: -

Customer care coordinator
Medway Community Healthcare
MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham,
Kent, ME8 0PZ
t: 0300 123 3444
medch.customercare@nhs.net

All contact will be treated confidentially
This information can be made available in other formats and languages. Please contact: medch.communications@nhs.net

Ref: MCH559



Speech and Language Therapy

Community Child Health Service
Stammering: Preschool children



Medway Community Healthcare CIC providing services on behalf of the NHS
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Introduction

Stammering is when the smooth flow of speech gets disrupted.

It can take many forms including: repetition e.g. 'the the the', stretching out of words or sounds e.g. 'rrrrred', as well as silent blocking of the airflow where no sound is heard. Speech may sound forced, tense or jerky.

It is typical for a child aged between 2-5 years to go through a brief phase of dysfluent speech (stammering). This often begins when the child's speech and language skills have increased rapidly and they begin using longer and more complicated sentences.

The majority of these children will simply grow out of it in a few weeks or months. Some children can continue to stammer and will need help from a Speech and Language Therapist to support them with their talking.



How to help your child

Show that you are interested in what the child is saying not how they say it. Maintain usual eye contact when they have difficulty talking. Allow them plenty of time to finish, avoid interrupting and show that you have understood. Don't show you are anxious about how the child is talking.

Reduce the number of questions you ask the child and give them plenty of time to answer. Using commenting instead will put less pressure on the child to talk.

Slow down the rate of your own talking. Children try to match their rate of speech to those around them. If you slow down they will too.

Talk to the child using simple language. Children try to imitate the language around them and are more likely to stammer when they try to use complicated language.

Reduce competitiveness if the child is working in small groups or trying to talk at the same time as his/her siblings, model good turn taking in the group.

Comment on things the child is good at to help build self-esteem and confidence.

Try not to:

- Ask the child to slow down. Instead slow down your own rate of speech and your child will copy you.
- Finish the word or sentence for the child.
- Look away or ask the child to stop and start again.
- Interrupt your child. Try and notice how often the child is interrupted and the affect this has on their talking. Explain to family and friends the importance of taking turns in conversation.

What causes stammering?

Despite lots of research into stammering we still don't know exactly what causes it. Research currently shows that a combination of factors can affect a child's fluency.

Stammering often runs in families and children who stammer are no more anxious or under confident than children who do not stammer. Stammering has no bearing on intelligence.



When should I refer?

It can be difficult to tell which children are going to grow out of stammering and those that will need more support.

If the child has been stammering for more than 6 months, if there is a family history of stammering or if the child is becoming very self-conscious or frustrated with talking then consider a referral to Speech and Language Therapy.

Useful websites:

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