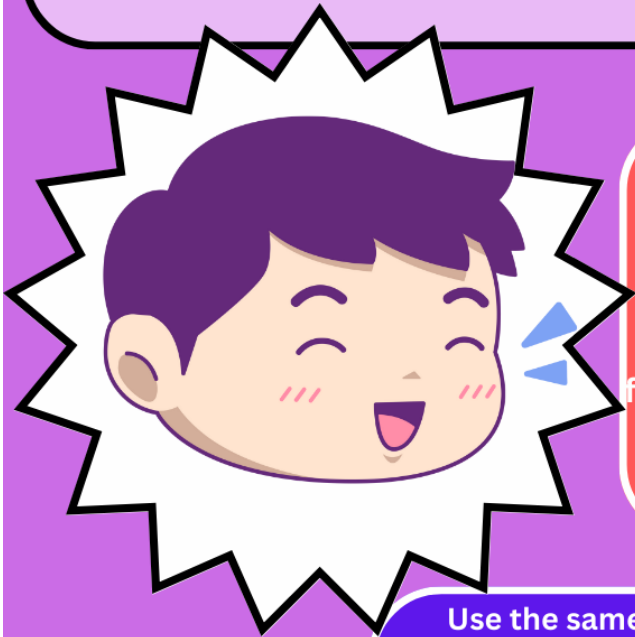


# How To Help A Child Who Stammers



For five minutes at least 3 times a week, daily if you can manage it, arrange a time in the day when you can give your child your full attention in a calm and relaxed atmosphere.

Slowing down your own speech when you talk to your child will make it easier for him/her to follow what you are saying and help him feel less rushed. This can be more helpful than telling the child to slow down, start again or take a deep breath. (A young child is likely to find it very difficult to control/slow down their own rate of speech)

Use the same sort of sentences your child does - keep them short and simple. Often children try to match the language levels of those around them and sometimes try to use longer sentences than is helpful for them at the time.

Keep natural eye-contact when s/he is speaking. Do not look away when s/he stammers.

Show you are interested in what s/he says, not how he is says it. Look at him/her when s/he talks, then s/he knows you are listening and won't rush his/her speech.

It may help to pause for one second before you answer him or ask a question. This slow, less hurried way of speaking gives your child time before answering. It also lets them know that it is ok for them to pause when they are talking.

Reduce the number of questions you ask. Always be sure that you give your child time to answer one before you ask another. Children can feel under pressure when asked a lot of questions at once.

Respond to the behaviour of the child who stammers in the same way as that of a child who does not stammer.

Praise your child for things she/he does well. This will help to build confidence.

Encourage everyone in the family to take turns to talk. This will reduce the amount that your child is interrupted and s/he interrupts others.

Try to avoid a hectic and rushed lifestyle. Children who stammer respond well to a routine and structured environment at home and at school.