

Where can I find more information?

You may find the following websites helpful:

British Stammering Association: www.stamma.org

Michael Palin Centre, a specialist centre for stammering in London:
www.michaelpalincenreforstammering.org

Disclaimer

Follow any specific additional advice from your speech and Language Therapist. Make sure new people in your child or young person's life have access to this information.

The Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service in St Helens has an open referral system, which means that any person in the child's life can refer with permission from the child's legal guardian.

To make a referral, please complete our referral form ensuring all information is included and send it to: mcn-tr.sthelens-slt@nhs.net

Please visit our website for further information: <https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/our-services/st-helens/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy>

Our patients matter

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust listens and responds to patients and their carers to help improve the services we deliver. If you have any comments, compliments or concerns you can speak with a member of staff or contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and Complaints Team.

Phone: **0151 471 2377** Freephone: **0800 328 2941**

Email: palsandcomplaints@merseycare.nhs.uk

To request this leaflet in an alternative format or language, please speak to a member of staff.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
V7 Building, Kings Business Park, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 1PJ

St Helens Paediatric Speech and
Language Therapy 0-18 years

Supporting older children and young people who stammer

Patient information leaflet



What is Stammering?

Stammering means that your words get stuck. You know what to say but you can't say it. Stammering is also known as stuttering or Dysfluency.

Stammering can sound like repeating whole words, such as, for example, 'then-then-then I scored.' Or Repeating bits of words, 'be-be-because...' Or stretching words 'Mmmmm can I...'

Words getting can also get stuck. The tongue and lips are in the right place, but the words don't come out.' Sometimes people might tense their face, move other parts of the body (blinking or tapping) or try and hide by looking away or placing hand over their mouth.

Parents and families do not cause stammering. Research tells us that it is likely a combination of things including: physical factors, speech and language needs, personality and the communication environment.

Stammering can be unpredictable. Most children and young people will experience times when their talking feels smoother and other times when they stammer more. Making small changes in how we communicate with a child or young person who stammers can make a positive difference.

There are many famous talented and successful people who stammer, including Ed Sheeran, Tiger Woods, Albert Einstein, Emily Blunt, and Samuel L Jackson.

Things that will help:

- Slowing things down a little and pausing can help
- Take a break if you are feeling frustrated. Do something else and come back to what you were saying when you are feeling more relaxed
- Focus on fluency and notice the times when you are more fluent
- Keep a diary, what do you notice?
- Get enough sleep and exercise as having a healthy diet and a structured routine.

Things that others can do that will help:

- Slow your rate of speech and pause before responding
- Avoid telling someone to "slow down" as this can have the opposite affect
- Try to limit the number of questions asked and balance these with comments to reduce the demands
- Listen to what is being said, rather than how it is said and give plenty of time to talk
- Keep language neutral, try talking about stammering
- more or less rather than speech being 'bad' or 'good'
- If your child is really unaware that they stammer, then you don't need to say anything about it. However, as with anything that someone is finding difficult it can help to acknowledge it. Don't pretend it isn't happening. Make your child aware that you are happy to talk to them about it when they want to. This can be reassuring. You might say something like, "that got a bit stuck, don't worry there is no rush."