

# Speech and Language Therapy Service's 'Help at Home' scheme

## BUMPY SPEECH

### Things to know about stammering in children

Learning to talk isn't always straight forward. Sometimes children stop, pause, start again or stumble over words.

Between the ages of 2 and 5, it can be quite normal for children to repeat words and phrases, or hesitate, saying "um" and "er" when working out how to say something.

This leaflet gives information about learning to talk and stammering - what to look out for at home and how to help.



# Things to know

- 5 in every 100 children stammer, at some point, when learning to talk. Speech can get more fluent as they grow up or it can carry on being difficult.
- At any age, stammering can come and go.
- Fluency may change depending on the situation a child is in, how they are feeling, who they are talking to, and what it is that they are trying to say.
- There is no known reason for stammering – it can't be caused. It can however run in families and is more common in boys than girls.

# What does stammering sound like?

- Not being able to get started for several seconds ("..... my train goes really fast")
- Tense or jerky speech
- Putting extra effort into saying words
- Repeating parts of words several times ("ca ca ... can I")
- Stretching sounds out in a word ("can I hhhhhave cake?")
- Stopping what is being said half way through a sentence

Types of difficulties vary from child to child – you may hear some or all of these things when your child talks.

# How to help your child

These tips may help your child talk more easily – but don't expect change straight away.

**Set aside a few minutes** at around the same time each day to give your child your full attention. Keep the situation calm and relaxed - Play with what they want to play with and talk about what they want to talk about.

**Use simple language** with your child, "oh, we're playing bricks" rather than "oh that's right, you and I are going to sit and play with your bricks now aren't we".

**Slow your own speech down** when talking with your child rather than telling them to calm down, slow down, think or start again.

**Let your child know you are listening** by looking at them when they are talking to you. If you are busy, try to stop what you are doing, turn to them and look at them so they know they have your full attention.



**Check the British Stammering Association website for more information**

**[www.stammering.org](http://www.stammering.org)**

# If you are worried about your child's talking or would like more information, please call your local Speech & Language Therapy Services

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend
Aneurin Bevan Health Board	Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and South Powys
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Wrexham & Flintshire    01978 727071 Conwy & Denbighshire    01745 443178 North West Wales        01286 662760	Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham) as well as some parts of mid Wales, Cheshire and Shropshire
Cardiff & Vale University Health Board	Cardiff & Vale residents
Cwm Taf Health Board	the Cynon Valley, Merthyr Tydfil, the Rhondda Valleys and the Taff Ely area
Hywel Dda Health Board	Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.
Powys Teaching Health Board	Brecon, Newton, Montgomeryshire and Knighton, Becknockshire and the remainder of Radnorshire

Afasic Cymru is the only charity in Wales, representing children & young people with Speech, Language & Communication Needs (SLCN), with a particular focus on Specific Language Impairment (SLI)

[www.afasiccymru.org.uk](http://www.afasiccymru.org.uk)

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