

Appendix G: Fluency Facilitators

Suggestions for family and teachers for ways to help children improve their fluency:

- Convey to the child that you accept him/her, whether or not he/she stutters.
- Respond to *what* the child says, not *how*.
- Talk about stuttering with the child, making stuttering a “no big deal” topic for discussion, just as you might talk about any other topic.
- Talk about talking, even when you can’t listen. Let the child know that you’re interested in what he/she has to say. Tell the child you’ll listen as soon as you’re through. Make sure you really do get back to him/her in a short period of time and listen without doing anything else.
- As much as possible, establish a calm, relaxed atmosphere. Allow plenty of time to do things so that you don’t have to rush from one thing to another.
- Speak in a relaxed, unhurried way, pausing frequently when talking.
- Speak in short sentences with vocabulary appropriate to the child’s age.
- Comment about what the child has done rather than ask lots of questions.
- When you must ask questions, ask yes/no questions, two-choice questions, or limited scope questions, such as “What was the best thing that happened on the field trip?” instead of “What happened on the field trip?”
- Allow the child to finish his/her thoughts before you respond. It’s often easy to anticipate what the child is going to say and respond before he/she finishes. Let the child finish, pause for a short time, and then respond.
- Model and encourage good turn taking while talking. Count silently to 5 before responding as a way to slow down the rate of turn taking.
- Set aside a few minutes at a regular time each day when you can give the child your undivided attention. Let the child direct you in the activities and choose whether he/she talks or not. When you talk, use slow, easy speech with plenty of pauses. Allow and accept periods of silence.
- Praise, compliment, and thank the child frequently.
- Let the child own the problem of stuttering. Allow the child to handle speaking situations and show confidence in his/her ability to speak by not letting the child avoid speaking situations.
- Be an active part of the child’s fluency intervention. Learn the tools or techniques the child uses to control his/her stuttering.

There are many things family and teachers can do to help children who stutter speak more easily and fluently. The most important of these is to learn more about stuttering. A good place to start this learning process is with some of the booklets and videos by the Stuttering Foundation of America at:

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