



## International Stammering Awareness Day 22nd October

### **Did you know....**

- Stammering and stuttering mean the same thing.
- It is not caused by nervousness.
- It is a physical struggle to get the words out, normally caused by a neurological condition where the parts of the brain that process speech and language behave differently to those who don't stammer.
- There is also a genetic link with 60% of people who stammer having a relative who stammers or used to stammer.
- Stammering usually starts in childhood, affecting up to 8% of children.
- Most children will go on to speak fluently, but up to 3% or around 1.5 million, will continue to stammer into adulthood.
- More rarely it can also result from a head trauma or illness such as Parkinsons or certain medications.
- Stammering can have a significant impact on a person's well-being at home, in education and in the workplace.

### **How to help**

Maintain natural eye contact and wait patiently until the person finishes speaking. Slow down your rate of speech to reduce any time pressures and avoid making comments to slow down or take a deep breath. Whilst well-meant, this often results in increased tension and stammering plus it can disrupt the flow of the conversation.

## Sources of Support

- British Stammering Association Website [www.stamma.org](http://www.stamma.org)  
You can find information for parents, teenagers, adults, teachers and employers including support with interviews and job applications, plus stories about people experiences in the 'your voice section'.
- British Stammering Association helpline  
The helpline is staffed by volunteers and people who stammer or who have worked in the field. It is free, confidential and anonymous. Call 0808 802 0002 (weekdays 10am-12pm & 6pm-8pm) or email via [mail@stamma.org](mailto:mail@stamma.org).
- Action for Stammering Children  
A charity supporting children and young people who stammer.  
[www.actionforstammeringchildren.org](http://www.actionforstammeringchildren.org)
- Speech and language therapy works for many people. This may involve helping clients to stammer more openly, learning techniques to speak in an easier way or supporting families in how to respond to moments of struggle.

Whilst lots of children grow out of stammering, it is not easy to work out whether children are going through a temporary stage of stammering or whether it will continue. Please seek advice if your child is between the ages of two and three and a half and been stammering for a few months especially if it is becoming more noticeable and there is a family history of stammering. Also if they are over the age of three and a half and just started stammering. Further information about referring to our service can be found on our website [www.speech.derbys.nhs.uk](http://www.speech.derbys.nhs.uk)

Natasha Wimbledon  
Stammering Lead DCHS Foundation Trust