

Children's Therapy and Family Resource Centre

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Do's and Don'ts of Stuttering

Suggestions to help your child's bumpy speech ...

Things To Do:

- **Do** speak slowly but *naturally* whenever your child can hear you. He will copy your style by himself.
- **Do** listen to your child. Let him know you are interested and don't rush him.
- **Do** praise the things he does well (i.e. "He's really trying with his speech, and you should see him ride his bike!").
- **Do** reassure your child that talking is hard. Animals can't do it. Let him know that some words are hard for you too.
- **Do** tell others not to tease or copy. This includes adults and visitors. Tell your child's sitters or daycare providers how to react to his dysfluencies. As for others, "stutterproof" your child against unkind comments by building up his self-confidence.

Things Not to Do:

- **Don't** put your child's talking on show (i.e. "tell Auntie Sue your alphabet"). When he feels comfortable talking, he will.
- **Don't** interrupt your child's speech or finish his sentences. If he is already having trouble speaking, he shouldn't have to worry about taking too long.
- **Don't** tell your child to slow down (not all preschoolers know how to do this) or "think about what you're saying first" (hasn't he done that already?).
- **Don't** encourage speaking when your child is excited or upset. Try using a "calm down break" (i.e. "let's get some water, then you can tell me all about it").