



SMART PARENTING *for* CHILD

Dr. Godbole's Chiranjeev Child Development Center



Stammering, Stuttering, Delayed Speech

'Stammer' and 'Stutter' mean the same. A stammering child (more in boys) puts extra effort into saying his words, has tense and jerky speech, and cannot seem to get started ("... I got a teddy"), stretches sounds in a word ("I want a ssstory"), repeats parts of words several times ("mu-mu-mu-mummy"), stops what he is saying half way through his sentence. Many toddlers stutter as they are learning to talk. Most of these children will grow out of stuttering and will have normal speech as they get older. This is usually referred to as pseudo stuttering.

Tips for parenting a stammering child -

1. Show your child that you are interested in what he says, not how he says it.
2. Be supportive. Avoid labeling the difficulty as stammering.
3. Be encouraging if your child gets upset about his speech.
4. Slow down your rate of speech, but don't tell your child to slow down.
5. Stammering is not caused by parents, but anxiety can be passed on to your child.
6. For your child, set aside a special, calm & relaxed time each day.
7. Ask one short & simple question at a time and give plenty of time to answer.
8. Take turns to talk so that everyone can speak without being interrupted.
9. Avoid corrections and criticism.
10. Try to avoid a hectic lifestyle. Stammering increases when your child is tired.

Delayed speech: First meaningful word usually comes by 12 to 18 months, but there is a wide range. One can wait, if child is able to express by facial or bodily expressions, responds to simple commands and communicates with peers and family. Delayed speech with hearing defect, poor social contact (autism?) and mental retardation should be ruled out.

Mother teaches how to talk, father teaches when to talk!