



## NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION

CHANGING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WHO STUTTER

In light of a recent incident concerning U.S. Customs and Border Protection and a person who stutters, the National Stuttering Association offers the following information about stuttering in an effort to prevent any discomfort felt by people who stutter while traveling to our 2016 annual conference in Atlanta. We do not have complete information regarding the incident in Atlanta and hope that the attention brought to the challenges faced by people who stutter helps bring awareness to the stuttering community.

### WHO STUTTERS?

About 1% of adults and 5% of children stutter. That translates to approximately 3 million people in the United States. Stuttering typically starts in childhood, and boys are approximately three times more likely to stutter than girls.

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### STUTTERING CAN BE CONFUSING.

When you are talking with someone who is having trouble producing sounds or words smoothly, he or she may be stuttering. Stuttering can cause listeners to feel uncertain or anxious about how to respond. If you keep the following suggestions in mind, talking with a person who stutters can become more comfortable for you—and for the person who stutters.

### STUTTERING IS NOT A PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM.

When a speaker appears nervous, keep in mind that the nervousness is a result of embarrassment about their stuttering, rather than a cause of it.

### PEOPLE STUTTER IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

Some repeat syllables and others stretch out sounds or “block” while speaking. There are as many different ways to stutter as there are people who stutter.

### BE PATIENT.

Most people who stutter strongly prefer to speak for themselves. You may be tempted to finish a person’s sentences or “fill in” words, but this does not help. It is okay to stutter! Don’t give advice such as: “slow down,” “take a breath,” or “relax.” Maintain eye contact, listen carefully, and wait patiently until the person is finished speaking.

### BE A GOOD LISTENER.

Let the speaker know, by what you say and do, that you are listening. Focus on the message, instead of how it is said.

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### IF YOU STUTTER, YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

To learn more about stuttering – whether you are a person who stutters or a listener –  
[visit the National Stuttering Association online.](#)