

# RESOURCES

You and your child do not have to face stuttering alone. The NSA is here to help! The NSA is the largest self-help and support organization in the world for children and adults who stutter and their families. Through all of our family programs, we have dedicated ourselves to providing parents and others with the knowledge, understanding, and hope they need to support children's success in their speech and throughout their lives.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our 4-day Annual Conference is the best way to help children who stutter learn to overcome the challenge of stuttering and teach them that they are not alone! Workshops specifically designed for school-age kids create an amazing opportunity for children who stutter to build confidence and make new friends, while parents and siblings can participate in their own workshops to help them better understand and cope with stuttering.

## LETTING GO NEWSLETTER

*Letting Go* is compiled of articles geared specifically towards kids, teens, and adults who stutter, their parents, SLPs, and others who love and support them. All articles are written by NSAers like you and by our staff, each sharing their stories and experiences with the hope of helping and supporting others.

## PARENT SUPPORT CHAIN

Connect with other parents online who have faced the challenge of being the parent of a child who stutters. Search 'NSA Parents' on Facebook.

## NSA TEENS CHAPTERS

Our local chapters bring teens together for support and encouragement to help them know they are not alone.

## ASK THE EXPERT

Have your questions about stuttering answered by top stuttering specialists and leaders in the stuttering self-help community.

800-We-Stutter  
AskTheExpert@WeStutter.org



TEENS **KIDS!** Parents



NATIONAL CHANGING THE  
STUTTERING LIVES OF PEOPLE  
ASSOCIATION WHO STUTTER

*The National Stuttering Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Since 1977, we have dedicated ourselves to bringing hope and empowerment to children and adults who stutter, their families, and professionals through support, education, advocacy and research.*

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NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION**

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# 18 WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN WHO STUTTER

## 1. CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL

Fortunately, many treatments are available for children who stutter, though not all of these treatments are helpful for all children. Seek the advice of a speech-language pathologist (SLP) who specializes in the treatment of children who stutter and work closely with your therapist to ensure the best possible outcome for your child. Contact the NSA for help finding a local specialist.

## 2. LEARN ABOUT STUTTERING

Getting the facts about stuttering can help you understand what your child is going through. The NSA has partnered with leading specialists to provide the most up-to-date information about stuttering research and treatment. The more you know, the more you can help.

## 3. LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD

Listen to the message your child is trying to communicate, not the stuttering. You can show your child that you are listening by not finishing sentences, filling in words, or giving simplistic advice such as “relax,” “slow down,” and “take a breath.” Encourage your child’s development of healthy communication skills by showing them that what they say is more important than how they say it. Reflect what you have heard back to them so they know that they are understood.

## 4. TALK ABOUT STUTTERING

Talk openly with your child about stuttering (to the extent they are comfortable). Keeping communication open creates an atmosphere of trust and sharing. Open communication helps your child know that they can talk to you about how they feel about stuttering, and this helps know they are not alone in dealing with their speech.

## 5. COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CHILD

Make time each day for quality, relaxed talking time with your child. Many families today are faced with increased demands on their time and fewer opportunities for simple conversation. A hurried atmosphere creates additional stress that can make it harder for your child to communicate successfully.

## 6. EMPOWER YOUR CHILD

Through your acceptance and trust in your child, you can create opportunities for them to believe in themselves. By empowering your child to become an independent problem solver, they can grow more confident in their own skills to deal with stuttering throughout their life.

## 7. BE HEARD

You can be your child’s best advocate. As you learn more about stuttering, you will gain the tools you need to foster your child’s long-term success. Often, you will find that you need to teach others about stuttering, so they can be more understanding and supportive. You can also teach your child to advocate for themselves by helping them talk to teachers and others about stuttering.

## 8. DECREASE TIME PRESSURE

Time pressure is the feeling of having to act or speak quickly. Too much time pressure can make things more difficult to accomplish. You can reduce time pressure for your child by limiting interruptions and encouraging good turn-taking in your home environment. Allowing pauses and silence during conversation will help create an easier, more supportive communication environment.

## 9. REDUCE DEMANDS

Your child will experience many demands on their speaking abilities as they develop more advanced speech and language skills. Reducing the amount of “demand” speech (e.g., “tell grandma what you did today”) can decrease the pressures they experience and help with successful communication, even when they are stuttering.

## 10. GET INVOLVED

Become a partner in your child’s journey by learning all you can about how they are coping with stuttering. Ask about what they are experiencing with speech, and do your best to learn from those experiences. Your child is the expert about their speech, but knowing that you are there will give them the support and encouragement they need to overcome the many challenges they will face.

## 11. ACCEPT YOUR CHILD’S STUTTERING

Stuttering is a very small part of who your child is and an even smaller part of who they will become. Stuttering does not have to limit your child’s life, and the key to overcoming stuttering is acceptance. You can help by showing your child that your love and acceptance are unconditional, regardless of how fluently your child speaks.

## 12. GIVE YOURSELF & YOUR CHILD A BREAK

Change is a process that takes time and effort. As your family learns to cope with and accept stuttering, remember to give yourself and your child permission to take small and varied steps on the path to success.

## 13. RELEASE OWNERSHIP

Remember that your child is responsible for their own speech. As they become an adult, they will need to feel this responsibility for themselves, while knowing that they have your support and encouragement. This is true regardless of how they choose to address stuttering.

## 14. UNDERSTAND YOUR NEW ROLE

Teenagers who stutter continue to need their parents, however; what they need from you will change as they make the transition to becoming an independent adult. More and more, decisions such as whether or how they will manage their speech will be up to them. You can become a source of advice and opinion, but you can no longer expect your child to work on their speech simply because you want them to. Your support for your teen’s choices is key for creating an atmosphere of trust and responsibility.

## 15. EMBRACE CHANGES

As your child moves through adolescence, you will find that their motivation and ability to manage stuttering may change. These fluctuations are a normal part of dealing with stuttering in the teen years. Try to view these challenges as opportunities to encourage your teenager towards success. Embrace these times of transition, for they create new possibilities for you and your teenager to work together and grow together.

## 16. IDENTIFY PATHS TO SUCCESS

Evaluate what the goals of therapy are and what is considered “success.” A person can stutter and be a good communicator just as a fluent person can be a poor communicator! The objective of good therapy is to increase the effectiveness and ease of communication, not to achieve 100% fluency.

## 17. BE PATIENT & LEARN IN SMALL STEPS

These strategies take time to learn. Do not feel discouraged if you find them hard at first. You will receive specific training about how to make these and other changes as you partner with a stuttering specialist.

## 18. GET CONNECTED

The NSA is dedicated to providing hope, empowerment, and support for you and your child. Through the NSA, you will become part of a community of people who understand stuttering and how to help people who stutter. Together, we can make a real difference in your child’s life.