

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our 4-day Annual Conference is the largest gathering in the world of people who stutter, as well as their loved ones and speech professionals. During the conference you'll find activities, motivational speakers, support from others who stutter, the latest in research, and much, much more! If you know someone who stutters, be sure to tell them about this life-changing experience!

## LOCAL CHAPTERS

Our network of local chapters have been providing support and encouragement for people who stutter for nearly 40 years. We maintain a network of almost 200 chapters for adults who stutter nationwide, and a growing number of chapters for families (NSAKids and TWST - Teens Who STutter).

## NEWSLETTER

NSA's newsletter, *Letting Go*, has been distributed to thousands within and outside of the NSA since 1979. *Letting Go* has created broad-based awareness of and support for those who stutter and helps break self-imposed isolation, too often a lifetime by-product of stuttering. The personal accounts of victories over stuttering encourage self-acceptance and self-esteem throughout the reading audience. *Letting Go* also provides the latest research, therapy options, coping management strategies, and is often the only connection to the stuttering community for those not in speech therapy or geographically distanced from a support group.

## WORKSHOPS & CONTINUING EDUCATION

The NSA provides the latest information about stuttering treatment and research to persons who stutter and to speech-language pathologists through our series of nationwide workshops and ASHA-approved continuing education (CE) presentations.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

We have a wealth of resources available online including the latest in stuttering information and events on our website, WeStutter.org, live and recorded webinars, and various social media communities. In addition, help is always just an email or phone call away.

Founded in 1977, the NSA is the largest self-help/support organization for people who stutter in the United States. Throughout our history, we have worked to improve the lives of people who stutter and their families, whether that is changing the life of one individual or raising awareness of stuttering throughout the nation and the world. For example, the NSA was instrumental in securing a Presidential Proclamation establishing the second week of May each year as National Stuttering Awareness Week.

Later, the NSA named 1996 "The Year of the Child Who Stutters," and hosted workshops nationwide to help young people who stutter. In 2001, we held the first joint symposium for scientists and people who stutter, aimed at advancing stuttering research and treatment.

In 2005, we launched our NSAKids initiative to help children who stutter and their families through local chapters, dedicated publications, and a new level of personal support.

Our history shows our commitment to people affected by stuttering and proves the success of our mission.



**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.*

**COPYRIGHTED © ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION**

1460 BROADWAY NEW YORK, NY 10036  
P. 800.WESTUTTER (937.8888) | E. INFO@WESTUTTER.ORG  
[WWW.WESTUTTER.ORG](http://WWW.WESTUTTER.ORG) | [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) 'WESTUTTER'



# NOTES TO LISTENERS

# WHAT TO KNOW AND WHAT TO DO WHEN SPEAKING WITH A PERSON WHO STUTTERS

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. You will probably react appropriately by instinct, but if you are not sure what to do, you are not alone. The NSA is here to help. 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.

## PEOPLE WHO STUTTER ARE NORMAL

They just have difficulty producing sounds and words fluently. 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. Most people start stuttering between the ages of 2½ and 5 years. Boys are approximately three times more likely to stutter than girls.

## STUTTERING IS NOT A PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDER

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

## THE CAUSES OF STUTTERING ARE COMPLEX

Current research suggests that many different factors may be involved but the precise cause(s) of stuttering are still unknown. Most researchers now consider stuttering to be a neurological condition, and one which is shown to have a genetic component.

## PEOPLE STUTTER IN DIFFERENT WAYS

Some repeat syllables (e.g.: C-c-c-cat) and others stretch out sounds (e.g.: Mmmmmilk) or “block” (absence of sound) while speaking. There are as many different ways to stutter as there are people who stutter.

## STUTTERING VARIES

Some days, it is harder to speak smoothly, and other days it is easier. It is not always possible to figure out why a person stutters more at one time than at another.

## IT'S 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.

## STUTTERING IS NOT EASY TO CHANGE

Stuttering may look like an easy problem that can be solved with simple advice. At this time there is no consistent, research-based cure for stuttering, so for most adults who stutter, stuttering poses a life-long challenge. Still, speech therapy and self-help/support groups such as the NSA have helped countless people who stutter improve their ability to communicate.

## THERE ARE NO LIMITS TO WHAT PEOPLE WHO STUTTER CAN DO

Many people have learned to manage their stuttering so it has little or no impact on their daily lives.

## 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.

## 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.

## IF YOU'RE NOT SURE HOW TO RESPOND, ASK THE SPEAKER

Although some people may be uncomfortable talking about stuttering, most will appreciate your interest. Talking openly and honesty about the problem can help both of you communicate more easily.

