



National Speech/Language Therapy Center

DBA: National Therapy Center, Inc.

The Stuttering Clinic

National Stuttering Awareness Q & A Week 2018

412 First St. SE
Rear Building, Lower Level
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202.470.4185
Fax: 202.741.9952

Monday's Question: My pediatrician said my child's stuttering is "normal" and he will outgrow it. Is this true?

Response: While many children will go through a temporary period of stuttering, we would be doing families a great disservice by assuming all children will outgrow stuttering on their own. In fact, we may miss the critical window of time that therapy can boost a child's chances of outgrowing stuttering. In addition, we're wasting valuable time that could be spent ensuring your child is a confident and effective communicator, whether or not he continues to stutter.

5606 Shields Dr.
Bethesda, MD 20817
Phone: 301.493.0023
Fax: 301.493.8230

The truth is we don't know with certainty which children will outgrow stuttering and which will persist into adulthood. However, there are certain things to consider before telling a parent that their child's stuttering is "normal" and therapy is not warranted. You should consider the following risk factors:

20400 Observation Dr. Ste. 104
Germantown, MD 20876
Phone: 301.540.0445
Fax: 301.540.0766

1. **Family history**- if the child has a family history of stuttering, especially a family member who continued to stutter into adulthood, he is at an increased risk of persistent stuttering.

2. **Gender**- if the child is a male he is at an increased risk for persistent stuttering.

3. **Late onset stuttering**- if the child began stuttering at the age of 3.5 or older he is at an increased risk for persistent stuttering.

4. **Co-existing developmental or speech/language disorders**- if the child has a co-existing disorder such as articulation disorder, mixed receptive/expressive language disorder or certain genetic disorders like Downs Syndrome, he is at an increased risk for persistent stuttering.

1934 Old Gallows Rd. Ste. 350
Tysons Corner, VA 22182
Phone: 301.493.0023
Fax: 301.493.8230

5. **Negative reactions to stuttering**- children who are exhibiting negative reactions such as frustration or shame should be seen by an SLP. Negative reactions may come in many forms but may include giving up on words or messages, avoiding certain sounds or words, covering their mouth while stuttering, starting to speak in a low volume, etc. Physical tension and struggle behaviors that accompany stuttering moments including facial grimacing, eye blinking, movement of the body or limbs, etc. may also be a sign to seek an SLP's advice.

1100 N. Glebe Rd. Ste. 1010
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 301.493.0023
Fax: 301.493.8230

6. **Parental concern**- since stuttering is variable by nature often parents may be observing more stuttering or more negative reactions to stuttering than is apparent within the classroom or during a doctor's visit. At the very least, a speech/language evaluation could assist parents in identifying what they should be looking for if therapy is warranted at a later time.

Brooke Leiman MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-F