



National Speech/Language Therapy Center

DBA: National Therapy Center, Inc.

The Stuttering Clinic

National Stuttering Awareness Q & A Week 2018

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Wednesday's Question: Why is my child refusing to practice speech/stuttering management strategies for homework?

Response:

Reason # 1: These Techniques Are Hard!

Making changes to one's speech becomes more difficult when you introduce factors that often are not present in the therapy room, such as interruptions, time pressure, and feelings of embarrassment or shame associated with stuttering. Children will be more likely to use strategies if they are first introduced to them in safe and supportive environments (ex. home, therapy room). If your child is resisting practicing strategies in a certain situation (ex. in the classroom), he most likely is not being defiant, rather it might have to do with factors in that specific environment that make using the strategy more difficult.

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Reason #2: These Techniques Make Me Sound Weird!

All speech/stuttering management techniques require your child to alter his speech in a way that is different from how his friends sound. Your child may not feel comfortable with how he sounds while using strategies similar to how he feels when he stutters. Just as your child needs time to get used to hearing himself stutter, he may also need time to get used to how strategies sound. In addition, your child may benefit from activities aimed at improving his ability to handle listener reactions or practicing how to respond to curiosity/teasing. (ex. "Why do you sound like that?" "Sometimes when I stutter I stretch my sounds to help me get the word out more easily").

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While your child may not be practicing speech/stuttering management techniques as much as you would hope, try not to lose sight of the other ways he is challenging himself outside of therapy. Examples include but are not limited to advocating for himself and teaching people about stuttering, speaking more openly about his feelings about stuttering, increasing his enjoyment for talking, talking more in situations he previously avoided (ex. raising hand in class), stuttering with less struggle/effort and improving overall communication skills whether or not he stutters (ex. rate of speech, eye contact, etc.).

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