

# Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Smoother Speech at Home: Helping a Child Who Stammers

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Hearing your child get stuck on words, repeat sounds or push hard to speak can be worrying and heartbreaking. Please know that many young children go through a period of bumpy, disfluent speech as their language grows quickly — and how calm and patient the people around them stay makes a real difference.

This home program shares gentle ways to make talking feel easy and pressure-free at home. It supports your child but does not replace a proper assessment.

Stammering is best guided by a speech and language therapist, so please do book a check as well — early support helps.

## ♥ Who this program is for

- ✓ Children who repeat sounds or words, or stretch sounds out (“b-b-ball”, “mmmmmy”).
- ✓ Children who sometimes get stuck and no sound comes out for a moment.
- ✓ Toddlers going through a very fast burst of new words and sentences.
- ✓ Parents who feel anxious watching their child struggle and want to help calmly.
- ✓ Families waiting for, or already seeing, a therapist who want gentle home support.

### ⚡ Important — when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program, not a diagnosis or a substitute for an assessment. Please speak to a professional promptly if:

Your child shows physical tension or struggle — tight face, blinking, or pushing hard to get words out.

Your child starts avoiding words, sounds or talking altogether, or swaps words to dodge stammering.

There is a family history of stammering and it has lasted longer than 6 to 12 months.

Your child seems upset, embarrassed or frustrated about their talking.

You have a worried gut feeling — always trust it and ask a therapist for help.

## ☆ Your step-by-step roadmap

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are a gentle order, not a race. Repeat any stage as long as it helps.

### **Week 1 – Slow your own pace**

**Model an easy, unhurried way of talking.**

Talk to your child a little more slowly, with gentle pauses between phrases.

Let a second or two pass before you answer them.

Keep your own voice calm and relaxed, never rushed.

⚡ **Try this:** You cannot tell a child to slow down — but you can show it in yourself.

### **Week 2 – Take the pressure off**

**Make talking feel safe and unhurried.**

Never say “slow down”, “start again” or “take a breath”.

Give your child all the time they need — do not finish their words.

Keep good eye contact and a warm face while they talk, bumps and all.

⚡ **Try this:** Silence and patience say “I am listening” louder than any advice.

### **Week 3 – Praise the easy talking**

Notice and value the smooth moments.

Warmly comment when talking flows — “That came out so smoothly!”

Praise the message and the sharing, not just fluency.

Stay just as loving and calm on the bumpy days.

⚡ **Try this:** What you shine a light on grows — so highlight easy, relaxed talking.

### **Week 4 – Calm, connected talk time**

Build daily one-to-one moments with no rush.

Set aside a few minutes a day of calm, screen-free play and chat.

Follow your child’s lead and keep your questions few and easy.

Reduce competition to talk — let each person have their turn.

⚡ **Try this:** One unhurried minute of full attention beats an hour of hurried chatter.

### **Week 5 – Keep life calm and steady**

Protect the calm that helps smooth speech.

Keep predictable routines — tired and rushed children stammer more.

Slow the whole household’s pace at busy times like mornings.

Keep talking openly and kindly, and never make stammering shameful.

⚡ **Try this:** A calmer home almost always means calmer, smoother talking.

- ✓ Never say “slow down” or “start again” — it adds the very pressure that hurts.
- ✓ Give your child time and never finish their sentences for them.
- ✓ Reduce rush, tiredness and too many questions at once.
- ✓ Slow your own speech instead; children copy the pace around them.
- ✓ Keep your reaction calm and loving whether talking is smooth or bumpy.
- ✓ Talk to your therapist about structured programmes — these are clinician-guided.

### **How you'll know it's working**

- Your child has more smooth, easy talking days.
- You see less tension or struggle when your child speaks.
- Your child keeps talking freely and does not avoid words.
- Your child seems relaxed and confident about talking.



**Is this based on real methods?** Slowing your own speech, giving your child time, and praising easy talking — rather than saying “slow down” or “start again” — reflect widely accepted advice; structured programmes such as the Lidcombe Program are delivered under the guidance of a qualified speech and language therapist.