

# Parent – tips to help your child with stuttering!

## Be calm

- Your child's stuttering can often cause you, as a parent, to become worried and even frightened. The child may be confused by stuttering, too. It is essential that as a parent you stay calm and send the child the message (with your expressions, gestures, actions and words) that stuttering is okay and that they will get through this.

## Talk about it

- It is a good idea for the parent to talk about the stuttering with the child and offer sympathy and comfort. You could say, for example: "Oh, I can see that's difficult for you to say". Also remember to tell them: "I want to hear what you have to say". Stuttering is also worth talking about, for example, in early childhood education or at a child health clinic. Employees may have information about stuttering for you, or if not, they should attend free training on [www.temposhop.fi](http://www.temposhop.fi)

## Help the child

- Pay attention to your own ways of acting and interacting, and use them to facilitate your child's speech. More detailed instructions can be found on the next page. Check out the free initial information kit "Kohti Voimaa" (in Finnish) on [www.temposhop.fi](http://www.temposhop.fi). It is important that early support for stuttering starts in the child's everyday life (at home and in early childhood education and care) immediately after the onset of stuttering.

## See a speech therapist

- Stuttering is treated with speech therapy. It is a good idea to see a speech therapist if it has been 6 months since the stuttering in your child started. If you are very concerned about stuttering or the child reacts negatively to stuttering, it is a good idea to seek help from a speech therapist earlier. Ask your child health centre for more information!

For families:



For early childhood education and care:



For health nurses:



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**Open attitude:** Talk about stuttering in a neutral and open way. It's worth talking about speaking to your child as well – it's a trait like any other trait or skill in a child.

**Accepting atmosphere:** Show the child that you don't mind if they stutter. Do not correct the child's speech. Talk to somebody, maybe a friend, about stuttering to ease the worry and make stuttering commonplace.

**Courage to speak and self-esteem:** Encourage your child to speak despite stuttering. Acknowledge your child's strengths and skills, and support the development of self-esteem.

**Calm everyday life:** A busy lifestyle can affect speech fluency. Make sure your child has enough time to settle down at home and gets enough sleep. Reduce unnecessary extra activities and an unpredictable lifestyle. Organise daily one-to-one moments with your child when they have your undivided attention.

**Calm interactions:** The child's speech often becomes more fluent if the adult emphasises taking turns and speaks to the child at a slower pace. Focus on listening to your child and maintain natural eye contact. Try these methods first during one-to-one moments, and you may notice a difference.

**Early support:** Talk about stuttering in early childhood education and care and with close ones, such as grandparents. Make sure they know how to deal with stuttering properly. Share information about stuttering and refer them to free materials on [www.temposhop.fi](http://www.temposhop.fi)

**Find help:** The initial information kit "Kohti Voimaa" (in Finnish) is suitable for everyone. The more extensive online rehabilitation programme "Voima" (in Finnish) is one option for getting quick help. See a speech therapist if the stuttering has been going on for 6 months, if you are very worried about it or if the child reacts negatively to the stuttering.