



## National Speech / Language Therapy Center

5606 Shields Drive • Bethesda, MD 20817 • Tel: 301-493-0023 • Fax: 301-493-8230  
Email: [Brooke@nationalspeech.com](mailto:Brooke@nationalspeech.com) • Website: [www.StutteringSource.com](http://www.StutteringSource.com)

### HOW TO ASSIST A STUDENT WHO STUTTERS: TIPS FOR TEACHERS

1. **Contact the school's speech pathologist or parent.** If you notice disruptions in the child's fluency, do not ignore it. If you're noticing it, chances are the parents are noticing it too and will respect your efforts to address it with them.
2. **Do not say "slow down",** rather slow down your own speech by inserting more pauses.
3. **Do not complete a student's sentences.** This may indicate you think they are unable to complete it themselves, or you may not complete it in the way they intended. Just wait them out, keeping eye contact so they know you are listening.
4. **Discourage interrupting.** Easier said than done, but be cognizant that increased time pressure triggers disfluencies in a child who stutters.
5. **For the child who is aware of their stuttering, approach them about it in private.** Often students want to talk about their stuttering with their teachers, but are too nervous to bring it up on their own. Let them know that stuttering is okay and that they should be comfortable talking about it with you. Talk about how you can assist them and find out situations that worry them the most.
6. **Be alert and handle teasing right away.** Talk to the student about how the teasing makes them feel.
7. **Collaborate with the speech pathologist.** If your student is already receiving speech services at school, see if you can sit in on part of a session.
8. **Do not ask students to use techniques/strategies** unless told to do so by the speech pathologist, especially strategies you have come upon in your own research. Stuttering treatment is a process and the child may not be ready to use their strategies in the classroom setting.
9. **Some common classroom accommodations** may be:
  - Allowing for the student to practice or make presentations before/after class with only the teacher present. Slowly build up to making presentation with friend present, small group, etc.
  - Giving the student the option of what order in which they are to be called on. Some PWS may prefer to get it out of the way so they do not have sit and wait for their turn, whereas others prefer to be called on later. This applies to roll call/attendance as well.
  - On days that the child is having a "bad speech day", word questions so that they are more close-ended, or allow student to initiate participation themselves. Do not excuse students from participating all together, however it is okay to give them a break on days you see they are particularly frustrated.