

## Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Stammering - Tiredness and Consistency of Routine

### Tiredness

A stammer can increase when a child is tired (difficulty getting off to sleep, staying asleep or having a lively personality). They may also get tired if they have a busy week with lots of clubs or activities.

### What you can do to help

- Have a consistent bedtime routine, so that your child has a chance to wind down and get into a deep sleep. Having a structure, e.g. bath, teeth, and a story helps your child to relax naturally.
- Avoid loud or noisy games, DVD's, T.V or computer games before bedtime. These tend to wake a child's brain up and make it more difficult to get into sleep.
- Some children find having relaxing music on at bedtime makes it helpful to sleep.
- Encourage your child to sleep in their own bedroom and to go off to sleep by themselves. This helps them to learn to relax on their own.
- Give your child the opportunity to have calm times during the day, doing activities that encourage slowness and carefulness e.g. drawing, painting, model building, sharing a book together,
- If you know that your child has a busy time coming up then increase the number of calm activities and make their bedtime earlier.
- Avoid having a hectic family routine.

### Consistency and behaviour

Children with a stammer particularly benefit from consistent routines during the day. If a child doesn't know what is going to happen next or how a person is going to react they can become anxious and the stammer may increase.

### What you can do to help

- Try to have consistent ideas and actions with regard to discipline in the family. This again helps the child to know how people will respond to his behaviour
- Be clear about your expectations and give your child realistic and small goals, e.g. 'Sit down quietly for a few minutes' rather than 'be good'.

Further information can be found on the website for the British Stammering Association ([www.stamma.org](http://www.stamma.org))