

“What I Wish Parents Knew”

We asked adults who stutter what might have made them feel more supported growing up.
This is what they shared.

WHAT IS LESS HELPFUL?

- Praising fluency. Instead, praise the content of their communication (e.g. “wow that was a funny story”).
- Talking for or over your child. Instead, give them time and space to say their words themselves.
- Reminding them to use a speech strategy or technique. There is time to work on speech (if that is desired), and it may not be when your child wants to communicate freely, spontaneously, and joyfully.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD?

- Listen to what your child is saying, not how the words come out.
- Try to keep natural eye contact while your child stutters.
- Love and accept your child for who they are regardless of how they talk. The way you react will greatly impact how a child views their own stutter and self-esteem.
- Encourage your child to say all that they want to say. Encourage your child who stutters not to avoid saying specific words or other strategies to work around their stuttering, as that only makes talking more difficult and increases fear.
- Ask questions and talk to your child about stuttering. This may be new for them too. This helps to create a culture of openness so that they feel safe sharing how they feel.
- Find a community of people who stutter so your child feels supported and connected with those who understand stuttering. These meetings and activities are often in-person but also online.
- At the end of the day, listen to your child. They have dreams, they have ideas, they have stories. Appreciate them and encourage them to tell them. Communication is a beautiful thing!

