



# Communication Connection

Update: Issues pertaining to Communication Disorders

## A Checklist Of Stuttering And Normal Dysfluency

Between the ages of two and four the bulk of a child's speech and language development is complete. Also, at this time, speech fluency skills are developing. Fluency is smooth and effortless speech. As children develop there may be a disruption in fluency skills due to the complex language being established.

That is, as the child's sentences become longer and more complex, he may use sound and word repetitions, interject sounds like "ah" and pause frequently. These are dysfluencies. Determining when these are a part of the child's normal development or signs of stuttering may be difficult.

The following checklist is provided to determine whether a child's fluency is normal or a problem. The presence of one to two of the stuttering characteristics suggests the need for further evaluation by a licensed Speech and Language Pathologist.

### Stuttering Characteristics

Two dysfluencies or more per 100 words (2% or greater).

Repeats initial sound or syllable of words ("M, M, M, My")

Prolong sound ("MMMy name) generally accompanied with struggle behavior.

Gaps if stoppages of speech within words ("My (pause) name is Paul").

Physical signs of struggling behavior during speaking situations.

Appears to avoid certain communicative situations (i.e. talking on the telephone).

### Normal Fluent Speech

Less than two dysfluencies per 100 words (less than 2%).

Repeats words or phrases (My name, My name).

Generally, does not prolong sounds.

Pauses before words of phrases ("(pause) My name is Paul").

No apparent struggle during dysfluent periods.

Has no anxiety about talking.

\* Please note another important consideration is that a family history of stuttering may contribute to your child's speech being a problem.