**Stammering**

**Tips for parents**

Parents may notice that their child sometimes stammers and at other times speaks fluently. Can you see a pattern to this? When does he seem to be more fluent? For some children this seems to be when they are calm, not rushing and not competing with others. This may be in a one-to-one speaking situation. What do you think helps him to speak more fluently? Your instincts about this are probably right - if you feel he needs to be giving himself more time, or calming down, it is highly likely that these things would help.

You may have noticed that his speech is less fluent when he is excited or in a hurry, when he is trying to explain something complicated, when he is tired or ill or when normal routines have changed. Again, following your instincts about how to help him is usually the best approach. If you think he needs to get more sleep, get back into a routine or stop rushing around, then making changes in these areas may help his speech.

Think about what you already know about your child and what seems to affect his fluency and try making a few changes that you think might be helpful.

Here are a few general ideas which you may wish to consider:

Having a short (5 minutes) one-to-one time with your child on a regular basis, when you are both calm and not in a rush and you are not likely to be interrupted

Thinking about your child's general well-being, his sleeping and eating habits, his health and his pace of life

Looking at your family's conversations - are you letting each other finish what you want to say? Is anybody hogging all the talking time? Do you interrupt each other when trying to speak?

Building your child's confidence by focusing on what he is doing well and praising him for this

Thinking about your child's language and whether he is trying to use sophisticated words and sentences to express himself. What kind of language are people using when they talk to him?