



# THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION®

A Nonprofit Organization

FALL 2015

Since 1947 ... Helping Those Who Stutter

## RESEARCH CORNER

### Evidence-Based Practice

## When It's Time to Stop & Think

By Nan Ratner, Ed.D.  
University of Maryland,  
College Park



Years ago, a distressed clinician approached a distinguished fluency expert while we were having a conversation, seeking advice. "I have had a child on Step X of the Monterey Fluency Program for over two years! What can I do?" My colleague, memorably, cocked his head and responded – "Something else???"

I have used this comment many times over the years to make the point that evidence-based practice is grounded, inescapably, in group numbers, not individual outcomes.



Nan Ratner, Ed.D.

It is really difficult in any field to find that a well-documented intervention works for all people equally well, or at all.

That is why many simpler models of EBP, such as the famous diagram that places Best Evidence, Clinician Expertise and Client Values in complementary and overlapping distribution are best viewed as a starting point, rather than a complete model for therapeutic action.

What happens if the client doesn't respond in the same way as the majority of clients/patients in the published studies?

This thought was brought to

*Continued on page 10*

## Reaching Out to the World

### 32 Countries Represented at IFA's World Congress

Lisbon, Portugal, is one of the oldest cities in the world. But this summer it was also the location for discussing some of the newest research on stuttering.

The International Fluency Association's 8th World Congress on Fluency Disorders was held in July in Lisbon. The event, which also marked the 25th anniversary of the organization, drew participants from 32 countries.

The Stuttering Foundation co-sponsored the pre-conference, which included topics such as *How to Work with Preschool Children* presented by Marie-Christine Franken and Ellen Laroes, *Basic Skills in Working with a School-Aged Child with a Fluency Disorder* by Elaine Kelman, and *Management of Stuttering with Adolescents and Adults* with Walt Manning.

During the main conference, keynote speakers included Ken St. Louis, Per Alm, Michael P.

More photos from the World Congress are on pages 2 and 3.

Boyle, David Ward, and Kate Watkins. This year's theme was *Embracing Our Differences, Sharing Perspectives on Stuttering and Cluttering*.

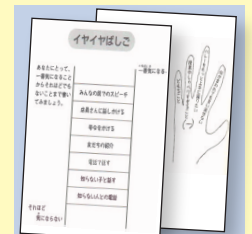
The Stuttering Foundation was represented by Jane Fraser and board member, Celia Gruss.



## Popular Workbook Now in Japanese

The seminal workbook, *The School-Age Child Who Stutters: Working Effectively with Attitudes and Emotions*, is now available in Japanese.

We thank Dr. Taiko Nagasawa for her work in completing this outstanding translation to help school-age children in Japan.





*Thanks to Jaqueline Carmona and Tom Weidig for these photos!*



# The International Fluency Association's World Congress on Fluency Disorders Lisbon, Portugal



## NEW YORK CITY GALA

# Stuttering Foundation Honors Entrepreneurs

To celebrate Stuttering Awareness Week in May, the Stuttering Foundation honored two entrepreneurs for their contributions to the stuttering community during its gala in New York City.

In a reception at The Lotos Club, Foundation president Jane Fraser noted, "Finding meaningful employment can be one of the hardest endeavors those who stutter face during their lifetime. For some, starting or running a successful business is both a personal triumph and a necessity. Our speakers tonight shared their achievements, motivated us and challenged us all to do more."

Those honored were Nick Weaver, COO and co-founder of Blue Delta Jeans Co., and Laura Shinall, president of Syndicate Sales, Inc., and her son, Mac Wilson.

"Our honorees provided us with an intimate look into their own personal experiences with stuttering and those of their loved ones. They've inspired us with both their hard work and their humanity," said Fraser. "As they have demonstrated, actions speak so much louder than words."

Weaver spoke about succeeding in business, said how he uses humor in communication, shared how stuttering is just one part of who he is, and discussed how stuttering can be an advantage in business. He is a role model, an entrepreneur, an app developer, a husband, a father, and a person who stutters.

Shinall discussed entrepreneurship, mentoring, and job interviews.

Stuttering, she said, can be an additional hurdle to overcome during a job interview.

She encouraged those who stutter to "hire yourself" and become entrepreneurs.

She also encouraged others to form a network so those who stutter could link up with those in the business community. To help Laura achieve her goal, contact her at [ldshinall@syndicatesales.com](mailto:ldshinall@syndicatesales.com).

Presentations from the gala can be viewed on The Stuttering Foundation's YouTube Channel, [www.YouTube.com/StutteringFdn](http://www.YouTube.com/StutteringFdn).



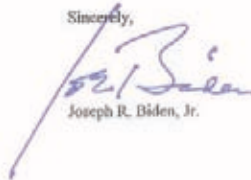
Mac Wilson (from left), Nick Weaver, Jane Fraser, and Laura Shinall at the Stuttering Awareness Week gala in New York City.

THE VICE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON  
May 3, 2015

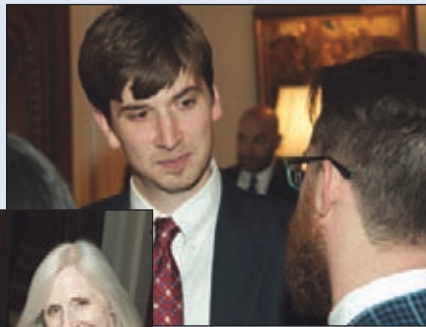
**As you know, I personally understand the terrible fear and frustration of a stutter. My stutter embarrassed me and made me question myself and my abilities daily. But, I was lucky to find love and support through my family.**

**It was constantly reinforced that I was as bright and capable as any of the other kids in my class. In a world where people who stutter are often misunderstood, the Stuttering Foundation ...helps empower them to overcome the challenges presented by stuttering and achieve their greatest goals.**

*-Vice President Joseph Biden*

Sincerely,  
  
Joseph R. Biden, Jr.





*The cast and crew of the upcoming movie, The Huntsman, made a donation to the Stuttering Foundation.*





Northwestern Class of 1993



Northwestern Class of 1991



Northwestern Class of 1988

**1985**

The first two-week workshop for specialists was held at Northwestern University. It was organized and directed by Hugo H. Gregory, Ph.D., in conjunction with Carolyn Gregory, M.A., June Campbell, M.A., and Diane Hill, M.A.



Eastern Workshop Class of 1998



Eastern Workshop Class of 1996

**1996**

Eastern Workshop begins. It was organized and directed by Susan Dietrich, Ph.D., Maureen Tardelli, M.Ed., and Sheryl Gottwald, Ph.D.



Eastern Workshop Class of 2014



Eastern Workshop Class of 2001



Midwestern Workshop



Southern Workshop

**2000**

The Southern Workshops

**1985**

**1996**

**2000**

**2003**



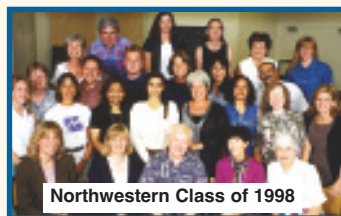
Northwestern Class of 1995



Northwestern Class of 1996



Northwestern Class of 1997



Northwestern Class of 1998



Western Workshop Class of 2000

**2000**

The Western Workshops start. Now there are workshops coast to coast.



Western Workshop



Western Workshop

# 30 Years of Workshops: Spreading the

Malcolm Fraser was a visionary. Drawing upon his experiences as both an entrepreneur and a person who stuttered, he knew that the future of therapy lay squarely in the hands of well trained therapists and that specialty training would be a must.

The fruits of his efforts have helped spread best practices and improved skills across the globe. More than 1,100 clinicians have attended Foundation workshops over the past 30 years.

In 1978, Charles Van Riper, a pioneer in the field of speech therapy, wrote to Malcolm suggesting a “pilot program” be started by the Stuttering Foundation to encourage training speech language pathologists (SLPs) to become specialists in stuttering. He added, “the present preparation (1973) of general practitioners is so prescribed by the American Speech-Language-Hearing

Association that trying to fit in an intensive preparation of stuttering therapy is just about impossible.”

This led to the training of a single therapist, Dr. Carl Dell, who worked as a specialist in the public school system. But Malcolm wanted more — and thanks to the efforts of Dr. Hugo Gregory, he got what he wanted!

Hugo agreed to dedicate two weeks of his summer to create an intensive workshop on stuttering for clinicians. So in 1985, the Stuttering Foundation funded its first ever workshop for a select group of SLPs at Northwestern University. This inaugural workshop treated participants to an in-depth look at stuttering therapy, patient engagement and the latest fluency techniques. Hugo was ably seconded by his therapist wife, Carolyn, as well as expert clinicians June Campbell and Diane Hill.

Thirty years later, the Foundation’s workshop pro-



Top Class of 2009



Iowa Workshop Class of 2003



Mid-Atlantic Workshop Class of 2012



Southern Workshop Class of 2002



Iowa Workshop Class of 2005



Mid-Atlantic Workshop Class of 2010



Top Class of 2000



Iowa Workshop Class of 2007



Mid-Atlantic Workshop Class of 2006

Southern/Midwestern workshops begin.

**2003**  
Iowa Workshop, directed by Patricia Zebrowski, Ph.D., takes place at University of Iowa.

**2006**  
The Mid-Atlantic Workshop begins

**2006**

**2015**



Top Class of 2005

**2006**

Frances Cook and Willie Botterill come on board when the Stuttering Foundation and the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children join forces.



Diana de Grunwald, Willie Botterill and Frances Cook of the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children with Jane Fraser of the Stuttering Foundation.



**2015**

The Stuttering Foundation celebrates 30 years of workshops.

More than **1,100** clinicians from more than **46** countries and all **50** states have graduated from our workshops during the past **30** years.

**“The workshop has changed the way I do therapy with those who stutter! I keep my workshop binder at my office and frequently refer to it for inspiration or a quick reminder.”**

# Word Around the Globe

grams have grown to multiple locations and are still inspiring SLPs to help the global stuttering community. Workshops sponsored by the Foundation have been held in Massachusetts, Washington, Iowa, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Kansas. Those attending have started local programs, founded camps, created organizations, presented at conferences, and served as expert resources for colleagues at school districts and universities.

Clinicians frequently travel from around the world to participate in Foundation workshops. “Our attendees come from places far and wide,” said Stuttering Foundation president Jane Fraser. “We’ve worked with clinicians from Turkey, Croatia, Finland, Peru, France, South Africa, Canada, Estonia, Korea and Thailand to name just a few of the countries. We’ve

also had attendees from all 50 states. Their feedback has been universally consistent. They all tell us that the Foundation’s workshops have been wonderfully transformative, and changed the way they approach their patients who stutter.”

Malcolm Fraser’s vision to use workshops to spread the Foundation’s mission has become a successful reality. “No matter where we travel, we always find a workshopper doing great work and inspiring others,” said Fraser. “We’re just back from the IFA’s World Congress on Fluency Disorders in Lisbon where we met with numerous Workshop leaders and graduates who were presenters and attendees.”

For more information on Stuttering Foundation workshops or to apply to attend an upcoming session, visit [www.StutteringHelp.org/workshop-applications](http://www.StutteringHelp.org/workshop-applications).



## Western Workshop Moves To Forest Grove



Front, from left to right: Maria Pia Coscueta, Voula Constantarakos, Ilkem Ucal. Second row: Jennifer Watson, Jane Fraser, Susan Hamilton, Ellen Reuler. Third row: Hannah Nielsen, Dunya Chirchi, Monica Gonzalez Spurgeon, Melissa Petersen, Melissa Hoffs, Marcy Adler-Bock. Back row: Jean Richards, Melissa Jensen, Christopher Heximer, Rhonda Standage, Jessica Hudson, and Meaghan McLeod.

Once again, Susan Hamilton, Jennifer Watson, and Ellen Reuler conclude that this year's workshop was a success! The three joined forces for this five-day event, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Children and Adolescents Who Stutter*. This year the event moved from Portland to Forest Grove, Oregon and was co-sponsored by Pacific University and the Stuttering Foundation.

This year 15 attendees from nine states and four countries participated in this five-day event, which took place June 9-13 at Pacific University.

The goals for this year's workshop were to help the attendees increase their competence and confidence when treating adolescents and children who stutter. The Presenters agreed that this year's participants were willing to step out of their comfort zones during discussions, role-plays and interactions during client Skype calls. "It takes courage to be vulnerable in front of your peers, but the outcome is increased learning," stated Hamilton.



### Comments from workshopers...



**"I have grown so much in my understanding of and confidence in treating stuttering."**

**"This was such a wonderful learning opportunity and I am going to be more confident and flexible in my therapy."**

**"I am now willing to take on work that I previously wouldn't have, and I consider myself knowledgeable on a topic that I previously didn't."**







Back row: Ruth Bass, Noura Embabi, Kelly Harrington, Amy Sindelar, Sheila Cina, James Burden, Ryan Millager, Christina Lattermann, Chaim Greenberg, Caroline Bedeson. Middle row: Thushanie Jayasuriya, Mirela Pollini Caputo, Anne Dube, Joanne Summer, Bryan Brown, Diana Bennett, Marja-Riitta Tarkiainen, Kara Ross, Aliza Lamdan. Front row: Diane Constantino, Elaine Kelman, Jane Fraser, and Alison Nicholas.



## Eastern Workshop Draws Clinicians Worldwide

The Stuttering Foundation’s Eastern Workshop, *Using Cognitive Approaches with People Who Stutter*, was held from June 22-26 and featured Elaine Kelman and Alison Nicholas of the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children. Co-sponsored by Boston University and hosted by Diane Constantino, this year’s enthusiastic group of participants gathered from Sri Lanka, Finland, Brazil, Canada, and the USA.

This annual workshop provides specific skill training in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Solution Focused Brief Therapy, and Palin Parent-Child Interaction Therapy. “Each year I witness the group transform from wanting to be entirely responsible for the stuttering therapy program – and sometimes feeling the weight of that responsibility, to welcoming true partnership with clients and parents. This means generating conversations that allow clients and parents to lead the clinician in identifying important changes that are needed for better communication skills. This year was no exception. It was a cohesive, light-hearted group; and I think a network of long lasting friendships was formed,” said Constantino.

**“I didn’t expect to enjoy myself while learning so much!”**



### Comments from workshopers...

**“The workshop presented a radically different perspective on the role of parents and therapists. We saw that small changes can have big impacts and that finding what is already working is very empowering.”**



**Stop & Think** *Continued from front page*  
 mind more forcefully this past week with the recent release of a study extending the evidence base for use of a single, popular preschool stuttering program. See page 11 for a summary of this study.

Buried deep in the study details, which showed good promise in use of the program for most clients, was a statistic describing the mean (and range) of time spent to achieve the treatment's desired outcomes. "The average number of weeks of clinic visits to reach the end of Stage 1 was 31.4 (SD = 21.2) and the range was 11 to 96 weeks."

This number stopped me in my tracks. At least one child in this study was treated using a single approach for almost TWO YEARS before showing the program's defined initial treatment goal. It vividly brought my colleague's comments from years ago back to mind.

Whatever we do as professionals, using evidence to guide our practice is a STARTING point, not an end point.

Who among us has not responded to medication or treatment as predicted, or even responded with an opposite (paradoxical) response, e.g., finding that a tranquilizing agent made us sleepless? That is why more nuanced applications of EBP are now urging clinicians to practice the 5 A's:

- Ask (research the question),
- Acquire (find the evidence),
- Appraise (understand how/if it applies to your case),
- Apply (use the treatment) and
- Analyze (see how well it works).

An EBP tutorial from Duke University on this model can be found at <http://sites.duke.edu/ebm-workshop/files/2012/06/evidence-cycle.pdf>.

In the analyze step, there should

be traffic signals. If all goes well, a green light says "keep going" and feel confident using the treatment with more clients. If things are not going well, should one proceed, or "Stop" and think about possible options?

There is no predetermined guide in most professions for when you have been doing something for too long without obvious benefit. Try searching to find it – you won't; it's actually quite frustrating.

It's really not even in most conversations about EBP. But clearly, we all need to think about our personal comfort level, our clinical expertise, in assessing when this point may have been reached. We probably have a different threshold for medications, or treatments for cancer, than we do for fluency therapy, and that may be OK. Some guidance may lie in the published evidence itself: if the treatment selected tends to achieve its goals within roughly 30 weeks, with a standard deviation up to another 20 weeks, then is it reasonable to continue for almost twice this long without considering an alternative treatment?

We know in fields similar to ours that many therapists doggedly pursue treatment that doesn't lead to benefits. Analyses of work in psychology (see Stewart & Chambless, 2008) has revealed that between 10 and 30% of clinical psychologists exceed the average total number of sessions shown by studies to be required to resolve a clinical problem (such as depression or anxiety) before noticing that the client is not progressing as expected.

The American Psychological Association was mindful of this problem in its position statement on Evidence Based Practice (2006): "The applicability of research evidence to a given patient always involves probabilistic inferences. Therefore, ongoing

monitoring of patient progress and adjustment of treatment as needed are essential to EBP."

As with many of the columns the Stuttering Foundation has generously asked me to contribute, I don't have a ready answer to the questions I ask. But I do have a level of personal discomfort with letting evidence of something that works for many clients guide treatment for ALL clients.

Perhaps we as professionals can start a dialogue on this important question. As we start that dialogue, we will also need to appreciate that the next step after identifying a client who is not responding to well-documented therapy is to decide what other choices we have available to us. That is why we should all fervently hope to find evidential support for more good treatment options for our clients, something nicely offered by Franken and her colleagues in her recent study publication, highlighted in this issue.

References:

- Evidence-based practice in psychology. (2006). *American Psychologist*, 61(4), 271-285.  
 Stewart, R. E., & Chambless, D. L. (2008). Treatment failures in private practice: How do psychologists proceed? *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(2), 176-181.

*For those of you who were looking forward to results of our survey on atypical fluency disorder profiles you are seeing in your clinical practice, we have both good news and a teaser: Our survey, still open at [https://umdsurvey.umd.edu/SE/?SID=SV\\_5j7YxjpAOWSj4ln](https://umdsurvey.umd.edu/SE/?SID=SV_5j7YxjpAOWSj4ln) has had almost 200 respondents! (You can still take the survey if you forgot to earlier this summer). Because of the very large number of comments that respondents included, we are working hard to reduce the information to a more usable format, and should be able to share this information with you in the next edition of the Newsletter.*

# The Evidence Is In — One Size Does Not Fit All

*Editor's Note: There are other effective ways to work with preschool children in addition to the two that Dr. Franken describes below. As Dr. Ratner suggests in her front page article, if what you are doing is not helping, stop, think, and make changes.*

*By Marie-Christine Franken, Ph.D.  
Erasmus University Medical  
Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands*

The effectiveness of treatment for young children who stutter is very difficult to assess.

Like all medical conditions, more than one effective approach must be documented since no single treatment is likely to work for all children. The RESTART trial<sup>1</sup> is the only head to head study so far, comparing two treatments for stuttering in pre-school children.

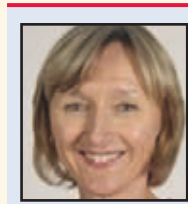
Up until now, only the Lidcombe Program (LP), a direct, behavioral treatment program, has shown efficacy in a Randomized Controlled Trial.<sup>2</sup> Stuttering, however, is a highly complex communication disorder.

This largest treatment outcome study of stuttering children in history, conducted by Erasmus University Medical Center and Erasmus University Rotterdam in The Netherlands, is a powerful demonstration of what thorough steps need to be taken to come to an internationally accepted approach to evaluation of stuttering therapies and their long term effects.

In The Netherlands, treatment based on the Demands and Capacities Model (DCM) has remained the standard stuttering treatment for pre-schoolers since the 1980s. About thirty years ago, Drs. Jeanna and Glyndon Riley, C. Woodruff Starkweather, Edward Conture, and Hugo Gregory visited our country and taught us their treat-

ment approach. The Dutch clinician, Els Versteegh-Vermeij (1917-2007), also inspired many Dutch clinicians to focus on the emotional aspects of stuttering.<sup>3</sup> The approaches of all these professionals can be characterized as indirect DCM treatment. The direct, behavioral LP was introduced in the Netherlands in 2000 by Elisabeth Harrison and is therefore a relatively new treatment approach in The Netherlands.<sup>4</sup> LP treatment is not included in the regular Dutch education of Speech Language Therapists, while DCM treatment is.

Our main research question



Marie-Christine  
Franken, Ph.D.

was to compare the number of children treated by LP and DCM with no stuttering at 18 months after onset of treatment.

Investigating our main research question would require us to include almost 200 young children who stuttered!

Such a large-scale study can only be done in a country where the primary education of clinicians is comparable with many clinicians and parents willing to participate. Also, it was mandatory that all participating clinicians agree on a DCM treatment protocol: DCM treatment can vary widely. Some clinicians practicing DCM treatment give recommendations to parents to talk slowly or to ask fewer questions; many others train parents to reduce motoric, linguistic or emotional demands; and not so many practice a full-blown DCM approach: reducing motoric, linguistic, emotional and cognitive demands, followed by increasing motoric, linguistic, emotional, and cognitive capacities - when deemed necessary.

Before the study started, the group of participating clinicians agreed on a highly structured protocol, called the RESTART DCM method.<sup>5</sup>

Twenty-four clinicians working in private practices throughout the Netherlands participated in this study. All participating clinicians were trained in both approaches. This was a conscious choice, enabling us to study the effectiveness of the two treatments per se, instead of the combination of treatments and clinicians.

The study showed that the RESTART DCM treatment for stuttering is just as effective as the Australian Lidcombe Program — 71.4% versus 75.5% of children with no stuttering at 18 months follow-up — not a statistically significant difference.

While the frequency of stuttering did decrease faster in the first three months in the Lidcombe Treatment group than in the DCM group, at the end of the study (18 months), the two groups showed equivalent outcomes (mean % Syllable Stuttered 1.2 for LP and 1.5 for DCM). This Dutch study not only compared the effectiveness of both therapies for stuttering after 18-month follow-up, doubling the 9-month follow-up for LP trials, but this includes four times as many children (199 versus 54).

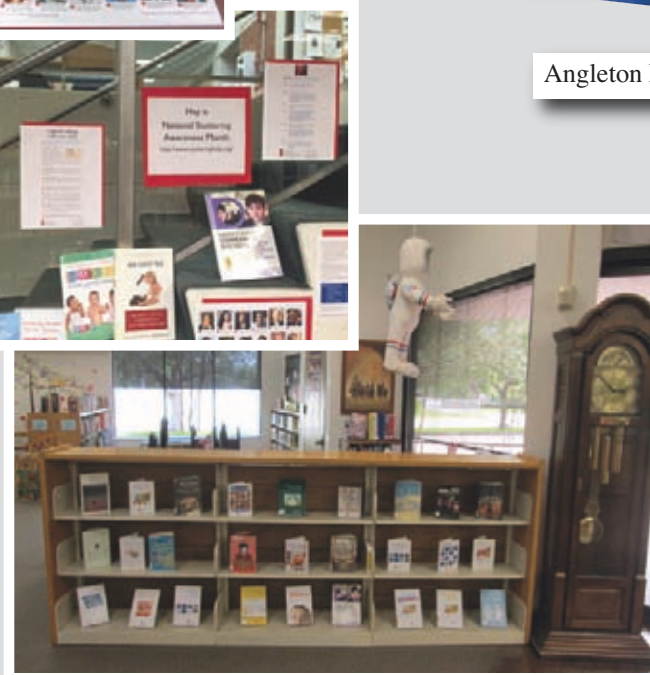
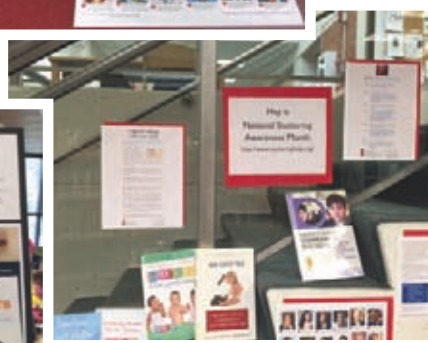
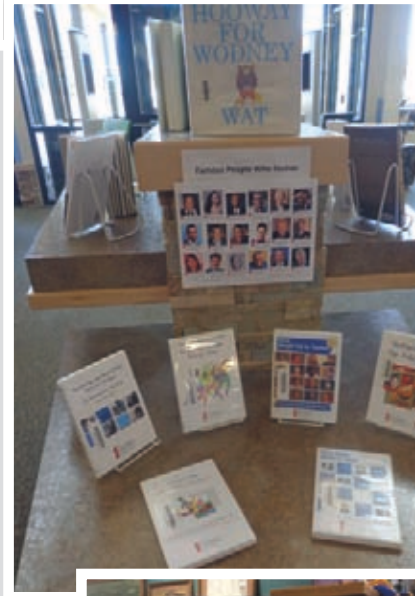
This finding gives HOPE to parents and stuttering children that there are many ways to tackle this disabling condition before it becomes chronic.

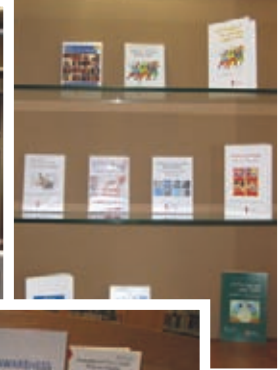
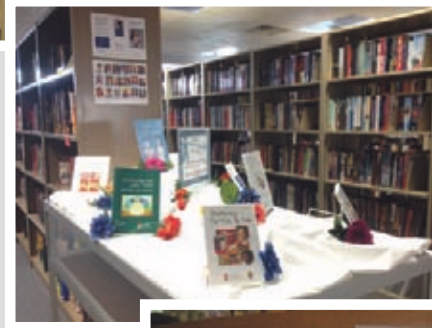
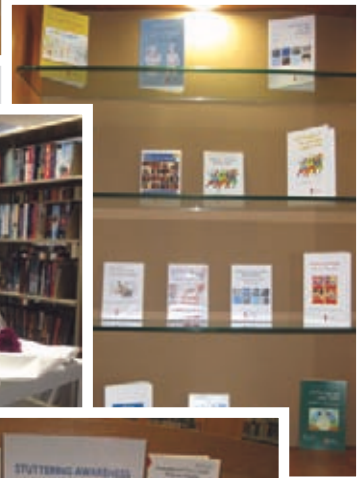
Parents of children who stutter for whom treatment is recommended should be told that two approaches, a direct and indirect one, have been shown to be equally good in the longer term, and allowed to choose a treatment approach that will work for them.

*Continued on page 28*

# ACROSS AMERICA Libraries Put Stuttering Resources on Display

*Editor: These are just the libraries that sent us pictures of their displays for National Stuttering Awareness Week in May. Many other libraries around the country also participated. A huge thank you to all the libraries for helping us spread the word about stuttering.*





Mitchell Branch Library, New Haven, CT

Two Harbors Public Library, Two Harbors, MN

Orland Park, IL

Morrison, IL

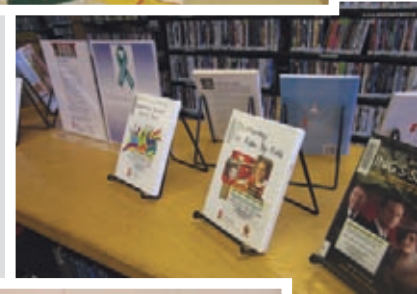
Library, Auburn, IL

Marshall County Memorial Library, Lewisburg, TN

Maxwell Branch Library, Augusta, GA

Theodore Johns Branch Library, Beaumont, TX

Dunedin Public Library, Dunedin, FL



# Dear SFA:

Send letters to:  
 The Stuttering Foundation  
 P.O. Box 11749 • Memphis, TN 38111-0749  
 or e-mail [info@StutteringHelp.org](mailto:info@StutteringHelp.org)

## Strategies Help Me

My name is Amarion. I'm 10 years old and I'm in fifth grade. My favorite sports are football and baseball. My favorite thing to do at home is play games. I started stuttering at 6 or 7 years old. There are other people that stutter in my family, my big brother and cousin too. I stutter the most at night time. I go to speech therapy at school. The strategies that help me are take a deep breath and think before you talk. I hope you have strategies that help you when you stutter too.

*Amarion, 10  
 Milwaukee, WI*

## Speech Therapy Helps

My name is Laila. I live in Milwaukee, WI. I am the middle child in my family. I'm 10 years old, a 5th grader, and I stutter. I started stuttering when I was 4 or 5 years old. I go to speech therapy because the therapist can help me control my stuttering. I usually start stuttering when I'm nervous or excited. One of my steps in speech therapy is to just chill or relax so I can speak what's on my mind. You can use these strategies to help yourself out! If this strategy helps you out, then I'm happy to help! I don't care what people say about my stuttering, as long as I keep it under control.

*Laila, 10  
 Milwaukee, WI*

## Bullies Need to Stop

My name is Jeremiah. I am 10 years old and I stutter. I like to play basketball, football, and the game NBA 2K 13. I like to play



I love reading the stories that other kids have written and sent to SFA. It inspires me to hear other people's stories because when I hear about girls my age who stutter I think they sound just like me. I do not know any girls that stutter that are in my school.

I am writing my own story to send to the Stuttering Foundation and I already gave three letters to my 4th grade teachers about what they can do to help me and what does not help my stuttering in class. I want to become friends with some of the kids that are in the newsletter. Maybe they can help me and I can help them too.

*Wylesia, 10, Cheriton, VA*

with my friends. Their names are James and Elijah. We like to play football together. I started stuttering when I was 2 years old. When I stutter, it makes me feel bad. Sometimes people make fun of me. When I stutter a lot, really a lot, I sometimes cry. When that happens, I remember to take a deep breath. A rubber band also helps me remember to talk easy and slow. To the bullies: please stop making fun of people who stutter because we are the same as you.

*Jeremiah, 10  
 Milwaukee, WI*

## I Hope My Letter Helps

My name is Azajuan. I am in 4th grade. What I like to do at home is watch TV and sometimes play with my big sister and my brother. I stuttered since K5, but then I went to speech therapy. When I am talking I get stuck on words. I take deep breaths and relax. Then, I stop and think what I want to say. If I get stuck on a word it helps when I use easy talking. If you get stuck on a word let it out softly. I hope this letter helps other kids.

*Azajuan, 4th grade  
 Milwaukee, WI*

## I Love Animals

Hi! My name is Abrianna and I am in 3rd grade and I stutter. I love animals, especially dogs, and I love to play with them. I go to Comanche Springs Elementary and my teachers are Ms. S and Mrs. B. My best friend is Grace. I come to speech because I talk so fast that my words get stuck and that makes me stutter. My speech teacher, Ms. S., helps me

not stutter. I am learning to slow down and use fluent speech. Stuttering is frustrating, but it can't stand in my way!

*Abrianna, 8  
 Fort Worth, TX*

## Many Things Can Help

Hi! My name is Adrianna. I am 10 years old and I stutter. I started to stutter when I was born. I said words 5 times and I put the letter 'z' at the beginning of my sentences. I am getting good in speech. I learned that I can stutter on purpose and I learned stretch-





ing. I also use smooth, easy speech. These strategies will make the words come out easier. It is okay to stutter and there are many things that can help you.

*Adrianna, 10  
Kenosha, WI*

### I Love to Play Sports

My name is Anthony and I'm in 5th grade. I'm good at soccer, basketball and football. I really don't know when I started stuttering, but 3rd grade is when I first started speech. At speech I learned a lot of strategies like easy start and go slow. They both help me a lot. Go slow means when you talk you go slow so you don't stutter and it's easier to start a sentence. When you go fast your words will get stuck. I need help sometimes with my words. For example my words get stuck when I go too fast and then I get stuck more and more. That's why my favorite strategy is go slow – it helps me a lot when I remember to do it. Some kids make fun of other kids. If you get made fun of, don't worry about it and walk away. I use all of the strategies and they help me a lot.

*Anthony, 5th grade  
Odenton, MD*

### Stuttering is Another Trait

My name is Austin I am 11 years old. I go to Gray Elementary School. My Speech therapist is Mrs. B. She is the best speech therapist I have ever had. We work on stuff like slow talk and stop and start over. I have lots of fun in there. She even taught me about bilabials. They are p, b, and m. The strategy that helps me the most is the tap out. My parents noticed I first started stuttering at the age of 3. Stuttering does not affect me at all its just one of

my traits that God gave me. My favorite things to do are to play football, baseball, and basketball.

*Austin, 11  
Gray, GA*

### Easy to Talk to Animals

My name is Bodi. I don't like stuttering. I started stuttering when I was in 1st grade. I'm in 3rd grade now and I learned how to take control of my stuttering thanks to my speech teacher, Mrs. B. I have trouble reading out loud, and I don't like it. I'm the odd-one-out in my class. My twin

speech teacher, Mrs. G, helps me a lot. I like to slow down, restart, and talk slowly. Mrs. G knows a lot, and hardly ever stutters at all. When I learned about the speech machine, I started to get the hang of it. Now, I am doing a good job. My goal for speech is to talk slower and not stutter. I have a dream today that one day no one will stutter.

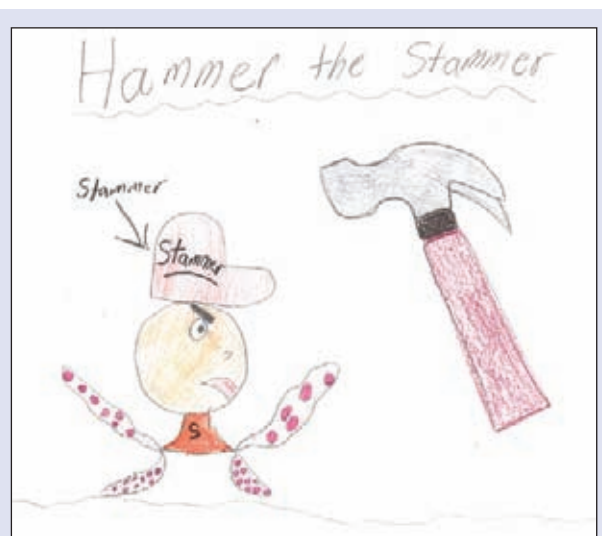
*Cameron, 4th grade  
Odenton, MD*

### “Just Right Porridge”

My name is Dari and I have a stuttering problem. I started doing it at the age of 4, and when I was a baby I could hardly talk. My words would get stuck and my mouth would be open for minutes. My dad's sister said, “Come on and get it out.” But I couldn't and it was hard. I have gone to two speech therapists, Mrs. L. and Ms. Jessica. I have been going since 4th grade and I am in 5th grade now. It has been a year and a couple of months. I achieved all my goals and objectives in speech at school. My mom says I have to maintain my speech at home to finish speech at school. My speech teacher, Ms. Jessica, taught

me some strategies like keep still, make eye contact, and “just right porridge.” I made up “just right porridge” which means don't go too fast or too slow, go just the right speed. I think before I speak, I keep my speech moving, and use forward flowing speech. I feel very happy to just speak freely and not be asked, “What's wrong with your voice?” If you are a person who stutters you shouldn't let people say that you are weird, that there is something wrong with you. Don't listen to them. Just think positive about yourself and remember you are in control of your speech, no one else is.

*Dari, 5th grade  
Dundalk, MD*



*By Alexia, 10, Old Fort, N.C.*

brother, Gunnar, is in my class. He doesn't stutter. Some people make fun of me because I stutter. Some people stick up for me, especially my cousin Jake, my two friends Isaac and Max, and my twin brother Gunnar. It's easy to talk to my cats and my dog, but it's hard to talk to people. I think stuttering is embarrassing.

*Bodi, 3rd grade  
Eveleth, MN*

### I Practice My Speech

My name is Cameron. I am in 4th grade. I stutter a lot. I started stuttering when I started talking. Now I am in speech. I practice saying things as if I am in an emergency. I make my own flashcards, and sometimes I talk fast to see how I am doing. My



My name is Belial and I am 11. I am a kid that stutters. I've been stuttering since I was 3 years old. I go to a stuttering camp called SAY. Some times at camp I go to speech therapy and we talk about our stuttering. In speech I learned that I cannot be silenced because of my stuttering. Camp SAY makes me feel like I am not the only one that stutters.

*Belial, 11, New York, NY*



My name is Austin. I'm 11 years old. I like video games and I stutter. When I stutter, it feels like a bunch of rocks are piling in my throat. When I stutter, people copy me like it's a joke, but I've learned that I'm myself and no one will change that. Ms. Jackie taught me really good strategies like stop, think, do, and light contact.

Here are some tips:

- Stop and think
- Take a deep breath
- Let people remind you about your stuttering

*Austin, 11, Melrose, MA*

## Letters

*Continued from page 15*

### Sports, Stuttering, Strategies

Hi! My name is Dylan and I am 13 years old. I don't know when I started stuttering but it was a long time ago. My stuttering is like basketball. If I miss a shot I stutter and if I make it I have easy and smooth speech. My stuttering is also like football.

I'm the running back and the other team is stuttering. It's a goal for many kids to be good at something they are not good at. If you have a goal to stop stuttering you could use your fluency strategies to accomplish it.

*Dylan, 13*

*Conesville, IA*

### Constant Phonation Works

Hello, my name is Evan and I'm in 5th grade. I like dancing and bowling. I started speech in 2007. I have been working on making my speech better for a long time. People make fun of me because of my speech problem. I try my best to ignore them. Don't say anything mean back because that makes you the bully. When I feel like I might stutter, I think about my strategies and start the sentence again. My favorite speech strategy is constant phonation. It's my favorite because it works best for me. It means go slow, easy start, keep moving, and think first. I'm working toward my goal to be

done with speech before I go to middle school.

*Evan, 5th grade*

*Odenton, MD*

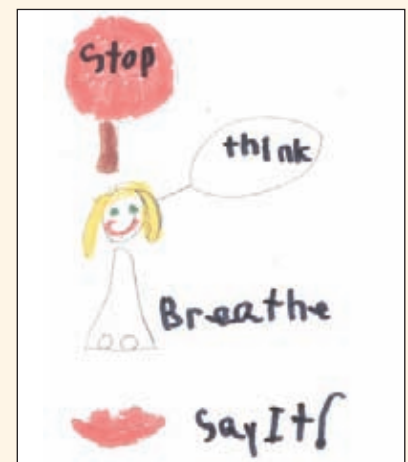
### Practice During Errands

Hello, my name is Gavin and I am 11 years old. I go to a school in California called Blue Oak Elementary (I am in 5th grade). I like playing football and rugby. I started stuttering when I was six and I got a lot better. One of the ways I help my speech is going to errands to drop off folders and talk to the drop off lady – then I come back and say if I was good with my speech. If I stutter I think of a happy place and I slow down and take a little breath, then I talk.

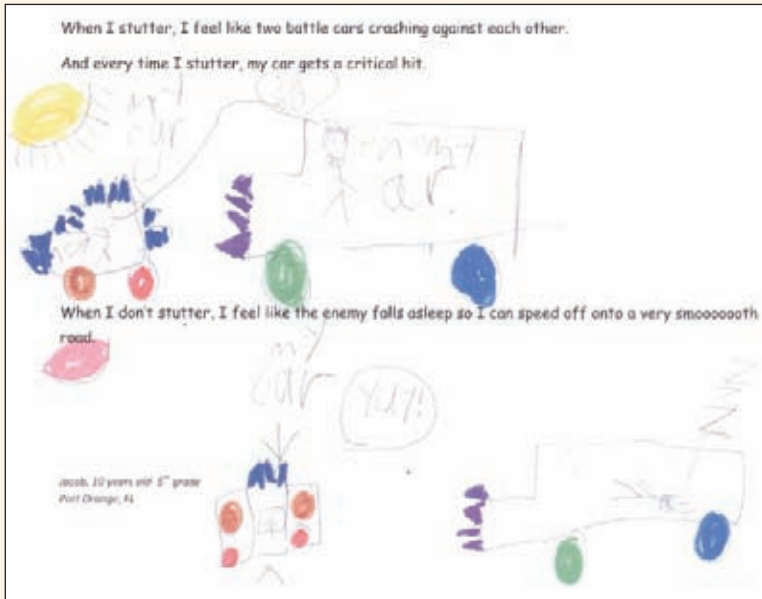
Hi! My name is Kinley and I am 9 years old! I am in the 3rd grade and I attend an elementary school on the Army installation of Fort Jackson, located in South Carolina. Sometimes, I stutter and people do not always understand me! My speech therapist, Dr. A, helps me! She taught me a strategy known as "easy onset." We made an "easy onset" checklist that I keep on my desk to help me remember to:

1. stop/cancel a stuttering moment
  2. think about the word I want to say
  3. breathe
  4. say the word on the air coming out – air first then word
- I like my visual checklist and I like me!

*Kinley, 9, Fort Jackson, SC*







Drawing by Jacob, 10, port Orange, FL



Drawing by Brooke, 8, Old Fort, NC

Also, just be yourself. I hope this is good advice for you.

Gavin, 11  
Cameron Park, CA



Greta, second from left, performs in a play.

### Performance Must Go On

Hi! My name is Greta and I am 12 years old. I have been stuttering most of my life, but the stuttering was the worst when I was 6 years old. I remember not being able to say anything to anyone because I was afraid of being judged. Then I started speech therapy about a year later and gradually got better. I quit speech thinking the stuttering was gone, but it came back when I was in third grade and was worse. I was performing in a school festival and I couldn't say a word and I was in front of so many people. I told myself that I would never perform again because I was so

embarrassed. I started therapy again a couple months later and I learned not to let stuttering change my life, and that I am the only one who can try and help my stuttering. Today I am still in speech therapy and involved in several different theatre programs. I love acting and I want to be an actress when I grow up! I hope you are inspired to follow your dreams and not let stuttering limit you and to never give up, because if you believe you can you're half way there.

Greta, 12  
Denton, TX

### Stuttering Doesn't Stop Me

Hi! My name is Himani. I am 9 years old and am in third grade. I go to Stony Lane Elementary School. I like to spend time with my family and friends and to write. I started to stutter when I was about 3 years old. I started taking therapy since then. When I was in Kindergarten I didn't know any speech strategies and it was hard to get my words out. Now when I stutter I just think of strategies I learned from my speech teacher in speech class. I use these tricks to try to stretch the words out. If you ask me if stutter-

ing bothers me I will say no not at all. I am confident in my speech!

Himani 3rd grade  
Paramus, NJ

### I Stutter in Two Languages

My name is Jhoan and I am 12 years old. I am in the sixth grade at the Mildred Avenue School in Mattapan, MA. I speak Spanish and English. I stutter in English and Spanish too. My favorite sport is basketball. I stutter more when I get excited. Some of the things that help me to not get stuck in some words are to take a deep breath, speak slowly, and use light touches on my lips.

Jhoan, 12  
Dorchester, MA

### "Why Do You Talk Like That?"

Hi, my name is Jose and I live in Houston, Texas. I go to a school called Carroll Elementary and I go to speech therapy because I stutter. I go two times a week to speech therapy. The skills that I use are slow talk, pausing, and relaxing. Every time I stutter I feel like I pause like a 1,000,000,000 times so that's why I talk slow. I don't like it when I meet a new friend because they

*Editor's Note: We attempt to answer every child's letter personally so please include a contact name and postal address for either a parent or the SLP of the child along with your submission to Joan at [info@stutteringhelp.org](mailto:info@stutteringhelp.org). Thank you!*

## Letters

*Continued from page 17*

always ask me "Why do you talk like that?" I get so nervous that I don't even know what to say. But I'm trying to get better at talking right and if you are reading this, think about that.

*Jose, 10*

*Houston, TX*

## OK to Use Strategies

Hi! My name is Malik. I am 10 years old and I stutter. I started to stutter when I was five years old. People at my school made fun of my stuttering. I worked on my speech with my speech therapist and I got better. I use smooth easy speech and it helps me talk slower. I use lots of strategies like pullouts and cancellations. My mom and grandma helped me with my speech by telling me it is okay to start over and use my strategies. I also go to speech groups to have fun with some of my friends who also stutter. We learn that there are a lot of people that stutter and it is okay.

*Malik, 10*

*Kenosha, WI*

## I Love to Dance

My name is Marissa, age 10 and ½ years. I dance at a dance studio in Midlothian. I think that you have to stretch your brain and practice, just like you stretch your body, to get smarter and remember things. When you're at speech

helps me to just ease out of it. Working on my stuttering is like working on my dancing. When I can't get something or I forget a move, I just keep practicing. Don't give up.

*Marissa, 10*

*Midlothian, VA*



Hi, my name is Joseph. I like speech. I'm in first grade. I'm 7. I only stutter a little bit. Like, say I'm at home and I might stutter a little bit. I like pretending to stutter in speech. I like to play with my friends.

*Joseph, 7, Riverside, CA*

because you stutter, you learn speech tools and you have to store things in your mind to remember them later on. Sometimes I can't get the word out - I have a freezing moment. My speech teacher

## Be Confident

My name is Natascia and I am 9 years old. I started having speech class since I was a little kid because I stuttered. Some of the strategies I use are: go slow, project my voice, stretch it out, and be more fluent. Something that's really important to me is to be confident and not to be shy to say things.

You might not realize this but many kids stutter and have speech problems. You are not alone and other people can help you to improve or be better. Before I went to speech class I could barely say a sentence without

stuttering, and now I could go on and on without stopping or having a problem. I have gotten so comfortable with my speech that I was able to talk in front of my whole school and more to give a speech.



My name is Malachi. I am 11-1/2 years old. I hate stuttering because my mom says I sound like a broken record. I get teased sometimes. I get upset and walk away. This is what I like about stuttering. I can get help so I can get better at speaking. I learn lots of things that help me like easy starts. I make friends when I stutter. I stutter a lot when I am trying to communicate with people.

*Malachi, 11-1/2, St. Clair, MN*

A word of advice is you shouldn't be embarrassed of your speech or be shy to talk. Don't worry about if people don't like the way you sound. Keep on getting the help you need and your speech will get better and better.

*Natascia, 4th grade  
Paramus, NJ*

### Just Keep Going

Hi, my name is Nathan. I go to speech with my friend Cullen. I started stuttering in 3rd grade. Now I am in 4th grade. Stuttering has changed my life a lot. Sometimes I get teased, but I try not to let it ever bother me. I gave a survey to my class. All 22 kids agreed that stuttering would not stop them from making friends. The whole time I've stuttered this phrase has kept me going, "Never let stuttering block your path, just keep going."

*Nathan, 10  
Northfield, MN*

### Stuttering Makes Me Special

My name is Rakon, I am 8 years old and I like playing chess. I only stutter sometimes. When I stutter I feel nervous because I think kids will make fun of me but I know stuttering makes me special. Stuttering is when your throat closes and you can't talk. I can practice my 5 strategies. Those are Easy Start, Light Contact, Stretchy Speech, Pullouts, and Cancellations. I usually do cancellations the most to help me not stutter. The 5 kinds of stuttering are Whole Word Repetition, Part Word Repetition, Sound Prolongation, Block, and Phrase Repetition. I do part word repetitions the most. I have learned a lot about stuttering and now you guys should too.

*Rakon, 8  
Lincoln, NE*

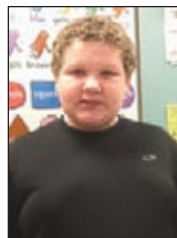


Hi, my name is Madison and I am 7 years old and in the 2nd grade. I stutter a lot in class. And I started to stutter when I was in kindergarten. And one of the strategies I've learned is called easy onset where when you come to a vowel, put a tiny baby 'h' before you say the word. And one of my favorite strategies is called light contact where you lightly say a word with a consonant. And sometimes when I stutter, I feel embarrassed when everyone's watching me, I feel like, "Oh, I should've not stuttered in front of that person." And one way stuttering is good is because that makes everyone different than each other. And it's okay to stutter because everyone's different. Thank you for listening to my letter!

*Madison, 2nd grade, Houston, TX*

### I Want to be a Gym Teacher

My name is Tommy, and I am 8 years old. I am in 2nd grade. My favorite class is gym. I want to be a gym teacher when I grow up. I stutter the most when I am at home or playing with friends. I go to speech at school.



My speech teacher helps me with my stutter. I like reading about athletes that stutter.

*Tommy, 8  
Kingsport, TN*

### Certain Tools Help Me

My name is Carter and I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. Now I live in Plymouth, Mass. I stutter with my S's. There are tools I use to help me with stuttering. I also have a friend that stutters too. My little sister also goes to speech. I am in the 3rd grade and have been working on my stuttering.

*Carter, 3rd grade  
Plymouth, MA*

### Therapy Was Fun

Hi, my name is Patrick, and I am 9 years old. I go to Buffalo Elementary School. It is a good school. I am trying to stop my stuttering. I have gone to Marshall University. I worked with two therapists there. The man was Craig, and the woman was Kristen. They helped me a lot in the summer. It was fun. She helped me with words and saying them, and as we went, we were playing a game. I was always beating her in the games. I have gone to speech for two years at school with Mrs. Laura. We are doing belly breaths, starting over in the sentence, pulling it out, bouncing, easy beginnings. All of this stuff has helped me. The way I

feel when I am stuttering is ok. Sometimes I just keep on stuttering. I just get nervous so I just don't talk a lot that day. Some of the time is at home. If you ever stutter, it is okay. Just practice, you will get better at it.

*Patrick, 9  
Buffalo, WV*

### Have Confidence in Yourself

Hi! My name is Brandon. And just like everyone else I have a problem: stuttering. Stuttering is a thing I have had all my life. And I was always teased and tortured until I spoke out. That is what I want you to do. Stuttering is just your nerves. When I talk I need to calm down and slow down.

Have confidence in yourself. If there is anything I learned in these hardcore months, it is that. That will be the key to your success.

*Brandon, 9  
Chesterfield, VA*

**Letters** *Continued from page 19*

### **I Love Dirt Bikes**

My name is Henry. I am 12 years old and I love to ride dirt bikes. I stutter a lot but I use breathing and I let some air out before I start my words to help me out. The things I notice when I stutter is that my throat tenses up and I run out of air. The feeling I have when I talk to other people I don't know is very nerve racking.

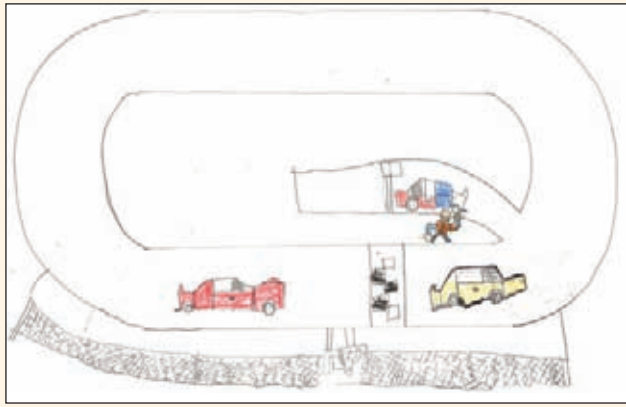
*Henry, 12*

*Hastings, NE*

### **Don't Be Scared**

Hi, my name is Kamire, and I am in 7th grade at Beach Park Middle School in Beach Park, Illinois, and I am a neurological stutterer. Stuttering doesn't stop me from being who I am. I have been stuttering since first grade. I've been working on my easy onsets and making sure I have voice, air, and movement in my speech. I don't stutter all the time. I don't stutter when I sing or when I talk at the same time as other people.

To students who stutter: If you stutter, please do not be scared to tell your friends you stutter. Please do not be scared to com-



My name is Cameron and I am 8 years old. I go to speech because I stutter. I have learned some speech tools to control the stuttering. When I have a block, I squeeze my fist really tight and then I let it go easily. That helps me to get my words out. When I have repetitions, I think of how a football flies through the air, and that helps get the words out easier. We read a story about a race car driver named Kyle who stutters. I thought my speech tools are like a "pit stop" for my stuttering. They give me a chance to fix my speech. We also read a story about a famous soccer player names James. I learned that people who stutter can have any job they want. I want to be a NASCAR driver.

*Cameron, 8, Byers, CO*

municate with others. Please do not be scared to do speeches and projects in front of your classmates because they need to know that you stutter. You need to face your fears. More importantly stuttering isn't your fault. When you talk to people and they know you stutter, they are conditioning you

to stutter more. If you teach them about stuttering they won't condition you as much!

In conclusion, please take my advice: stuttering is just something that some people have - don't let it stop you from being who you want to be in life!

*Kamire, 7th grade*

*Beach Park, IL*

### **I Get Frustrated**

My name is Jeffrey. I am an 11-year-old in 6th grade. I started stuttering the summer of 5th and 6th grade. My stuttering does not bother me that much, but I get frustrated when I can't say a word. My speech therapist is the best speech therapist because she teaches me all the strategies to help, like cancellation, pause, relax, and stretchy speech. All the strategies help me with my speech and I

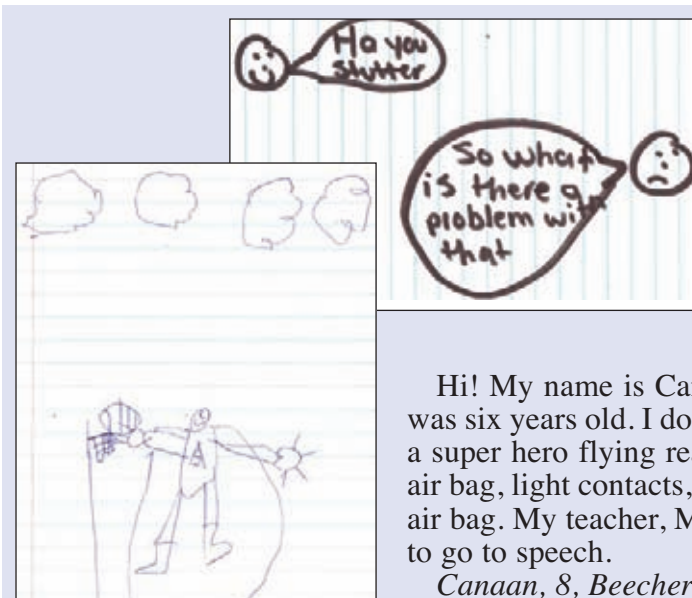
hope it helps other kids.

*Jeffrey, 11*

*Ripon, CA*

### **Just Let Us Speak!**

Our names are Cole and Matt. We are fifth graders at Abraham Pierson School in Clinton,

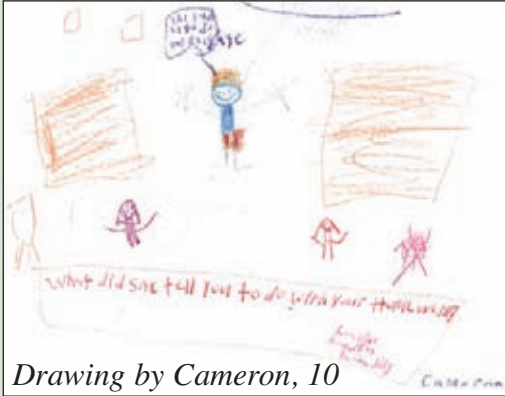


Hi my name is Angel, I'm 11 years old. I have been stuttering since the 1st grade but didn't get help until the 4th grade. Over the years when I wasn't getting help it was hard trying to slow down with my words. At home my mom didn't understand me. Now that I'm in speech my friends and family understand me because in speech I'm learning how to slow down with my words. So if any kid out there stutters it's OK because I do it too.

*Angel, 11, Rockaway Park, NY*

Hi! My name is Canaan. I am eight years old. I started stuttering when I was six years old. I do mostly blocks. I like super heros. My stuttering is like a super hero flying really fast. I started going to speech last year. I learned air bag, light contacts, and forward flowing speech. My favorite technique is air bag. My teacher, Mrs. S. helped me with my speech. Sometimes it is fun to go to speech.

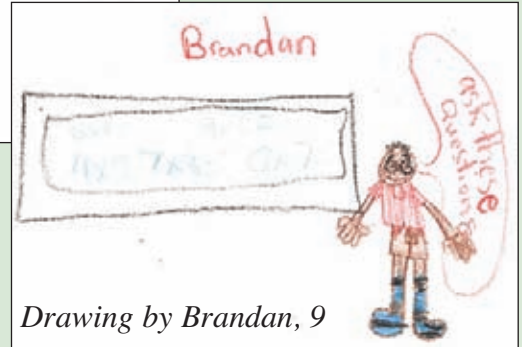
*Canaan, 8, Beecher City, IL*



Drawing by Cameron, 10



Drawing by Kayleen, 7



Drawing by Brandon, 9

Our names are Brandon (9), Kayleen (7), and Cameron (10). We are a group that works on smooth speech. We go to an elementary school in Indianapolis. We like video games and the iPad. We like to play with our siblings. We like to eat pizza.

When we stutter, we say words, syllables, or sounds over and over again. We sometimes repeat ourselves and sometimes we get stuck on a word. When we stutter, we sometimes feel embarrassed or nervous. But other times, we don't care. No one has made fun of us. If you stutter, don't feel bad.

Some strategies we have learned are slowing down when we talk. We also use stretchy speech, which means to make our words longer. We also take a big breath at the beginning of a sentence, we breathe out and talk at the same time, and we say five or six words on one breath. Sometimes we get stuck on a sentence or word and we start over again.

Thank you for reading our letter about stuttering.

Brandon, 9; Kayleen, 7; and Cameron, 10, Indianapolis, IN

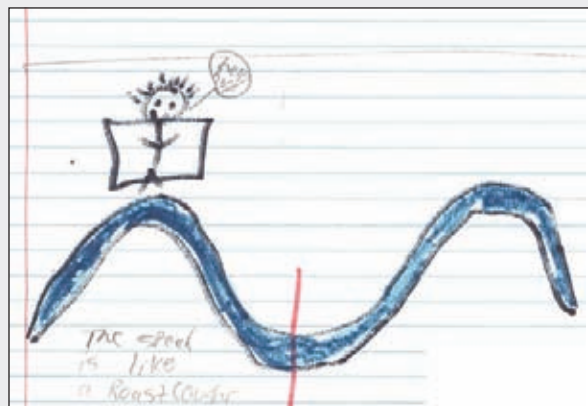
Connecticut. We both go to speech for stuttering. Together, we work on speech targets or strategies to improve our speech fluency such as slow easy speech, light contact, sliding, controlled stuttering, easy onset, breathing and pull-outs. Some things that have helped us are thinking before we speak and using calming strategies. We also try to use our speech targets whenever we can.

This year, we made a presentation to our class about stuttering. After we shared some facts about stuttering, including famous people who stutter, we showed the video, *For Kids, By Kids: All Grown Up* ([available at StutteringHelp.org/store](http://StutteringHelp.org/store)). Our class enjoyed our presentation. We were amazing! We felt good about sharing about stuttering with our classmates. We also made a public service announce-

ment for our whole school about stuttering during morning announcements.

Now we are getting ready to attend middle school as sixth graders. We feel ready to use our speech targets and strategies. People who stutter can be great students. Stuttering makes us no different than other people. Don't make fun of kids who stutter. Just let us speak!

Cole and Matt, 11 years old  
Clinton, CT



Hi! My name is Jerimiah. I am in 4th grade and I stutter. I started stuttering when I was five. People make fun of me. My favorite fluency tools are bouncing and prolongation.

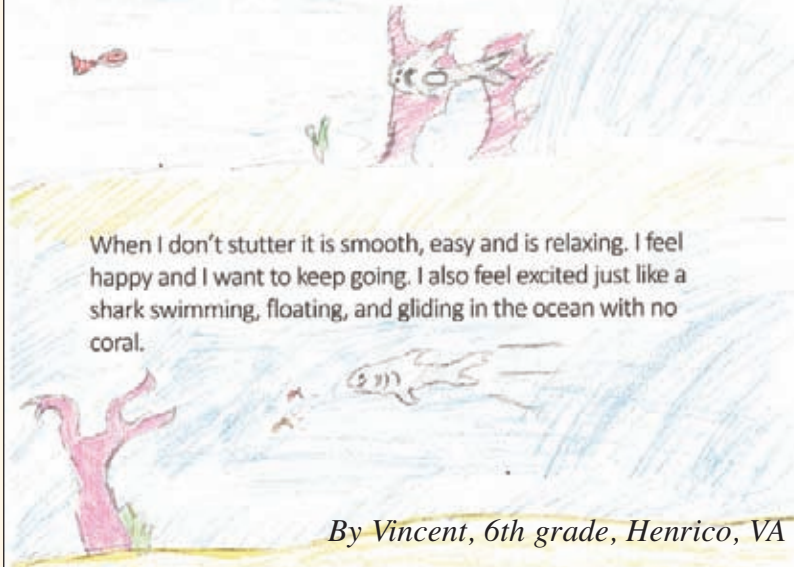
Jerimiah, 10  
New Iberia, LA

### Tortoise Beats the Hare

My name is Kamren. I am in the fourth grade at Live Oak Elementary. I have a lot of stuttering in my speech. When I try to say something, I start saying the part of the words again and again. My speech teacher has taught me to take a deep breath right before I speak and to let it out easy. Also she has taught me when I get ready

## STUTTERING SHARK

Stuttering speech feels like a shark getting stuck in coral. Coral feels hard, rocky, bumpy, it is not smooth but its' rough. My stuttering speech is hard, its' tight, it gets in the way and its' bumpy just like coral. I feel like I want to give up and I feel frustrated just like a shark stuck in coral.



When I don't stutter it is smooth, easy and is relaxing. I feel happy and I want to keep going. I also feel excited just like a shark swimming, floating, and gliding in the ocean with no coral.

By Vincent, 6th grade, Henrico, VA



By Marshall, 9, Prairieville, LA



My name is Howard and I am in the 4th grade.

I can manage stuttering by sliding and using light contact.

I can remember to slow down when I stutter.

I feel okay about my stuttering because I am better at controlling and managing it.

Imagine that there is a bubble in your mouth. Try not to pop it, and it will help your speech be more smooth and less tight.

Howard, 10, Newark, CA

## Letters

Continued from page 21

to stutter, to look at a picture of the tortoise and the hare and think about how the tortoise beat the hare in the race because he was going nice and easy. My speech teacher also taught me when I am reading I can bounce on some of the words. Sometimes I hold my stutter in my hand and let it go. My stuttering doesn't stop me from saying stuff in class. I hope one day a cure can be found for stuttering.

Kamren, 10  
Lafayette, LA

## Bracelet Helped Me

Hi, my name is Mack and I'm 10. I'm in 4th grade and I go to speech at Story School in Milwaukee, WI. I started going to speech in K4 at age 5. I started going to speech because I stutter. To help me with my stuttering, I made bracelets to help me slow down and keep my speech slow. I touched a bead every time I talked. First through third grade, people made fun of me because I stutter. Now, I don't stutter as much because I slow down and think of the ways

that can help me with my speech. So, I stutter a little bit. If you stutter, that doesn't mean you are different from anybody. When I get older, I want to help people who stutter and I want to write kid's books about stuttering.

Mack, 10  
Milwaukee, WI

## I Enjoy Playing Baseball

Hi my name is Anthony. I live on Long Island, NY and I am 10 years old and in the 4th grade. I started stuttering in 2nd grade. It can be very hard at times. I used to stutter

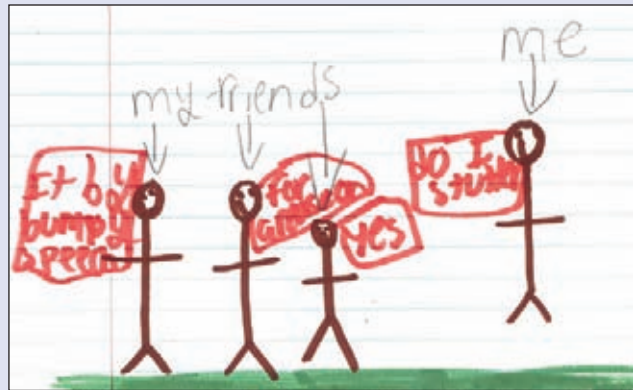


I have been in Speech for 2 years. I stutter and I am learning to say better R words. I love football. When the quarterback throws the football to a wide receiver, I like it when he catches the ball. He makes a touchdown. This is like when I say an easy sentence with no stuttering. When the quarterback throws the ball and it is tipped, the pass is incomplete. This is like when I have bumps in my speech. I need to use my speech tools like the easy start. When the ball is intercepted, this is like when I have a block. I have a list of speech tools that I can use to make me the boss of my speech.

*Sammy, 8, Byers, CO*

My name is Percell and I stutter. I like football. When I talk to my friends I never give up and I always belly breath. I started stuttering at the age of 5 and my dad stutters, too. I go to speech and my therapist helps me use sliding and I also keep moving. And, we don't use filler words.

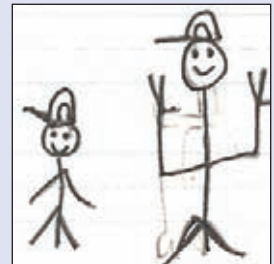
*Percell, 10, New Iberia, LA*



Hi, my name is Adrian. I stutter a lot sometimes, but then my speech teacher says, "Always take a belly breath and have smooth speech and do it slow and not fast."

I like to play wrestling. I have a perfect family because they take good care of me and do anything for me. I have the best brother and we like super heros and we spend so much time together.

*Adrian, 8, Rochester, NY*



"You can't cure stuttering by taking medicine."

*Liam, 7, Worcester, MA*



"Most kids who stutter start by age 5."

a lot but now I don't so much. I like playing baseball and video games on my GameCube. I use easy onset and pausing to help my speech get better. I am getting better at speech. Now it's the end of the year and I am kind of doing better at speech.

*Anthony, 10  
Long Island, NY*

### Baking is Fun

Hi, my name is Asher. I am 6 years old and I like to play Wii. I am saving up for a Wii U. I like to watch TV and play Mario Cart on the Wii. I have a brother Alden

and a sister Aria. I have two parents, a mother and a father, Christine and Will. We all like to sing. I like to bake shell macaroni with my Mom and I like to bake pancakes with my Dad. I have been stuttering since I started to talk. I like to draw on the board when I go to speech. In speech I like to practice bumps on purpose. We make practice videos to send home to Mom. Coming to speech helps me to get comfortable with my bumps.

*Asher, 6  
Haddon Township, NJ*

### Reading Rocks

If you feel upset or challenged because of your stuttering and that you can't do anything, then go to speech therapy.

My name is Andrew and I love reading and playing baseball. I was able to get a big part in the school play with speech therapy. I was very nervous at the play and forgot one small part, but overall, I think I did a pretty good job!

*Andrew, 13  
Owings, MD*

## Letters *Continued from page 23*

Have you ever combined two things in your life to work together? It works. I have combined my wrestling skills and my stuttering difficulties to help me master my stuttering.

My dad said he stuttered when he was a kid. I will be in 5th grade next year. I started stuttering in kindergarten. I didn't go to speech in 1st or 2nd grade. Then I began to go to speech again the middle of 3rd grade and still go.

It all started when my speech teacher and I were trying to find ways to learn about ideas and techniques to help me when I stutter. I am a wrestler and have earned lots of medals and trophies in wrestling tournaments. My speech teacher and I came up with a phrase that relates to my success in wrestling and helps me tackle my stuttering, too. That phrase is, "I can do it! I'll take you down!" Another thing that helped me was a sign that my dad gave me about being a champion. He got it as a gift from a wrestling coach. The sign says, "Champions are made from something they have deep inside them...A Desire...A Dream...A Vision." This is a quote from Muhammad Ali, a very famous boxer. I keep this sign on top of my trophy shelf in my bedroom and read it every day.

Combining my wrestling skills with my stuttering difficulties has helped me feel more confident with my speech.

*A.B., 10, Larned, KS*



My name is Ella and I am in third grade. I am 9 years old. I live in Oak Park, Illinois. I have had trouble pronouncing letters and words. When I was 8 (by then I could pronounce syllables and words), I had a surprising discovery. My tongue was attached too close to my teeth! It caused me to have trouble pronouncing syllables. I also stutter because my mind thinks too fast. I don't have time to say it all before I lose my train of thought. I do everything fast that requires me to use my mind. I read fast, I write fast, I think fast and I speak fast. Stretches and breathing help me to slow down my speaking. Now I don't need to practice as much as before, because I practiced a lot. If you stutter and then practice talking, it will eventually make you not stutter as much. People who stutter or have speech problems aren't different from other people. Many people including rock stars, actors and singers stutter. It doesn't make you different from other people. If you stutter, think about this. Really, stuttering doesn't make you a freak. Many people stutter in their lives. You will eventually get past stuttering.

*Ella, 9, Oak Park, IL*

My name is Evan and I am 10 years old and I live in Oak Park, IL. I stutter when I am excited and sometimes I don't think and I just talk. I go to speech at Lincoln Elementary School. Sometimes, it just helps me slow down and sound nice and smooth.

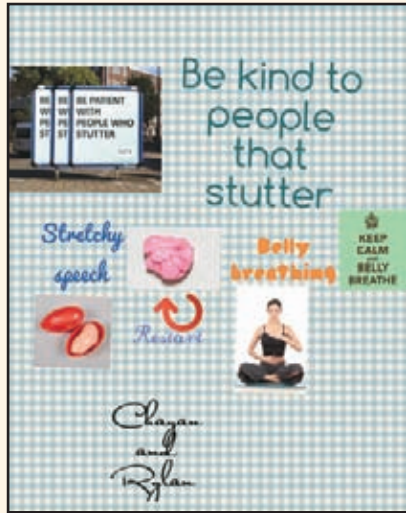
My picture is about a one page comic and different animals or different things talking and they all stutter. One thing says, "Stuttering doesn't matter because everyone stutters."

*Evan, 10, Oak Park, IL*





Hello, we are Rylan and Chayan. We are both 11 years old and going into 6th grade. It all began in third grade, that is when we both started stuttering. We both started going to speech group in third grade. We go to speech class to help our stuttering and to find strategies that can help us. We use belly breathing, start over, talking slowly, and pseudo (purposeful) stuttering as strategies to help us improve our speech. We both like to play games from "Steam." We both like to participate in sports such as track, soccer, and much more. We haven't been teased about stuttering very much, but if someone teased either of us, we would say, "So what if I stutter. I work around it." Thank you for reading our letter.



*Chayan and Rylan, 11 years old, Camarillo, CA*



My name is Aiden and I was the one who wrote the letter last year about baseball and stuttering.

Recently my speech teacher and I talked about the Stuttering Iceberg. We made an ice chunk and floated it in water. Then I drew it on the board. Above the water we listed things that you can see with stuttering. Below the water we listed things you can't see with stuttering (feelings). I think that I would rather have a little more of the stuttering and less of the feelings.

*Aiden, 11, Mechanicsville, VA.*

My name is Chanze. I am a kid who stutters but I have a speech therapist. Her name is Mrs. Emily. She cares about my stuttering, and she wants to help me with my stuttering. Also, she wants me to get better and cheers me up when I am sad. She cheers me up because she is a good friend.

Also, stuttering sometimes makes me feel sad because other kids make fun of me. But sometimes it doesn't bother me at all because I know that they have the problem, I don't. As I get older it will get better and I will remember all the lessons Mrs. Emily taught me. Sometimes I use cancellations or slow, easy speech, starting all over again, and relaxation.

Also, I know that other people stutter too, but that should not stop them from trying to make their dream come true, because it will never stop me. Even though people may pick on you, just know that you are you!

*Chanze, 10, Natchitoches, LA*

**Tick, Tick, Tick...Boom.**

They say it's not that bad. It's barely even noticeable. It's classified as minor, just a minor flaw.

But what is insignificant to them, is a war within myself. They see a single sniper, But I face a full-blown army.

Speaking is a struggle when you have a stutter. My teeth, a battalion. My tongue, a blockade.

Every faltered word is a fresh flesh wound. Each stammered sentence, a ticking grenade. Never truly knowing When it will blow up in my face.

My muscles clench as a bead of sweat escapes down my forehead. I try to force my mouth to cooperate, but it's battling against me.

Bystanders watch as the battle treads on. Unable to help, not knowing how to react.

Eventually, I just stop fighting. Barricaded by my own soldiers gone rogue, I surrender. I stop talking. ....They win.

*Ashlyn, 18, Murrieta, CA*



# Q & A It's Our Turn to Ask the Questions

with Attorney Todd Whatley

**T**odd Whatley is an attorney in Northwest Arkansas who specializes in helping the elderly. He is on the board of directors for the National Elder Law Foundation. Before becoming an attorney, Todd was a physical therapist, which he believes was the perfect initial career for anyone wishing to help the elderly because it gave him great "people skills." Todd began stuttering at a very young age and has worked to manage his speech although he says he still struggles all the time:

**Q:** Do you remember when you first began to stutter?

**A:** I remember as a very young child having difficulty getting words to come out. I would want to say something and the words would just hang there. My dad would try to encourage me to say it and he would get quite aggressive in his forcing me to say stuff. That made it worse. My friends later on in school would say really rude things like "can't you get it out?" "Come on Todd, just say it." Or worst of all, they would mock me. I had very low self-esteem and I think that made my stuttering

worse. Once I got older and somewhat accomplished in my career, my stuttering got much better. However, that was in my twenties. I struggled with stuttering significantly until my 20's.

**Q:** Does it run in your family? Who else stutters?

**A:** No. To my knowledge, I was the only one who did this. Neither of my children stutter.

**Q:** Did you seek treatment? Did it help?

**A:** My mom and my teachers got me into speech therapy at the school. Mrs. Holland. She was awesome! She worked with me during school hours, which was a problem because I was very embarrassed by my stuttering and now I had to miss classes, or recess or whatever to go to speech therapy. People would ask why I was gone and I was very embarrassed to say. However, Mrs. Holland did a great job. She helped



me with slowing down my speech pattern. We sang books that I read. I thought that was stupid until I could read a whole page and not stutter. I was amazed. I use that technique to this day.

**Q:** Tell us about your experience with stuttering as a child.

**A:** It was terrible! Kids and even adults made fun of me. They would mock me and think I was stupid because I could not talk "right." I shut down socially to some extent. I was a nervous kid afraid someone would ask me a question or make me answer in class. However, the absolute paralyzing fear of doing a presentation in front of class still haunts me to this day but when I do a speech to hundreds of professionals, I take that experience and use it to my advantage.

**Q:** Has your stuttering gotten worse or better since you were younger? How?

**A:** Much better. People now do not even know that I stutter until I start talking about it. My stuttering was more of a pause than the repetition of sounds. I did the repetition of sounds plenty but most of the time I would simply freeze and nothing would come out. People who don't know me very well only see the pause.



Q: How did it affect you growing up?

**A: Lots of anxiety and very low self-esteem. I remember thinking pretty much all the time, “Why can’t I talk like them? The words just come out of their mouth so easy.” I was jealous. I wanted to be like them and since I wasn’t, I was inferior.**

Q: How does stuttering affect you as an attorney?

**A: It mostly doesn't. I do presentations, I appear in court. Now, when I meet someone who stutters, it is a disaster! I had an adult client one time that stuttered. We had a very hard time communicating. I do great with my speech until I start talking about stuttering or I try to talk to someone who stutters.**

Q: How is your stuttering today? What do you do to control or manage it, if anything?

**A: It is fantastic. I still struggle with it all the time. However, I use what Mrs. Holland, and my new Speech Therapist, Mary Ann Southern taught me. When I get stuck, I stop, relax my throat and the word comes out. If it doesn't then, I switch to a different word with a different beginning sound. I have always had trouble with “h” words. Why it sticks, I have no idea.**

Q: What are the biggest challenges stuttering has presented to you?

**A: It’s there in my mind and in my throat all the time. Even though few people see it, it is there. It's a mind thing now. I have it under control but please understand, it is still there ALL the time. Sadly to say, you never get over it, or at least, I haven’t.**

Q: What is your greatest accomplishment with regard to stuttering?

**A: That I have it under control. I have been very successful despite that being there.**

Q: Based upon your experiences, what would you like to tell children who stutter?

**A: Go to therapy. Do what the therapist says. Practice. I hope theirs gets better with age and self-confidence like mine did.**

Q: Based upon your experiences, what would you tell parents of children who stutter?

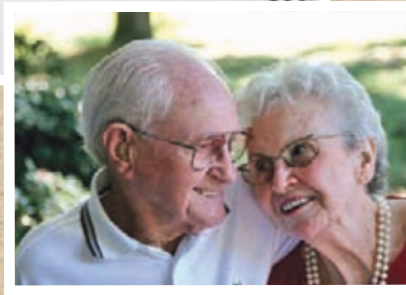
**A: Go to therapy with your kids. Do what the therapist says. Please don't pressure your child when they are struggling. Be there for them. They need someone in their corner who lets them know they are loved and they are awesome even though they have difficulty getting words to come out.**

Q: Anything else to add?

A story, vivid memory, something someone told or taught you about stuttering?

**A: One of my, my mom’s, and (I hope) Mrs. Holland’s proudest moments was when I was an attorney and I gave a presentation in my home town to a fairly large group. It was one of my earliest speeches as an attorney. My mom and Mrs. Holland were there. I did the speech and my mom, with tears in her eyes, sat there and heard me do it with very little difficulty. That was a real pivotal point in both of our lives. Having Mrs. Holland there too was icing on the cake.**

*Do you know someone we should interview for a future newsletter? Please e-mail us at [info@stutteringhelp.org](mailto:info@stutteringhelp.org).*





## Camp Provides Fun and Learning

By Ellen M. Kelly, Ph.D.  
Vanderbilt University

Camp TALKS (Talking And Learning with Kids who Stutter) was held on the Vanderbilt University campus June 1-5. Twenty-four campers ranging in age from 8 to 16, 14 graduate students, and 8 speech-language pathologists (SLPs), tackled daily challenges centered around this year's theme of "Communication, whether you stutter or not!"

Campers became their own "communication detectives," examining the complexities of human communication, speech fluency, stuttering in general, and their own stuttering "styles."

Activities helped campers to explore what they think, feel, and do (or don't do) when they communicate and/or stutter, and then try out some new ways of stepping out of their "comfort zones" to expand their communication repertoires.

Led by the teens, campers surveyed the knowledge and attitudes the general public has about those who stutter and provided verbal suggestions and handouts. Multi-age groups, with the help of graduate students and SLPs, wrote, choreographed, and performed their own skits, showcas-

ing both their acting skills and their communication confidence as many stepped well outside of their comfort zones.

Campers shared their own stories as part of an "In the Spotlight" video they helped create, and tackled teasing and bullying head-on with role-plays and brain-stormed solutions. Bowling, games on the lawn, indoor bizarre relay races, crafts, mindfulness exercises, and lots (and lots) of

food, rounded out the experience and added to the camaraderie and strong friendships forged during camp.

Parents spent the first and last day of camp sharing their children's stories, asking questions, learning from SLPs, and interacting with a panel of adults who shared their own experiences with stuttering and answered a myriad of questions. Parents uniformly commented that meeting the adults gave them hope and the knowledge that their children will be happy, healthy, successful adults, whether they stutter or not!

Camp ended with performances by the campers, shared recollections of special moments, happy tears, shared phone numbers and addresses, and, promised reunions in one year's time, if not sooner.



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### Evidence *Continued from page 11*

Most children will respond to treatment, but for those who are not responsive to a first treatment of choice, it is wonderful that another approach is available, with an overall comparable outcome.

The paucity of these types of studies underscores the desperate need for more work in this area, especially by teams not tied to the development of a specific approach.

1. De Sonnevle-Koedoot de Sonnevle-Koedoot C, Stolk E, Rietveld T, Franken M-C (2015) Direct versus Indirect Treatment for Preschool Children who Stutter: The RESTART Randomized Trial. *PLoS ONE* 10(7):e0133758. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0133758

2. Jones M, Onslow M, Packman A, Williams S, Ormond T, Schwarz I, et al. Randomised controlled trial of the Lidcombe programme of early stuttering intervention. *BMJ (Clinical research ed)* 2005 Sep 24;331(7518):659.

3. In memoriam Els Versteegh-Vermeij. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/18Lmbs-x9T8MGkU9pZxADF4FVIEvZvqOUAD4sjkhpE/edit?pli=1>

4. Onslow M, Packman A, Harrison E. The Lidcombe Program of Early Stuttering Intervention: A Clinician's Guide. Austin, Texas: Pro-ed; 2003.

5. Franken MC, Putker-de Bruijn D. RESTART-DCM Method. Treatment protocol developed within the scope of the ZonMW project Cost-effectiveness of the Demands and Capacities Model based treatment compared to the Lidcombe programme of early stuttering intervention: Randomised trial [Internet]. 2014 [cited 2015, January 10]. Available from: <http://www.nedverstottertherapie.nl/>

## Stuttering

By Dan Pappas

Take responsibility for my life.

Say "yes" more often.

See the sun rather than the clouds.

Make my goals real.

Follow my own advice.

Act as if everything I do will be graded.

Decide to begin now.

Read it again.

Balance thinking and doing.

Realize we all have problems.

Take responsibility for my life.

Say "yes" more often.

See the sun rather than the clouds.

Make my goals real.

Follow my own advice.

Act as if everything I do will be graded.

Decide to begin now.

Read it again.

Balance thinking and doing.

Realize we all have problems.

# General Battled Stuttering

While in the Internet era there has been no shortage of entertainers and other celebrities who are famous people who stutter, prominent figures in U.S. history have also risen above their stuttering to achieve success. Of these many people who stutter who are prominent in American history, two are Cotton Mather, the Puritan leader of colonial America and one of the most prolific writers in American history, and Joshua Chamberlain, a famous Union Army general and hero of the Civil War.

More about Mather in the next newsletter.

Joshua Chamberlain (1828-1914) was born and raised in Brewer, Maine. From an early age, his stuttering was evident and presented a conflict to the young Chamberlain. His mother constantly voiced that she wanted Joshua to

become a preacher while his father encouraged his young son to follow in the line of the many Chamberlains who were military men. The youngster knew at an early age that his speech would be a factor in pursuing either of the two professions.

Entering Bowdoin College in his native Maine, like many people who stutter, Chamberlain relished having fluent speech in foreign languages. Before the end of his college career, he was fluent in nine languages apart from English – Spanish, German, French, Italian, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Hebrew and Syriac. However, his main focus was religious studies as he spent three years in a seminary after college graduation.

To say that the prolific mili-

tary career of General Joshua Chamberlain cannot be summed up in a single paragraph is an understatement. As a colonel, his amazing performance at the Battle of Gettysburg in the Civil War put him on the fast track towards the rank of Brigadier General. He was involved in 20 battles, cited for bravery numerous times, was wounded four



times, and was famous for having six horses shot dead under him. After his brilliant military career, Chamberlain would return to his native Maine to serve four one-year terms as governor, and then returned to his alma mater Bowdoin College to serve as the school's president for twelve years.

*Conceived in Liberty: Joshua Chamberlain, William Oates and the American Civil War*, a 1997 book by Mark Perry, describes Chamberlain's speech and its impact, "Chamberlain's stammer was more than a worrisome problem: left unsolved, it would have an enormous impact on his life – and on his mother's dream that he become a minister."

It continued, "While the problem undoubtedly focused the

young Chamberlain on the written word (and helped to focus his attention on scholarship), the stammer was a constant worry that no one in the family knew how to solve. As Chamberlain's efforts at communication became increasingly difficult, and sometimes embarrassing, he spoke as little as possible and spent more and more of his free time in isolation."

While a student at Bowdoin College, the young Chamberlain finally decided to apply the same attention overcoming his stuttering as he did to his studies. Perry's book states, "The speech problem loomed over everything in Chamberlain's life, interfering with his scholarly recitations, his personal life, and his stillborn friendships."

Finally, he sought out help from Alpheus Packard, Bowdoin's pro-

fessor of ancient languages and a self-styled speech correctionist of sorts. "Under Packard's tutelage, Chamberlain taught himself to recognize word hurdles in his speech – and then learned to 'sing' his way through them." With the help of Packard, and the rigorous application of the same principles that helped him pass Greek, Chamberlain slowly mastered his problem, but his speech was never effortless.

To the end of his life his sentences were filled with strange hesitations and irregular rhythms, a habit that some put down to his great erudition."

Later in his life, Chamberlain said his struggles with stuttering "may have reached into the whole of my life."

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The book, *A Boy and A Jaguar*, received the American Library Association's Schneider Family Book Award. The book is written by conservationist Alan Rabinowitz, who is CEO of Panthera and a Stuttering Foundation board member. The story is about a boy who stutters except when he sings or talks to animals.

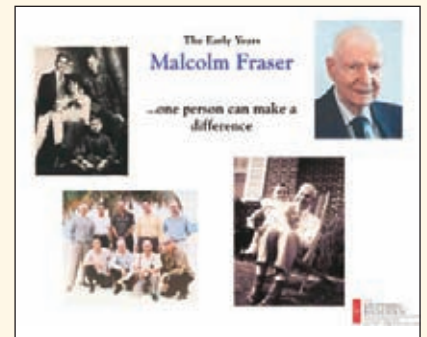


The Stuttering Foundation offers speech-language pathologists the opportunity to earn CEUs online. The courses, developed and led by world-renowned experts in the field, are available at [www.StutteringCEUs.org](http://www.StutteringCEUs.org). These CEUs, which focus 100% on stuttering, can be accessed on a computer and mobile device such as an iPad.

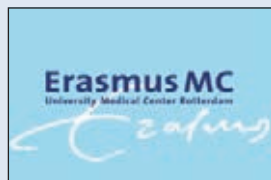


## A Look Back Provides Inspiration for the Future

*Malcolm Fraser: How One Man Made a Difference* is a look back at how the founder of the Stuttering Foundation had success and failures. But with perseverance, he became a very successful businessman and started the world's first and largest nonprofit dedicated to helping those who stutter. To view the PowerPoint presentation, click on "About Us" at [www.StutteringHelp.org](http://www.StutteringHelp.org).



## The workshop *Demands & Capacities Model (RESTART) for Treatment of Pre-school Children Who Stutter*



will take place July 14-16, 2016, at Erasmus University Medical Centre, The Netherlands. It is organized by Marie-Christine Franken, Ph.D. and Ellen Laroes. For more information, e-mail [restartdcm@erasmusmc.nl](mailto:restartdcm@erasmusmc.nl) or visit [www.erasmusmc.nl/kno/restartdcm](http://www.erasmusmc.nl/kno/restartdcm).

## International Stuttering Awareness Day

is Oct. 22. The day is intended to raise public awareness of stuttering, which affects one percent of the world's population.



Volume 23, Issue 3  
 The Stuttering Foundation was founded in 1947 by Malcolm Fraser, 1903-1994

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