



Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders OAFCCD

Stuttering *How You Can Help*

Parents and caregivers can indirectly help a child to produce smooth speech more easily by reducing some of the demands on the child in the following ways:

- ✓ **Speak more slowly, using shorter sentences and a quieter voice** when speaking with the child.
- ✓ **Be a good listener** - attend to what the child is saying, and not how the child is saying it.
- ✓ **Avoid interrupting** the child when she/he is talking and encourage good **turn taking rules** for everyone speaking in the household.
- ✓ **Don't say** "Slow down", "Take a deep breath", or "Think about what you are going to say."
- ✓ When speaking with your child **talk about what you are doing, seeing and feeling** instead of asking questions about what she/he is doing.
- ✓ **Avoid negative reactions** to your child's disfluent speech, including frowning, wincing, widening your eyes, looking away or tensing up.
- ✓ **Praise your child** about how much you enjoy playing or talking with her/him and give lots of positive nonverbal messages, like smiles and hugs.

Source: OAFCCD September 1996