

# Teenagers who stammer

Stammering is the same as stuttering. A stammer affects the fluency of speech and may involve repetitions of sounds (e.g. 'b..b..b..ball'), prolongation of sounds, (e.g. 'SSSSaturday') or blocks where the word is stuck and cannot come out. For some, stammering continues into adulthood.

- Around 8% of children and 1% of adults stammer.
- More males stammer than females.
- Stammering can lead to frustration and anxiety about speaking which can impact on mental health and wellbeing.

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## TOP TIPS

- Everyone's stammer is different and affects them in different ways. People who care about you will want to know how your stammer affects you and how they can help. Although it might be nerve-racking to do so, talking about your stammer with others can be incredibly helpful.
- You are not alone. There is a strong community of people who stammer that you can choose to link up with, e.g. through [www.stamma.org](http://www.stamma.org).
- Many people who stammer have rewarding and successful careers. Watch the British Stammering Association 'Stambassadors' videos online for inspiration.

## RESEARCH

There is lots of research around stammering. We don't know what causes it but there are a number of factors which contribute:

- **Genes** – it may run in the family however this does not make it anyone's 'fault'.
- **Brain differences** – people who stammer tend to use the right side of the brain more and messages are transmitted differently.
- **Speech and language difficulties** – you *may* have other speech and language difficulties or have experienced these in the past.
- **Emotions** – you may find that when you are tired, worried, upset, stressed or talking to specific people in specific situations your stammer is more noticeable.
- **Feedback from others** – how people react to you might affect how fluently you can talk.

For further support and advice try the websites below:

[www.stamma.org](http://www.stamma.org) – the British Stammering Association website.

[https://  
actionforstammeringchildren  
.org/](https://actionforstammeringchildren.org/)

[www.whittington.nhs.uk](http://www.whittington.nhs.uk) – the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering.

It is not your fault that you stammer. Be kind to yourself.