



# THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION®

A Nonprofit Organization

SPRING 2017

Since 1947... Helping Those Who Stutter

SPECIAL EDITION

# KIDS LETTERS

A COLLECTION OF ARTWORK AND LETTERS  
FROM KIDS TO THE SFA

# DEAR SFA:

The Stuttering Foundation has been hearing from kids for over three decades, **receiving more than 600 letters from children every year.**

Press releases, begun in the 1980's, resulted in a tremendous number of articles on stuttering nationwide. When Ann Landers featured the SFA in one of her classic newspaper segments, "Ask Ann Landers", the response from kids was immediate and overwhelming. Additional staff had to be hired to help with the incoming correspondence.

Anne Edwards, a librarian hired to help with the letters, was the first one at the Foundation to draft a response to kids, and it was her idea to have everyone from the office sign the letter. Those letters made an impact; and as time went by, the Foundation continued to hear from more and more children around the world affected by stuttering.

Today, the Foundation purposes to feature kids' letters in each and every newsletter and respond to each child who writes with encouragement, advice, and/or thanks from the SFA team.



Anne Edwards  
in the Stuttering  
Foundation office,  
circa 1986



# I am a Stuttering Hero!

Dear stuttering kids around the world,

Hello, my name is Tristian, I am 8 years old and I am in the third grade at C.C. Pinckney Elementary School on the Army Installation of Fort Jackson!

Do you stutter? That's no big deal! I would like to share with you some stuttering tips that I have found to be helpful! First, I recommend that you find yourself a great speech pathologist! In speech, I have learned that if you get stuck, you need to stop or cancel the stuttering moment. You need to take time to think about what you are trying to say. Take a breath and then say the word on the air coming out.

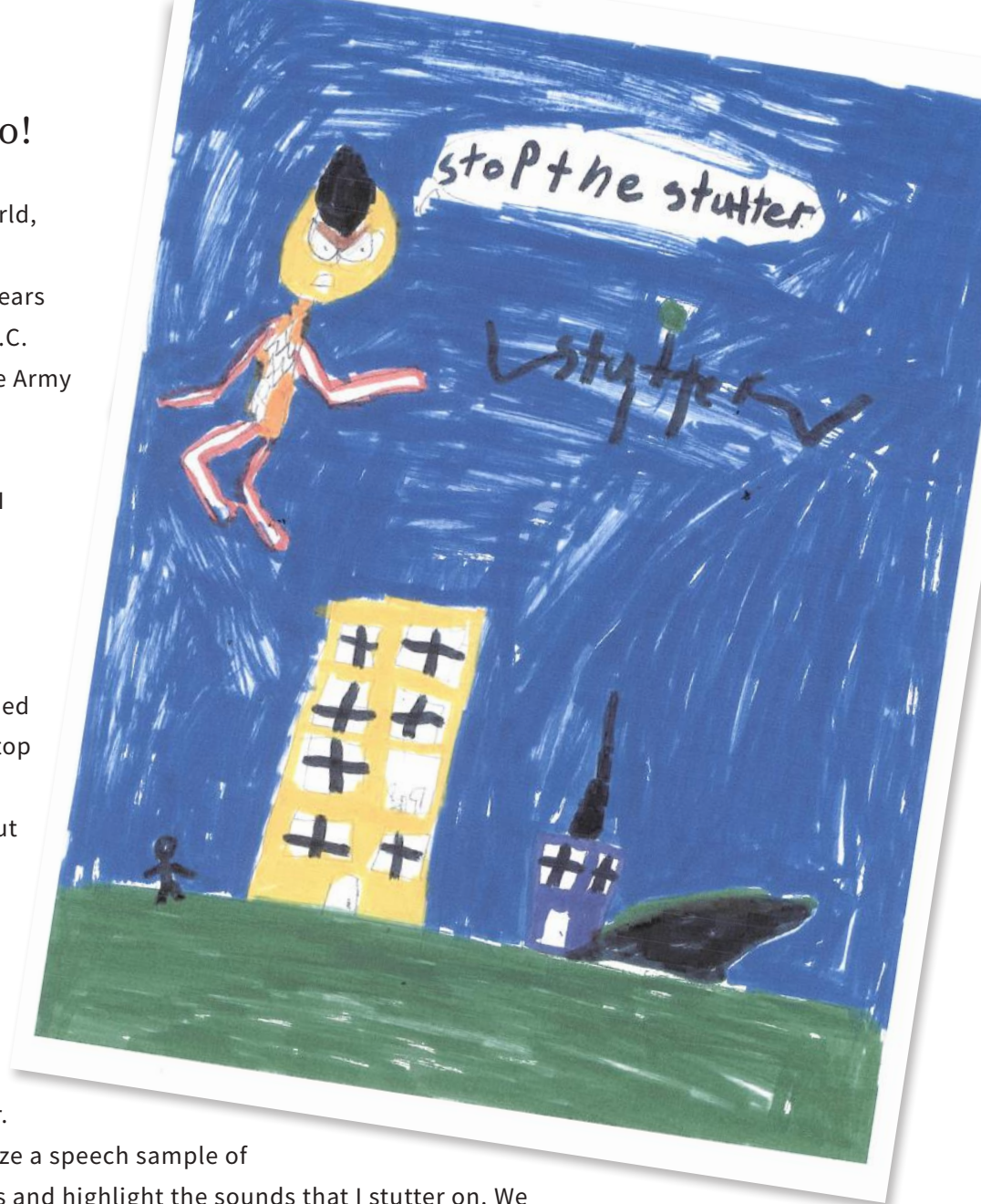
My speech pathologist has helped me think critically about my speech. We problem solve together.

Often time in speech, we will analyze a speech sample of MY words! We go through my words and highlight the sounds that I stutter on. We act like a detective looking for patterns and clues. We found that my most stuttering sounds were: p, b, t, d, k, g, and h. I know that when I get ready to say a word that begins with one of these sounds, I need to activate my easy onset strategies. Yes, my bumpy sounds may change, but IF I know how to be a reflective talker and problem solver, I can be better prepared.

A second thing about my speech that Dr. A and I discovered is that I rush through my sentences! I have learned that using a pacing board can be helpful for monitoring my speech and rate. Sometimes I like to talk way too fast and a pacing board is a visual reminder to slow down. It helps me! My final piece of advice is to know that you are amazing and that everyone is different! If you find that you feel sad or bullied for the way you talk, just remember that everyone is special in their own way!

I'm going to share my speech motto with you; if you like it, you can borrow it! My speech motto is: ***I am a Stuttering Hero!***

Tristian, 8, from Fort Jackson, SC





## Talking Too Fast Mixes Up Words

I'm Trenton! And I'm 8 years old. I started speech therapy when I was 1-1/2 years old. Sometimes I stutter by talking so fast that my words get mixed up and I get stuck. When I get stuck it's like I can't breathe and I can't get the word to come out. I also use something called turtle talk and that is to talk as slow as a turtle walks. There is also a strategy called stretchy speech which means you stretch out the word as you say it. When I stutter I call that bumpy speech. Another strategy is bouncy speech which is saying the word like b-b-b-ball or d-d-d-dog.

Trenton, 8, from Thornton, CO

## You Can Control It

Hello, my name is Aiden and I'm in seventh grade and everyone should know stuttering is not a huge issue, as long as you control it. Once, a kid asked why I stutter so much. I remembered that even Albert Einstein stuttered. Stuttering is not something that can be prevented, but you can still control it.

Aiden, 12  
Chittenango, NY



## I Want to Be a Baker

I'm Yasmin and I am nine years old. I've been in speech for almost two years now. I like to draw, swim, and cook. I am also on a swim team with lots of friends. I am in third grade. My speech teacher is Mrs. S. Some strategies I like to use are stop and start over and easy start. I want to be a baker when I grow up. If you practice your strategies you can get better at them!

Yasmin, 9  
Kannapolis, NC





## I Am OK

Stuttering feels like a brick is smashing my throat. I am OK even when I stutter.

Tanner, 5  
Roseville, CA

# PRACTICE, BUT DON'T WORRY

My name is Aidan and I am 9 years old. I am in third grade. I like to play basketball and soccer. I have a big dog and her name is Birddog. I like to play fetch with her. My strategies are easy onset, pullouts, and think time. My advice is to practice your strategies, and then, don't worry about it.

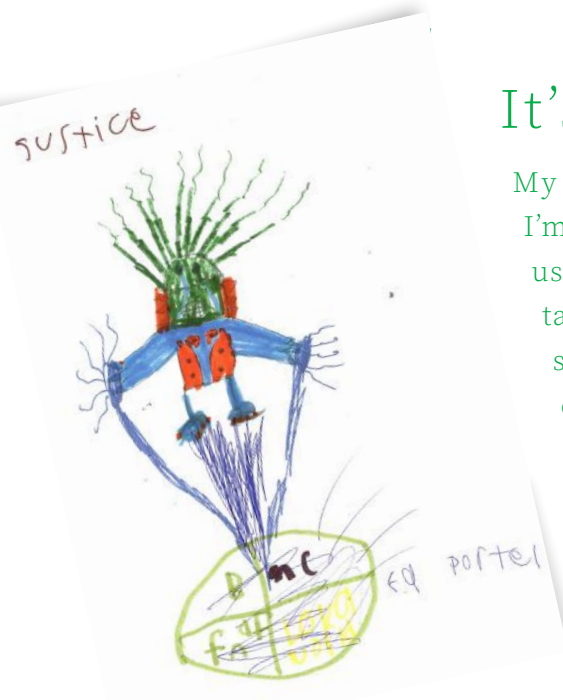
Aidan, 9  
Canal Winchester, OH



## Don't Change – Just Be You

Hi! My name is Taylor. I'm in fourth grade. I have been stuttering since the second grade, and I'm 9 years old now. Stuttering is not a problem. I really like toys and games. I love animals too. I love my family and they help me with my speech. My speech teacher helps me use easy speech. This works for me. Don't listen to what other people think about you because they don't know how you feel. Other people stutter, not just you. Stuttering is a good thing. It is part of who you are. Don't change, just be you. Don't be mad, sad, upset, or stressed. Just be happy about your stuttering.

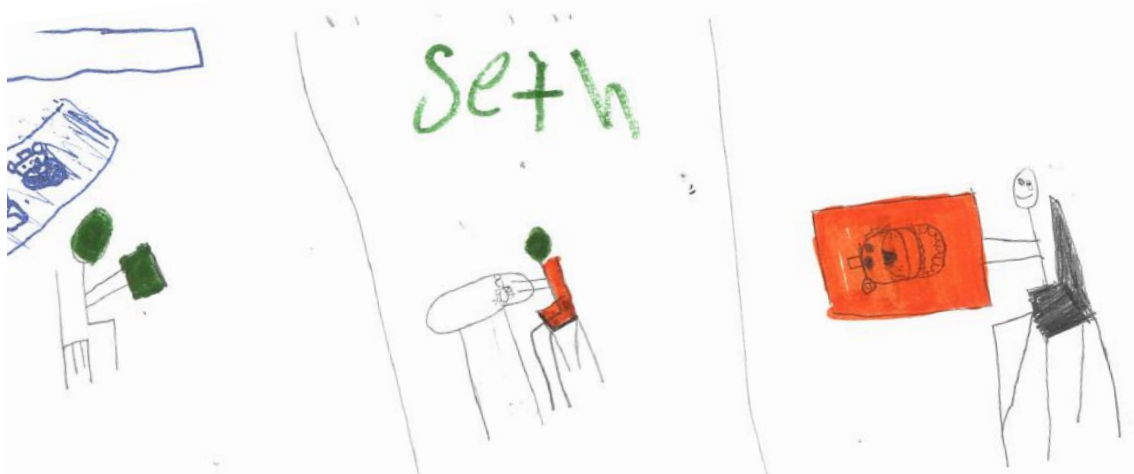
Taylor, 9, from Simpsonville, SC



## It's Just the Way You Are

My name is Justice. I live in Texas, but I'm from Washington, D.C. I'm in third grade and I talk a lot. I stutter and it makes me mad. I used to stutter more. At my school, there's a speech class and they taught me how to slow down and stop and do belly breathing. If you stutter, it's just the way you are. You can learn how to make light contact and use easy starts. The alien in my picture talks like this: "Eeoerrreeeriri" and there are a lot of Rs and he talks super fast. I like aliens and whenever I get mad, I think about aliens.

Justice, 3rd grade, from Austin, TX



## STRETCHY SPEECH HELPS

Hi, my name is Seth. I am in 5th grade. I like to play Five Nights at Freddy's, make sculptures of Five Nights at Freddy's, and draw Five Nights at Freddy's characters. I use stretchy speech. It helps me stretch out a word. I feel really happy when I use smooth speech. When I stutter, I can't get the words out Stuttering makes me feel sad. Playing video games makes me feel better.

Seth, 5th grade, from Austin, TX



## Backbends and Stuttering

Hi, my name is Moriah. I'm 9 years old. I'm in 3rd grade. I am good at backbends. The first time you might mess up, but the second time you might get it right. And messing up on a backbend is just like stuttering. It's like bumpy speech. Smooth speech is like holding a backbend for a long time. That makes me happy. Sometimes I get blocks. I feel happy even when I do bumpy speech because everyone is different. I feel frustrated when I have to get up in front of a bunch of people and talk.

Belly breathing helps me.

Moriah, 9, from Austin, TX

## Try The Best You Are Able

Hello, my name is Joshua, and I am 11 years old. I am in the sixth grade and am homeschooled. I live in Boone, North Carolina, with my two brothers and my mom and dad. I go to speech once every other week.

My speech is pretty fluent, but I do stutter sometimes. My favorite speech strategies are regulated rate, breath groups, stretchy speech, and minimize consonants, maximize vowels. I think that people who stutter should try to the best of their abilities to use their speech strategies and to not be embarrassed by their stuttering.

Joshua, 11, from Boone, NC



## I STOP AND LET IT GO

Hi. My name is Roman. I live in Mount Vernon, Washington, and I go to Jefferson Elementary School. I have a twin brother who stutters too. When I stutter I feel like I'm on a bumpy road. When I try to talk and get stuck on words, I stop and let it go. Then it feels like I'm on a smooth road so I can say words. Also, when I am stuttering I feel like I am a CD player and the CD doesn't work and I go "uh uh uh."

When I use my tools in my toolbox it works for my stuttering. My tools are a slug for slow speech, a cotton ball to remind me to do soft speech, and a rubber band to remind me to stretch out the word and do stretchy speech. I have a red button to push to start over.

Roman, 8, from Mount Vernon, WA

## DO WHAT YOU DO

Hello, my name is Riley. I have a dog named Ella. I started stuttering on and off in the 1st grade. I also do 3 types of dance: ballet, tap, and jazz. Plus I love to downhill ski. Another interesting fact about me is that I am blind. If you get frustrated when you stutter then you should just think, "I do what I do and no one can stop me!" It is okay to "do what you do." I go to

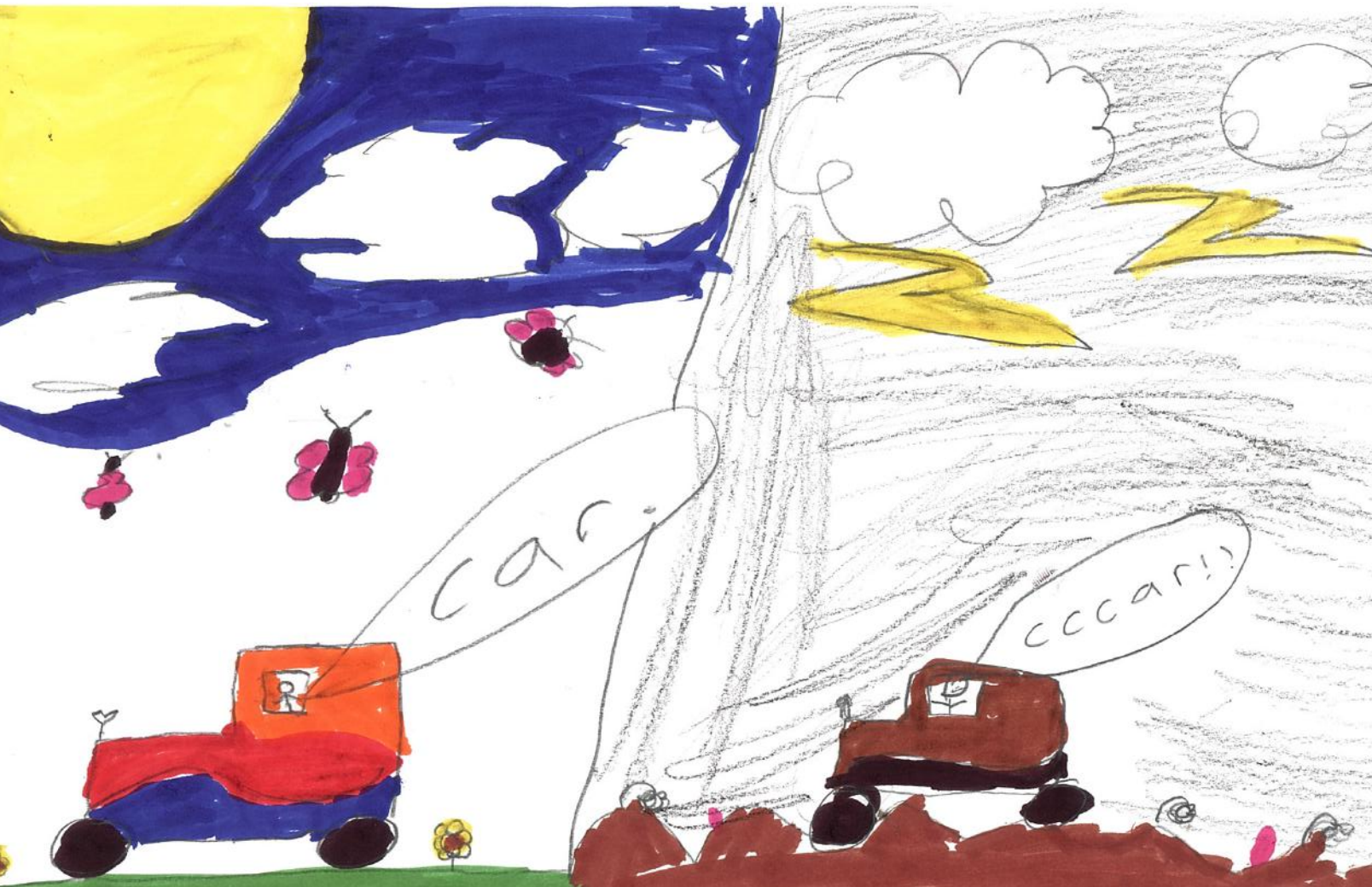
speech and use strategies to help me

and you should too! I get frustrated sometimes, but **I remember my motto and that makes me feel**

**UNSTOPPABLE!!**

Riley, 9

Birch Run, MI







## I Like to Dance

Hi, my name is Saddiq. I am 10 years old and in fourth grade. I have been stuttering since I was in preschool. I like football and my favorite team is the New York Giants. When I was in kindergarten I had two speech therapists, one was in my school and one was outside my school. Sometimes people tell me to hurry up and I say, "No!" Sometimes I pause and relax then say it over again. My new speech teacher, Ms. M., tells me to breathe in and then breathe out and then say it over. I am the only one that stutters in my family. My mom and my aunties tell me to slow down. And, I like to dance!

Saddiq, 10, from Savannah, GA



**IT'S OK TO STUTTER** : Hi! My name is Mitchell. I am 7 years old. I am in 1st grade. I started stuttering in 4K (four-year-old Kindergarten). When I stutter, I repeat parts of words and the whole word. In speech, I have learned many strategies. The one that helps me the most is chunking. I am practicing using chunking while I read aloud and speak in conversation. It's okay to stutter!

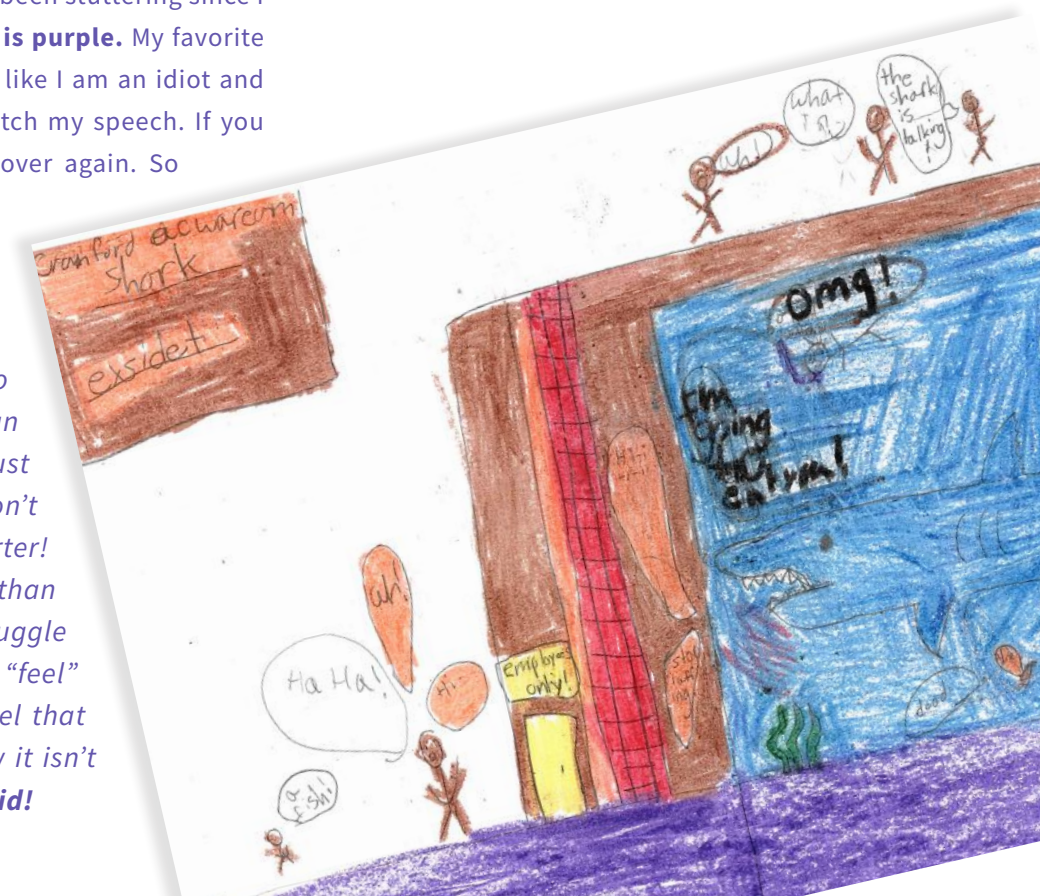
Mitchell, 7, from Mauston, WI

## JUST REPEAT THE WORD

My name is Oliver. I am 8 years old. I've been stuttering since I was in kindergarten. **My favorite color is purple.** My favorite animal is a shark. When I stutter, I feel like I am an idiot and dumb. I use silly putty to help me stretch my speech. If you stutter, then just repeat the word all over again. So that's all I've got for you. Bye!

Oliver, 3rd grade  
Cranford, NJ

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Oliver, stuttering is no indication of being either dumb or an idiot! In fact, people who stutter are just as smart and creative as those who don't stuttering – many times even smarter! However, sometimes being different than others, or having something we struggle with that is so visible, can make us "feel" awkward or dumb. It's normal to feel that way sometimes as long as you know it isn't really true! **You are a super bright kid!***

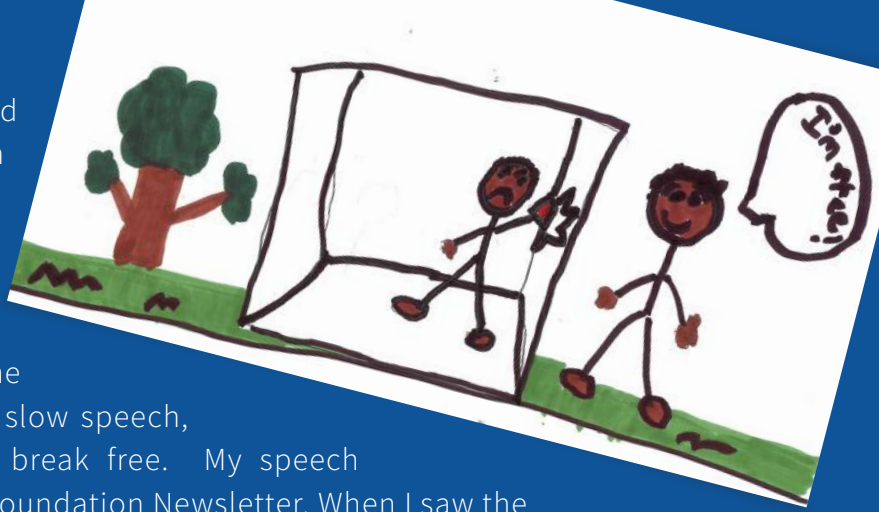




## TRAPPED IN A BOX

Hi. My name is Julian. I am 8 years and I live in Mount Vernon, Washington and go to Jefferson Elementary. I am a twin and my twin brother stutters too. I stutter a lot and when I stutter I feel like I am trapped in a box with no door. I am trying to break down the walls with an axe. When I start using slow speech, soft speech, and stretchy speech, I break free. My speech teacher gave my brother a Stuttering Foundation Newsletter. When I saw the pictures of all the grownups who stutter, I started noticing that I was not the only one who stutters. I felt happy and surprised.

Julian, 8, from Mount Vernon, WA



## REMEMBER TO USE STRATEGIES

This comic strip shows me going to Tae Kwan Do. Sometimes at Tae Kwan Do, I get really nervous to tell everyone my name because I am worried that I might stutter. When I do stutter, I get really mad at myself. These pictures show that instead of getting mad at myself, I can use one of my strategies and then I won't be as nervous next time.

Lily, 8, from Pittsford, NY



## Calm Breathing Helps

Hi, my name is Paul and I am 8 years old. I live in Boston. I have been going to speech for 3 years. My favorite speech tool is to calm breathe. Some ways you can try to stop stuttering is by calm breathing and moving your shoulders in a circle. I like playing hockey and I like to play Minecraft.

Paul, 8, from Boston, MA



## Why Do People Stutter?

My name is Asa and I live in Austin, Texas. I love to sing. I stutter with bumpys. I repeat words and sounds. I started stuttering when I was four. Now I'm seven. I also love animals. I have a hamster, a dog and a cat. My hamster's name is Peanut, my dog is Leroy, and my cat Puppy. I know, I know. A cat named Puppy! My mom named her. I have a mom, dad, and brother who live with me. Lots of people used to make fun of me but I found stuttering therapy. They help me to be a better communicator despite my stutter. I've also gotten to be a great communicator at speech. My speech therapists are really awesome. I want to know why people stutter. Is it just because of breathing in the middle of sounds?

Asa, 7  
Austin, TX



## I Inherited Stuttering

My name is Alice. How I first knew I stuttered was when I went to speech therapy. I have some questions for you. My first question is what is the most common type of stuttering? Another one of my questions is which gender stutters the most – boys or girls? One more question I have for you: is stuttering more common in places where it runs in the family? Stuttering runs in my family. I inherited stuttering from my grandmother. That's how come I stutter.

Alice, 8, from Austin, TX

*Alice and Asa –you both have some very good questions that everyone would like the answers to! If we knew why people stutter, we could probably get rid of stuttering once and for all. No one really knows for sure, but it is likely there are several things going on when we stutter, not just one cause. For some people there is a genetic component – it is in their family makeup, like for you Alice. More boys than girls stutter, but they aren't sure why that is either. And we bet you don't stutter when you sing – most people don't. Singing uses a different area of the brain than speech. There is no "common" type of stuttering other than it is usually repetition of sounds or words. But some people have trouble getting started at all and that is called blocking. Just know that stuttering is not your fault and do the things you can to have smoother speech and then just let it go and don't be worried by it!*





## Methods Help You Pace Your Speech

My Name is Reginald and I am eleven years old. I live in Louisiana. My school is Live Oak Elementary School. I was in kindergarten when I started stuttering. People used to make fun of me when I talked to them. When I was in third grade I started telling the teacher that when I talked to people I stuttered. So my mom put me into speech therapy. The speech therapist taught me ways to control my stuttering. Now I know how to talk to people without stuttering. If you start to stutter, just “pullout” of the stutter or tap your finger for every syllable that you say to help you pace your speech.

Reginald, 11, from Lafayette, LA



## Don't Let it Bother You

Hi! My name is Nora and I am in grade 3 at Howard Elementary. I turned 9 in September. I really like riding my horse, Tootsy. When I was in Kindergarten, I got bullied a little bit, but it didn't happen that much. Then, in first grade I started speech. Having bumps makes me feel like I am at the beach and a wave is crashing over me and I am tumbling down. I have many strategies but my main ones are sliding out and easy speech. If you stutter, I have some advice for you. Maybe try slowing down. That helps me. Sometimes I try planning what I am going to say. So, maybe it will work for you. You should try it! Well, I stutter most of the time at the beginning and middle of words. I think it is okay to stutter, and I think you should not let it bother you!

Nora, 9, from Howard, PA

## Do the Things You Like

Hello, my name is Quinton. I am 10 and in 5th grade and I stutter. I started stuttering when I was in 1st grade and my best strategy is to stop, take a deep breath, and say the word slowly. In 2nd grade kids would say, “Why do you talk like that?” I usually inform them or ignore them. I don't let stuttering bother me. I like to play baseball and I don't let stuttering keep me from playing the game. I think that kids who stutter should not let it keep them from doing what they like. Kids should be able to do things they like without having stuttering affect them.

Quinton, 10  
Chittenango, NY





## Advice Is Very Helpful



Hello, my name is **Mattie**. I live in Ireland. I read some of the letters in your Newsletters and some of the advice was very helpful. So thank you for the information because I am working on my speech.

**Mattie**  
Co. Wexford, Ireland

## STRATEGIES

Hello, my name is Ke'Von and I'm 13 in the 7th grade. I have been stuttering all my life. I don't care what people say about my stuttering. If people are talking, just let it go and don't get upset. My friends know that I stutter and they tell me to use my strategies. Friends and family are sometimes on your side when you are stuttering. It is always good to use your strategies. If you are bullied make sure you tell a teacher or another adult. And if you are stuck on a word use your strategies. My friends that don't go to speech use the strategies I use to get out of a word. Strategies help you in life. Make sure you always use your strategies.

Your stuttering buddy,

Ke'Von, 13  
Woodville, TX

### Slow and Smoooooth

My name is Logan. I am 8. I am in 2nd grade. What I feel about stuttering is nice because I have to learn from my mistakes. I use all the strategies. My strategies are slow, smoooooth, soft, and breathe. My speech teacher is Ms. G.

Logan, 8, from Lithia, FL



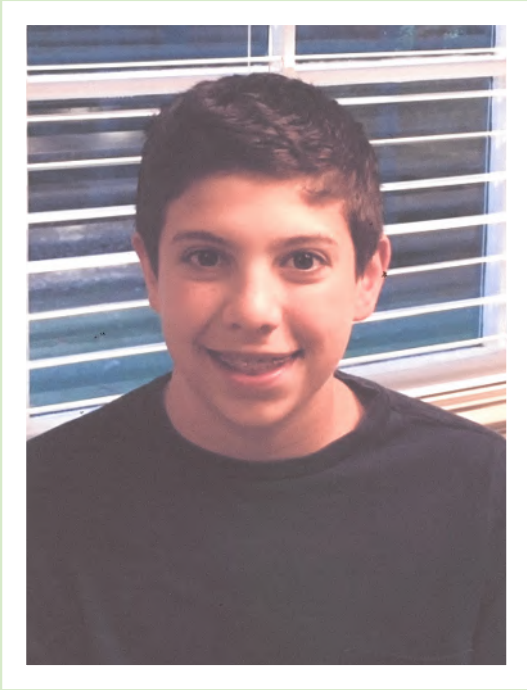
## I Use the Turtle

My name is Michael and I am 9 years old. Sometimes I am embarrassed when I stutter. When I stutter I use the turtle in sign language to help me remember to talk slow.

Michael, 9, from Woodbridge, VA







## Pros and Cons of Strategies by Max, 14, from Potomac, MD

Strategies are used often by people who stutter to help speak without difficulty. But strategies do not always work, especially when someone is being forced to use them. There are many pros to using strategies as well as many cons. Along with pros and cons, there is advice and tips to the use of strategies.

Stuttering can be minimized because of the effects strategies have on your speech. The most obvious good thing to come out of using strategies is the word can come out more easily. Using strategies can reduce the amount of time someone is in a stutter as well as the tension, which helps the word come out smoother. If you

use strategies a ton they can become a habit and you won't have to think about them. Kids would not have to listen to their parents' constant reminders of telling them to use strategies.

Strategies can have a positive effect on someone's speech, but they can also have a negative impact. One way strategies negatively affect one's speech is when they do not work. Strategies do not work one hundred percent of the time and when they fail one may feel embarrassed or self-conscious. Another reason someone would feel self-conscious is if the listener has no clue what you are doing. Also, people may ask why you are altering your speech. This is how strategies can have a negative impact on one's speech.

Having heard about the strategies' pros and cons, there is also advice to using strategies if you choose to. Strategies are great but you do not have to use them all the time. Another piece of advice is to let the other person know that you stutter and tell them about your strategies. You could even demonstrate them so it does not come as a surprise. The strategies one chooses to use can have positive and negative effects on their speech. It is important to not use strategies to just use them but to actually have them make an impact on your speech.



## BELIEVE IN OTHER PEOPLE from Abby, almost 5th grade, Oakland Township, MI

Hi, I'm Abby and I'm almost in 5th grade. I got the idea that what if Rarity stuttered? Would she be bullied like some other people who stutter? I got the idea of My Little Pony from Kimberly. She talked about how her speech gets bumpy and mine does, too, Kimberly. And I also hope, Kimberly, that you never stop BELIEVING in other people. Also, I do stretching with my speech teacher and slowing down and doing the sentence all in one breath. And so I want to know what if Rarity stuttered and got bullied by mean kids like I did once? I'm Abby and I hope you enjoy my letter and picture!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



**Editor's Note:** (Rarity is a unicorn pony and a main character of My Little Pony Friendship is Magic. She is a fashion designer and a seamstress with her own shop, the Carousel Boutique. Kimberly, 10, of Sacramento, CA, wrote to share her letter and drawing in our Fall 2016 Newsletter.) Abby, we think if Rarity stuttered and got bullied that she would stand up for herself and tell others to stop because it hurts her feelings. We think everyone who is bullied for any reason should tell an adult and should tell the person that it isn't nice. It's also a good opportunity to explain that stuttering is a communication difficulty – you know what you want to say, the words just get stuck on the way out. Tell them being patient is kind, and to wait for you to finish. Tell them what you have to say is important! You can tell them you are working on better speech and that no one is perfect!

## Cluttering Is Different Than Stuttering

My name is Anthony. I am a clutterer. Cluttering is a different type of stuttering. That means I talk too fast and sometimes I skip words or repeat words and I don't realize I'm doing it. I am almost 10 years old. I live in Joliet, IL. I have been stuttering since I was 8 years old. I go to Cunningham Elementary School. I am in 4th grade in Mr. K's class. My favorite sports are: football, baseball, soccer, and basketball. My favorite game to play is Minecraft. My tools to help me in speech therapy are: deep breathing, pausing, thinking first, and listening to myself stutter so I can catch the stutter. I like going to speech therapy because it's fun and it helps me out with my stuttering. People used to make fun of me because of my speech and that makes me feel kind of mad and sad. My advice to other kids like me is to not let them bully you because you stutter. Just ignore them and do what you have to do to get better.

Anthony, 4th grade, from Joliet, IL





My name is  
Mason and I  
stutter. Going to  
speech therapy  
is fun. My  
stuttering feels  
like a volcano.

Mason, 8  
Broomfield, CO



## Don't Think About It

My name is Curtis. I am 10 years old. The strategies that help me the most are talking in breath groups, and stretchy speech, and minimizing consonants/ maximizing vowels. If you stutter don't think about it, just say what you want to say and keep practicing. Whenever I am nervous about talking I just take a deep breath then say what I am going to say.

Curtis, 10  
Boone, NC

## BE WHO YOU ARE!

Hello my name is Josiah. I am in the fourth grade at Clinton Elementary School. I like to play basketball, video games and read books. When I was five years old I began stuttering. I now receive speech therapy in school from Ms. B. She has taught me how to use an easy start and pausing and phrasing. An easy start is when you stretch the first sound of the word. I use that quite a bit. I have much better speech now. I have only been teased about four or five times. I found that people tease others when they don't understand stuttering. I even shared what I learned about stuttering from the Stuttering Foundation with my family. My mom says that I am an amazing person, because I play sports, attend church, and read out loud to my class. Stuttering has never stopped me from being who I am.

Josiah, 9, from South Elgin, IL



## FEAR NO MORE

Hi, my name is Carissa. I am 12 years old. I am in 5th grade. I have stuttered for as long as I can remember. Even though I stutter, I'm a really great swimmer. I use pausing, easy starts, and pullouts. I use them when I need to and when I feel like I'm going to stutter. It does not matter what people say or do. It should not change who you are inside. And it is okay when you stutter because it does not matter. Do not change who you are inside for anyone because you're beautiful inside and out. Don't let anyone change who you are because it never changed me. It should never change you.

Carissa, 12  
Pittsburgh, PA

## I Repeat the Last Word



Hello. My name is Carlie. I am 10 years old. I am in the 4th grade. I go to Indian Lake Elementary. I started stuttering when I was three. Every time I stutter, I repeat the last word I say. Every week I go to speech. At first, I thought I wasn't going to stop stuttering, but then I realized it's OK to stutter after learning some strategies. Two strategies I use are taking a breath before I talk and sliding smoothly from word to word.

Carlie, 10, from Hendersonville, TN



## I TAKE MY TIME

Hello, my name is Chris and I'm 12 years old. I have been stuttering my whole life. I have been doing speech at Woodville Middle School in Woodville, TX. Sometimes people pick on me because I stutter. When they do, I know to just ignore them. I play football for the Woodville Eagles. My parents always remind me to take my time. My dad used to stutter too, so basically it is a generation. Now I notice when I stutter. Stuttering didn't make me stop being who I want to be. Don't let your stuttering get inside your head.

Your friend,  
Chris, 12, from Woodville, TX



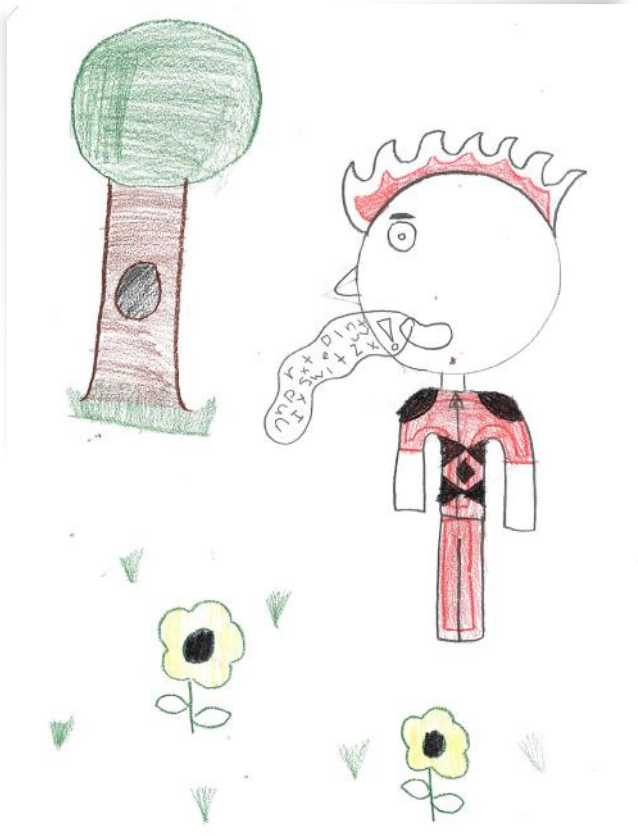




## Words Try to Come Out All at Once

My name is Sebastian. I go to MAS. I'm in 3rd grade. I started stuttering at 5 years old. When I was 6 years old, it got worse. So now I go to a Speech Therapist. I am getting better at controlling it. And now I barely stutter and I have this awesome speech teacher. She helps me when I'm down. Sometimes it feels like a mouth full of words trying to come out at once. I go to speech class because I want to improve my speech. I learned a lot, like prolongation, which is when you stutter and draw the sound out long. My favorite strategy is cancellation because I like to catch myself. Cancellation is when you stutter, but then go back again and fix my saying it easy with a soft beginning. So if somebody makes fun of you, tell the teacher or just don't let them get you down.

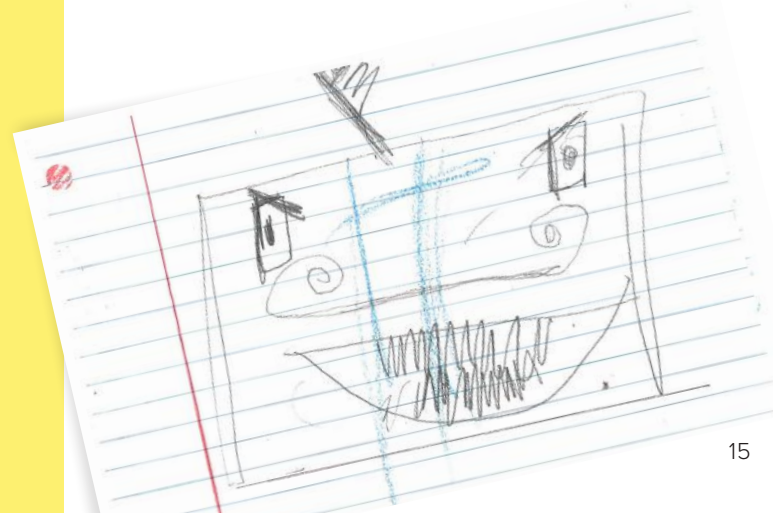
Sebastian, 3rd grade  
Milwaukee, WI



## School is Fun

My name is Josh. I am 8 years old. At speech I feel happy. I am in 2nd grade and I feel happy because school is fun because you get to learn stuff. My strategies are talking smooth. And my speech teacher is Ms. G - I love my speech teacher!

Josh, 8, from Lithia, FL



SAY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

My name is Cooper and I'm in 2nd grade. I like wrestling. Sometimes I stutter because I talk too fast. To help me speak smoothly, I would pause after a few words. This helps me not to stutter. This is what I would say to someone who stutters, "Say what you want to say even if you stutter. You are great." Going to speech helps me not to stutter.

Cooper, 8  
New Market, MD



## “All-Star” with a Goal!

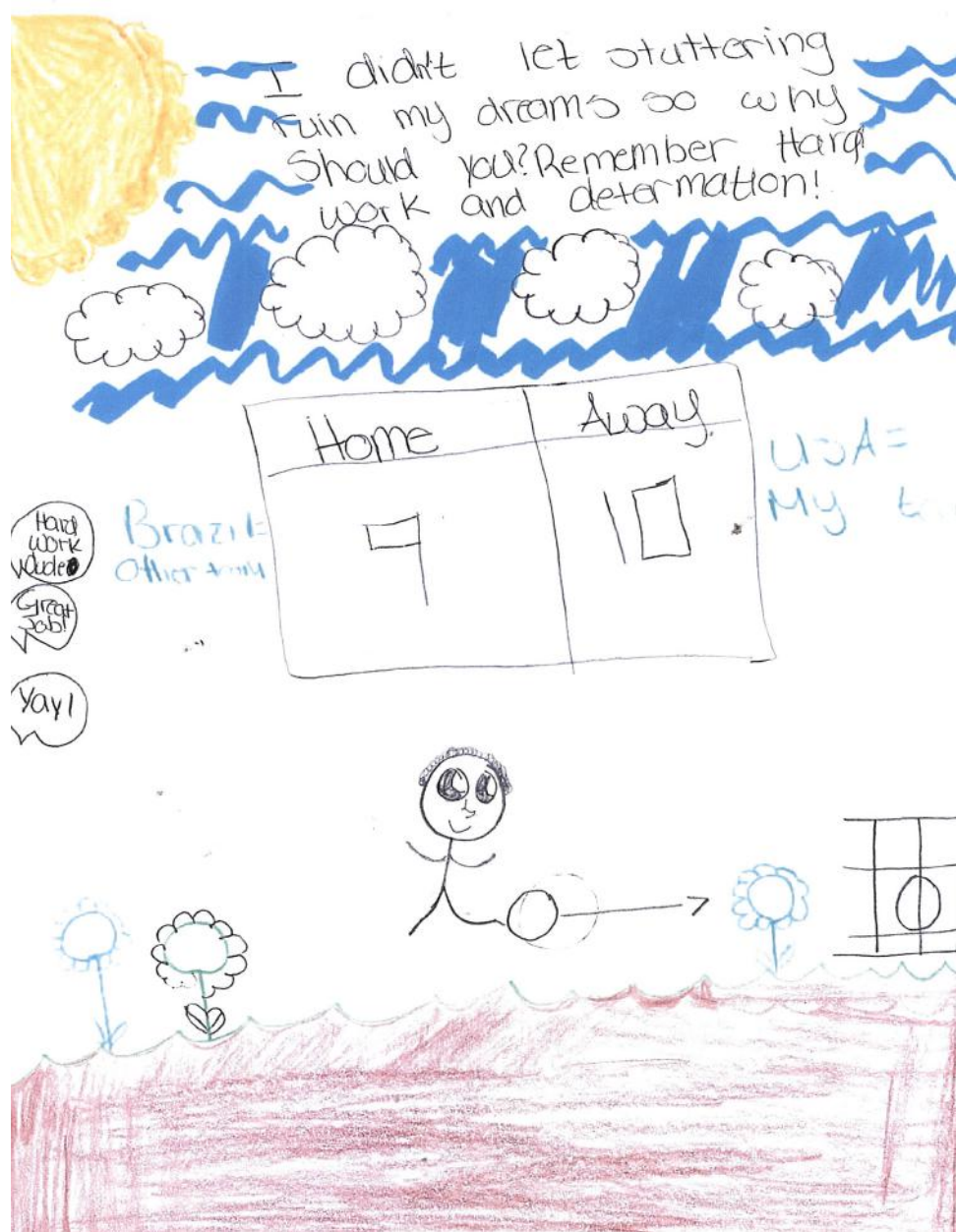
Hello, my name is Yug. I’m in 3rd grade and I am 9 years old. I go to Flickinger Elementary in Michigan.

This month I was picked by my principal as a student “All-Star.”

I started stuttering when I was little. I come to speech every Monday during second recess. My speech teacher teaches me strategies. Two of my favorite strategies are pausing and full breath. I think these strategies help me to be the most fluent.

My goal is to finish speech by 4th grade. I know that I can control my speech and speech therapy has helped me learn the best ways to do it.

Yug, 9  
Utica, MI



## Make Your Dreams Come True

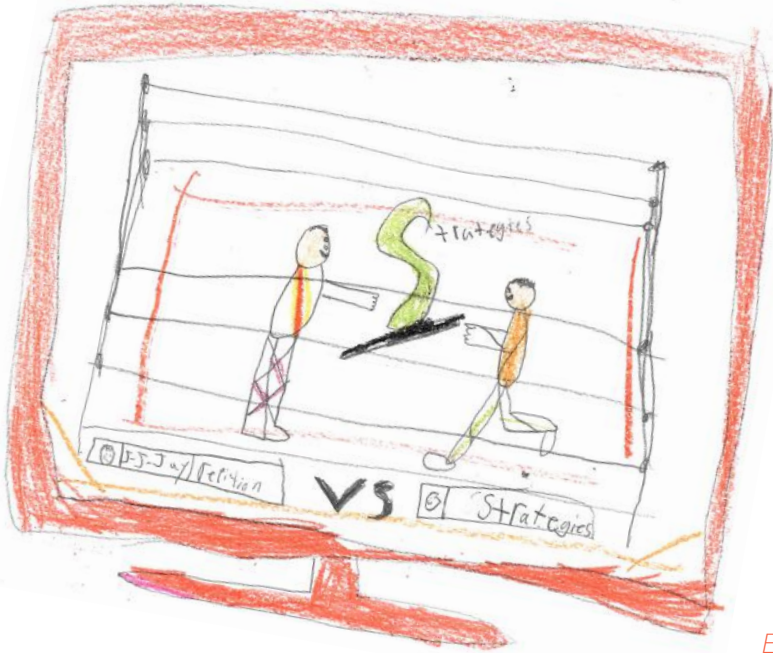
Stuttering is not an easy thing to deal with. But you shouldn't be angry that you stutter, it is what makes you unique. But other people might not think so, therefore you would get bullied. If you get bullied don't get sad about it, just ignore them. Also you can say “so what” if they are bullying you. That's their opinion, that is what they think, and don't make it get you down in the dumps. Just ignore them and go on with your day. Remember that's their opinion not yours so who cares what they say. That's their train of thought and don't let it affect you.

Joshua, 10 , from Atlanta, GA

P.S. Never let stuttering ruin your dreams just push though the hard spots and with hard work and determination you will probably make your dreams come true.



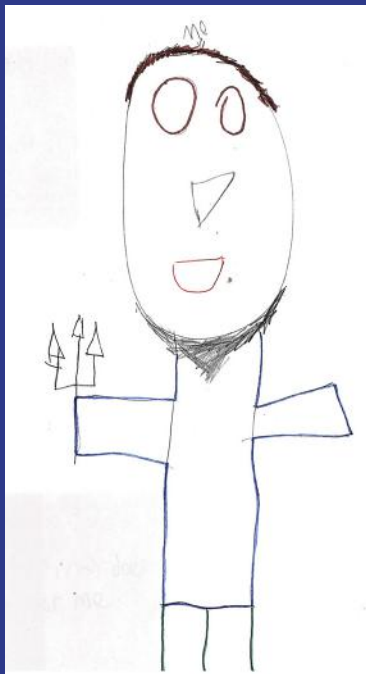
## WAITING FOR VICTORY!



Hi my name is Jordan. I'm 10 years old and I'm in the 5th grade at Dundee Elementary in Omaha, Nebraska. I stutter a lot and sometimes I'm nervous, but sometimes I'm not. Plus, strategies help me when I'm stuck on words. My favorite one is turtle talk. Turtle talk is when you talk slow or do it in a robot voice, or both in a calm and relaxed voice. I can't control stuttering - it just comes. It happens to 3,000,000 people in the world. I like WWE, so I pretend to fight stuttering. I'M WAITING FOR VICTORY!

Jordan, 10, from Omaha, NE

*Editor's Note: About 1% of the population stutters. That means about 3 million people in the U.S. and some 70 million people worldwide!*



**My stuttering does not bother me.** Like a Greek god, I am bigger than my stuttering.

Javion, 9  
Fort Dodge, IA

## It is Not Easy

My name is Jamie. I am 8 years old. I started stuttering after my dad died. When I stutter I feel sad. It feels hard and rough. It is not easy.

Jamie, 8  
Port Orange, FL



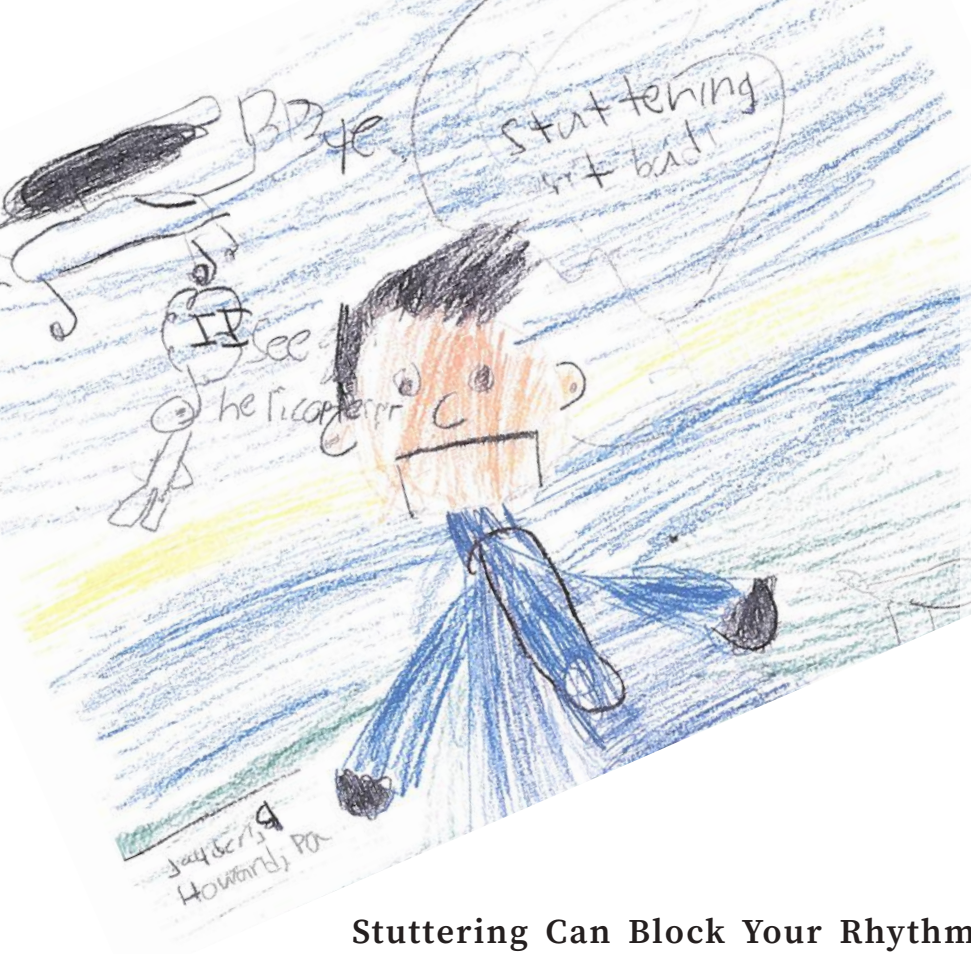
## Stuttering Is Nothing!!

My name is Reagan and I am 9 years old and in 3rd grade. I have gone to speech for 4 years and it has helped me get better with my speech. I work on easy speaking first – “sh” “ch” and “j” sounds. I like to play soccer and LAX. I am a really fast runner. Stuttering is not a big part of my life.

Stuttering is nothing!!!!

Reagan, 9, from Gibsonia, PA





## Stuttering isn't Bad

Hello!! My name is Jayden. I'm in third grade at Howard Elementary. I love to ride my bike and I'm 9 years old. I was born December 30, 2007. I use easy speech so my speech is better. When I stutter it feels like I'm in a car crash and makes me feel like I can't control my speech. I sometimes feel different and I'm proud because of that! So you can feel proud too! I stuttered since Kindergarten. I stutter mostly at the beginning of a word or sentence. Sometimes I stutter because I'm excited or happy. You should use easy speech because it helps speech get better. Stuttering isn't so bad. At least I don't care if I stutter.

Jayden, 9, from Howard, PA

## Stuttering Can Block Your Rhythm

I define stuttering as distorted speech characterized by blocks or spasms that interrupt the rhythm. I started stuttering when I was in 3rd grade. Stuttering is when a person tries to talk with rhythm but it gets blocked. People around the world stutter, even famous people, like Marilyn Monroe and Joseph Biden.

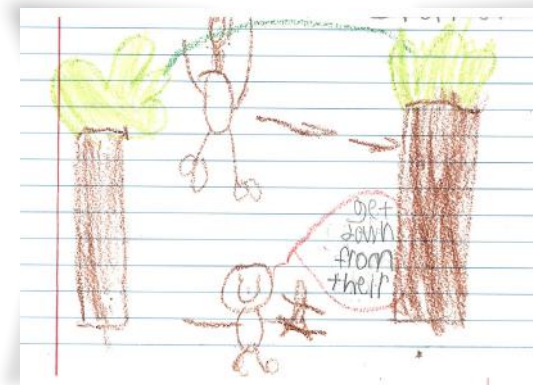


Sometimes when I try to talk, stuttering comes in and blocks what I'm trying to say. It really bothers me when kids make fun of me. I have started to speak really slowly and more fluently; it makes me feel very proud. Stuttering can make a lot of kids upset and angry, but when you talk you should always think about what you're going to say first and remember to speak slowly.



If you come to speech, your stuttering will not bother you as much as it did before. I come to speech two times every week to talk more fluently, to learn how to take a deep breath, to slide words out, and to describe things. I am happy that I have learned how to speak more fluently.

Jamarion, 14, from Milwaukee, WI



## It is OK to Stutter

My name is John. I am six and a half. I am in 1st grade. It is okay to stutter. I use slow and smooth, and breath and soft. I come to speech to help me with my stuttering.

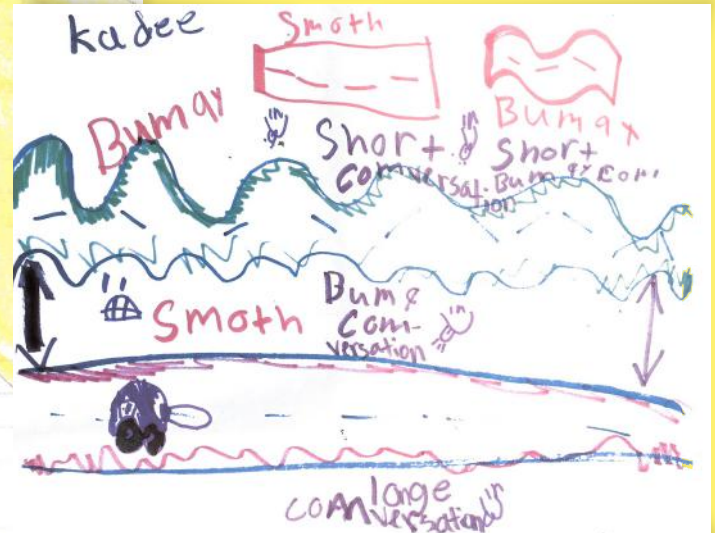
John, 6, from Lithia, FL



## Stuttering is Cool

My name is Kadee and I stutter. My stuttering feels like my voice box is stuck in the middle of my neck! I like my speech therapy. I don't know when I started stuttering. The rainbow stutter feels like I'm going down and it feels like I'm not safe. But stuttering is cool no matter what.

Kadee, 7, from Broomfield, CO



Hello my name is Jonathan and I am 8 years old and I am in 3rd grade. I stutter with my speech teacher who is teaching me. My dad used to stutter when my dad was in elementary school. My dad used a strategy to help him with his stuttering. The strategy was to talk slower. With my speech teacher we made a Pokémon/ Pikachu speech man with all of the body parts that we use to talk. My school is bilingual. We talk about different kinds of speech. My speech teacher is going to leave my school. I have one wish. Number 1 a new speech teacher. Sometimes I get really annoyed by saying the word stutter. But one day on December 8, 2016 I said stutter 3 times. Good bye and good luck!

Yours truly,  
Jonathan, 8, from San Jose, CA

MY ADVICE: START OVER

Hi, my name is Carson, and I'm in 8th grade. I use strategies such as slowing down and breathing. I started stuttering a little before 3rd grade. My advice for stuttering is even if there's a lot of attention on you, start the word over if you stutter. People might pick on you and you just have to ignore them or tell someone you trust.

Carson, 14  
Chittenango,  
NY





# Be Who You Are and Love Yourself

by Jace, age 9  
Big Lake, MN

Hi! I am Jace. I'm 10 years old and in the 5th grade. I'm just like everybody else: I like football, math, and reading. One thing that makes me different though, is that I stutter. It doesn't affect me when people pick on my stuttering.

I've learned strategies to help me have fluent speech, and also how to deal with unkind people. I've learned that if I'm confident in myself, it doesn't matter whether my speech is fluent or not. I like to hang out with kids that like me for me.

Some of the strategies that help me are: talking on one breath, going slow/slow talk, smooth onset, cancellation, getting a good

night's sleep, and thinking before I talk. Not all of these work all the time, but that's okay!

I've learned that I'm not the only one in the world that stutters. I used to think I was! It turns out that there are four other kids in my school that also stutter. Since I'm the oldest, I want to be a good role model for those kids.

Someday, I would like to talk to groups of kids that stutter, to give them inspiration. My message would be: "Live your life like you don't stutter." Stuttering doesn't have to be a disability. It's just a part of who you are. It's a part that makes you unique and special.





**I Like  
SUPER  
HEROES!**



Hi, my name is Hudson. I am 9 years old. I live in Bethalto, Illinois, and I go to Parkside. I like to draw superhero costumes. I have a hard time slowing down my speech. I'm working on using slow speech.

Your friend,  
Hudson, 9, from Bethalto, IL

## My Life of Stuttering

by Ethan, 12, from Milford, MI

My disability is a pain in the butt  
It's called stuttering  
I've had it my whole 12 years of age  
It started out terrible in Kindergarten  
I mean, it was a pain in the butt to talk out loud  
and to my friends  
Over the years, it got better  
Then worse  
I can't do some things I would like to  
I can't rap, talk fast, say speeches, even be on stage  
I also get teased or picked on from other kids  
I tell them every time,  
"It's not my fault, I was born with it."  
Yet I still get picked on and it's a pain in the butt  
Last year I even got beat up a little bit  
But that was my old place  
Now, I'm in a new place and I feel better  
Now, it's not a pain in the butt.



## TAKE MY ADVICE

Hello! My name is Aidan. I am in the third grade and I am 8 years old. I live in Lincoln, Rhode Island. I have been stuttering ever since Kindergarten. My strategies are pull-outs, easy beginnings, pausing, and cancellations. My favorite strategy is pull-outs because they help me a lot. Here is a thing I learned over the years, if someone bullies you, use your words and not your actions. If they don't listen, walk away and tell a teacher.

Aidan, 8, from Lincoln, RI

## GRUMPY S P E E C H HAS NOT GOTTEN TO ME

Hi, my name is Blaze. I'm in 3rd grade and I have grumpy speech like other people. My speech teacher has really helped me talk more fluently. Now I speak more in class. And because I speak more my grumpy speech has not gotten to me.

Blaze, 8, from Denver, CO

## Not Just Ordinary!

Hi! I am Grace and I am 10 years old. I am in 4th grade and I stutter. I started stuttering when I was in pre-school. It makes me feel sad and happy because all my friends don't stutter. I am not one ordinary kid! One of my ways to stop stuttering is to sing, because I picture myself in a field of flowers. I hope you guys try it!

Grace, 10  
St. Petersburg, FL



## I Like to Play Basketball

Hello, my name is Hank and I am 8 years old. My birthday is on St. Patrick's Day. I like to play basketball and it is hard for me to say words that start with an S. I go to speech once a week. I made this in 2017. I hope you like what I wrote.

Your friend,  
Hank, 8, from Bethalto, IL



## It's OK to Talk About Stuttering

My name is Tanner. I am 10 years old and I am in the 4th grade. I am a stutterer. I do not remember when I started stuttering. I go to my speech teacher for stuttering and it helps me a lot. My stuttering can increase and decrease based on my emotions. My stuttering could be life-long or I could grow out of it. I think it's OK to talk about my stuttering to my mom, dad, and speech therapist. I do mind very much that I stutter. I can now stop when I stutter and try again. I try avoiding words that begin with m, f, s, and giving speeches, and reading out loud in class. I've never heard any of my friends correct my stuttering. I would feel embarrassed if they did. Stuttering does not have to be the big white elephant in the room. It's OK to talk about it. Stuttering happens to a lot of people, not just me and Marilyn Monroe.

Tanner, 10, from Rutledge, TN





## I Do Not Mind Stuttering

Hi. My name is Conner. I am 8 years old and I started speech when I was 6 years old. I am in 3rd grade at Oxford Valley Elementary School in Fairless Hills. I do not mind stuttering. I love finding my elves at Christmas time. Their names are Ralfie, 16, and Lion. I stutter at home more and I talk too fast. I don't know what job I want but I love watching TV.

Conner, 8  
Fairless Hills, PA



## Stick Up For Those Who Stutter

My name is Gavin and I am 14 years old. I love to go on hunting trips with my dad and brother. I am on a swim team, in jujitsu, and I live in New Mexico.

I remember stuttering since first grade. I have worked with a few speech teachers over the years. When I got to middle school I started working with Mrs. McK and almost a year after working with her I completely stopped stuttering. Some of the strategies that I used were just trying not to think of stuttering when I am stuttering. Another strategy I used was to slow down instead of talking too fast.

When I got my braces on it changed everything because my tongue kept hitting against my braces and I started to stutter all over again. I felt disappointed that all of my hard work was gone but my family and my speech language pathologist keep encouraging me.

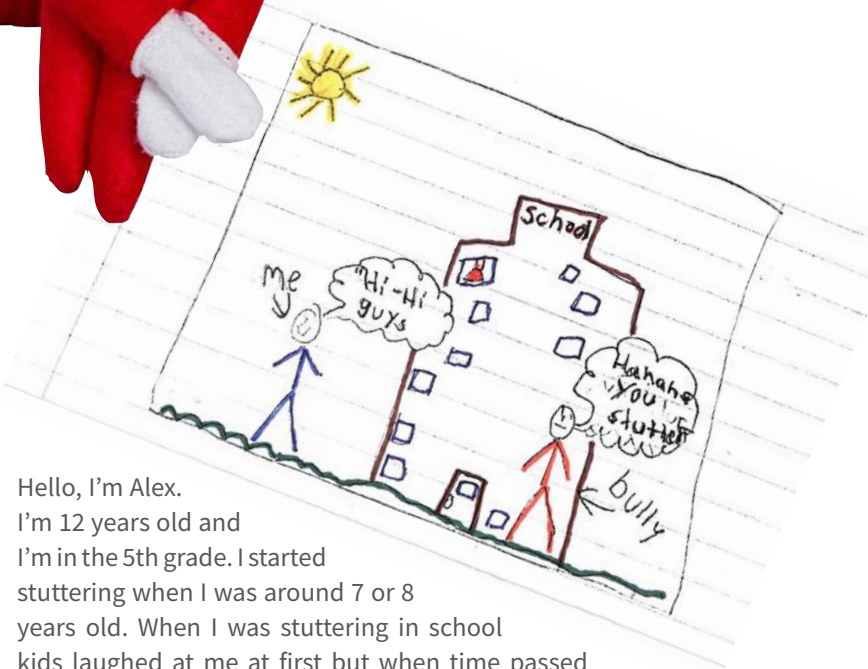
I don't know why but most winters my stuttering also increases as well as tongue clicking and eye blinking. Mom thinks it is because it is a busier time of year but it has NEVER kept me from talking with my friends and family or participating in any of my classes. I can't wait until my braces come off in a few months and I hope that you learn that stuttering is okay and to stick up for those who do stutter.

Gavin, 14  
New Mexico

## Stuttering Is Not Your Fault

Hello, I'm Alex. I'm 12 years old and I'm in the 5th grade. I started stuttering when I was around 7 or 8 years old. When I was stuttering in school kids laughed at me at first but when time passed they all know I stuttered. That was in school. In public I was super nervous and sometimes I just froze. If I wanted to ask something of someone I would start like, "Where is-is-is the bathroom?" So if that happened all I would do is just walk away and make it seem more awkward for me. So, most of the time, I would just not talk. So I told my mom and she put me in speech class. My speech teacher told me to use my techniques and I did. They were to take deep breaths in, relax, and start over. My advice to you is to don't let stuttering stop you from talking - it's not your fault.

Alex, 12, from West New York, NJ







## Don't Be Shy About Talking

I was born in Guatemala. I started stuttering when I was 2 years old. My mom and I moved to the United States to join my dad when I was 6 years old. When I first moved to the United States, I was surprised by how many homes there were. We don't have that many houses where I lived in Guatemala. That wasn't the only difference.

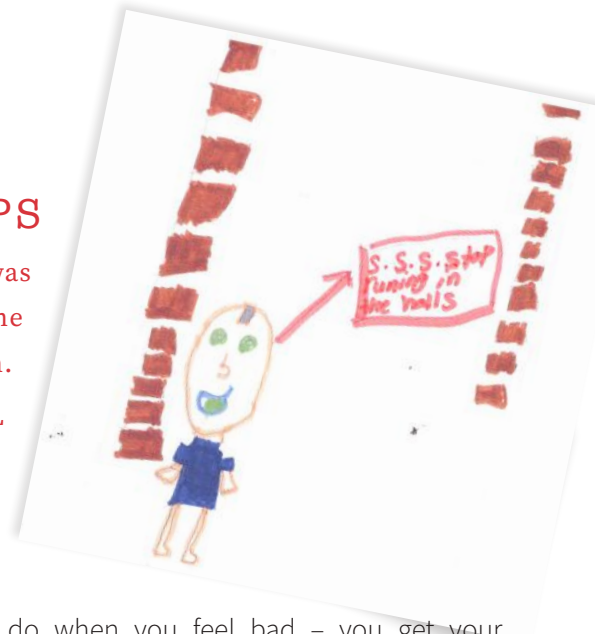
At my new school, everyone spoke English except for me. I was nervous at my new school in this new country. When I tried to speak in English, I started to stutter more. This made me sad. When I was in 5th grade, I started speech therapy. I learned how to slow down my speaking rate and when I get stuck on a word, I can use cancellations and prolongations to help. Now that I am in high school, I am the only one in my group who stutters. I am not embarrassed to talk in front of my friends. I want other English language learners who stutter to not be shy about talking.

Brian, 15, from Arleta, CA

## SLOW AND EASY HELPS

My name is Andrew and I'm 8 years old. I have been stuttering since I was one year old. It feels bad when I stutter. Sometimes I need to spell the word. It helps for me to get the word out when I use my slow easy speech.

- Andrew, 8, from Daytona Beach, FL



## Talk to Your Doll



Dear Jenny,

I like what you do when you feel bad - you get your doll and talk to your doll. I have a doll too. When I feel happy or sad I talk to my doll too. Where do you live? I live Boone, NC. It's okay to stutter - I stutter too.

Mackenzzy, 7  
Boone, NC

*Editor's note: Jenny's Story (as referenced by Mackenzzy) is in the book Sometimes I Just Stutter and Jenny lets us know it is ok to feel sad about stuttering and even to cry, but that it makes it better to share your feelings with someone else - especially your doll! Jenny doesn't let her stuttering bother her so much any longer - it's just part of who she is, she says.*

# Speech Therapy is Like a Mechanic for Your Car

Hello, my name is Andrew. I am 11 years old and I'm in the fifth grade. I love to play video games and I love science. When I'm thinking of a complex sentence it gets hard to speak because one side of my brain wants to just say an ordinary sentence and the other wants to make it more complex. So, it comes out bumpy like trying to drive an unfinished car. My speech teacher is like a car mechanic and she helps me drive my car smoothly.

Andrew, 11, from Sugar Hill, NH



Artwork by Andrew, age 11, Sugar Hill, NH

## I Don't Mind My Stuttering

Hi, my name is Ethan. I am 11 years old and I live in Lincoln, Nebraska. I go to Fredstrom Elementary School. I have confidence in myself and I try to always think positively so I don't get nervous, especially when I stutter. I really focus on my talents. This helps me remember that stuttering does not define me. I love playing sports. I am great at lacrosse and at being a really good friend. During lacrosse games I don't stutter, but when I speak in front of my class I stutter more often.

I have many ways to handle my stuttering and work through it. Some strategies that I use, especially when I am having rough days, are self-talk and stretchy speech. These help me slow my talking down so I stutter less and remember to think positively. Something else that helps me is hanging out with friends who don't care about my stuttering. They only care about me as a person.

Some people make fun of kids because of stuttering, but if someone does, I don't care because I don't let stuttering take me down. Some people don't like me because I stutter but I really don't care because if they don't really care about me why should I be friends with them?

Ethan, 11  
Lincoln, NE





## SPEECH IS FUN

My name is Esaiel and I stutter, and going to speech therapy is fun. I don't remember when I started stuttering. It's easy to talk to my family and certain friends.

Esaiel, 8, from Broomfield, CO



## PRACTICE MAKES IT EASIER

Hi, my name is Ben. I live in Ireland. I started stuttering when I was four. I am working on easy repetitions and trying to make easier blocks with Fiona my speech and language therapist. Here is a tip: if you do more easy repetitions in the stuttering clinic it will be easier outside the clinic.

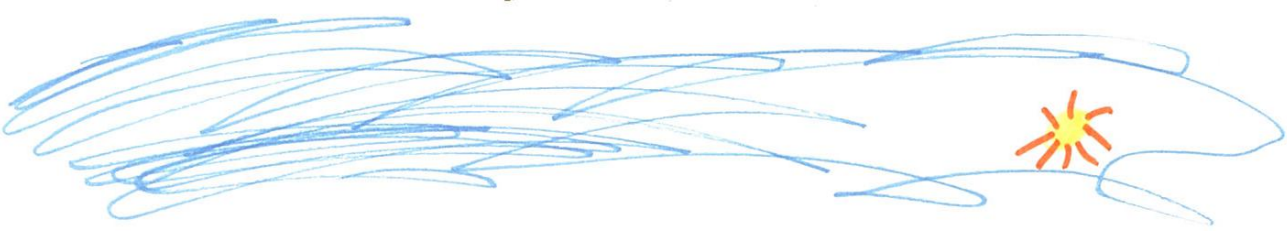
Happy days!

Ben, from Co. Wexford, Ireland

## I Am Going To Be Very Successful

My name is Hayden and I am 8 years old. I'm in third grade and I go to Lowell Elementary School. I began speech therapy when I was six. Slides are my favorite technique. My hobbies are Pokemon, Legos, and Skylanders. I hope to make it to the NFL and be a quarterback for either the Carolina Panthers or the Chicago Bears. And I hope to grow up to be very successful and buy a mansion.

Hayden, 8  
Madison, WI



## My Friends Cheered Me Up



Hello, my name is Dunia. I go to speech on Thursdays. Some kids tease and laugh at me. I ignore them, but sometimes I feel sad and I cry. My friends Ranya, Abrar and Eva saw me cry. Then they made me happy. I am 8 years old and I am in second grade. I use different strategies like light contact, easy onset, and slow speech. This helps with my stuttering.

Dunia, 8  
Daly City, CA

### WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

Hi, my name is Dillon. I am in 4th grade and I have been stuttering since 2nd grade. If someone is picking on you and they won't stop, tell a teacher or another adult. A strategy I use is to take a deep breath or talk slow. Another thing I use is called the pacer board. Those are some of the strategies that I use. For the last two years I have been educating my friends about stuttering by giving the class a presentation. I feel confident about giving the presentation because, what could go wrong?

Sincerely,  
Dillon, 9, from Albion, NY

P.S. I also invented a strategy for myself. It is called the pocket pal. It is like the pacer board. I press the button for each word or syllable.

### Speech Time!

Hi! My name is Abby. I am 8 years old. I stuttered when I was in first grade. When I went to speech I never noticed my stuttering but now I am getting better at it. Now I only stutter on hard words and when I don't know what to say. I learn speech techniques like pausing or easy onset and it helps me when I stutter. When I go to speech I always wonder what I will do with my speech teacher. Now speech is really fun to be at.

Abigail, 3rd grade  
Mt. Pleasant, MI



# YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Hi, my name is Abdullah and I live in Garland, Texas. I go to Luna Elementary. I am 10 years old. My parents found out I stuttered because I stuttered on my first word. In past experiences, I've gotten made fun of, but that's probably because they didn't know what stuttering was. My stuttering is mainly repetitions, which is saying a sound or word several times. I also have some blocks and prolongations. A block is where you can't get out the word, but you know the word. A prolongation is a word that is made longer. For example, the word "pizza" in a prolongation is, "piiiiizza".

I have two speech helpers. One of them is a pullout. A pullout is basically where you pull out of the stutter. For example, if you are stuttering on a word like "orange," what you could do is say "orrange." My other speech helper is a preparatory set, which is where you think your about to stutter on a word, and you ease into the word as you say it.

In conclusion, I wouldn't be able to do this without Mr. "D.", my speech teacher. Remember to thank your speech teacher for all they do for you as a speech student!!!!

Abdullah, 10  
Garland, TX

## Don't Feel Down

My name is Evan. I am 9 years old. I'm in third grade. I started stuttering in first grade. My speech teacher is Mrs. D. When I stutter, I slow down or pause. My advice is to not feel down. It's okay to stutter.

Evan, 9  
Cranford, NJ

# STUTTERING – DON'T LET IT HOLD YOU BACK

by Darrenell, 8th grade  
Milwaukee, WI

Stuttering isn't that important. You shouldn't make a big deal over it because you can save yourself from stuttering. If you put in the effort you will succeed. I honestly don't think that stuttering is that big of a deal. I achieved what I thought I would never overcome. You should never give up or think that you're not important or valued.

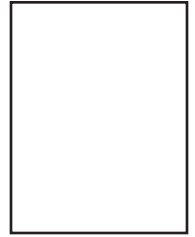
Scientists don't exactly know why people stutter. Despite this, I know that if you talk fast either your mouth or your mind won't be able to keep up with you. Sometimes you talk too fast. I used to come to speech twice a week and people made fun of me, but I never cared about what the people said about me. If I cared about what people had said about me I would have never accomplished anything. I came a long way because I was constantly stuttering.

When I stuttered, I honestly thought that I was the only one who stuttered. I wouldn't talk to anybody. I was beginning to give up on myself because I wasn't accomplishing anything. Thankfully I was told to never give up by the speech pathologist and my family. If I hadn't listened to them I would have never stopped stuttering.

I overcame stuttering and boy was I excited. I overcame stuttering by practicing and speaking slowly. I thought that speaking slowly wouldn't do anything but I was wrong. It may seem that when you start stuttering you'll never overcome it, but trust me, you can overcome it. I was someone who couldn't say a full sentence without stuttering. Some people would tell me to repeat what I said because they couldn't understand me, but when I was repeating things, it all sounded the same.

Stuttering never stopped me from succeeding. I got on my school basketball team and I even started to participate more in class. All I'm saying is, don't let stuttering hold you back; I didn't.





SPECIAL  
KIDS LETTERS  
EDITION  
Spring 2017



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**“Remember to thank your speech teacher for all they  
do for you as a speech student!!!”**

- Abdullah, 10, from Garland, TX



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