

Fluency Treatment for Big Kids

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What's your comfort level?

Choice A:

I LOVE working with big kids who stutter!



Choice B:

I'm a bit apprehensive about working with a big kid who stutters.



Choice C:

I don't want to see a big kid who stutters
walk through my door!!



What can I do for you???

Goals for today:

Group A: A few new ideas and/or resources

B & C: Increase level of comfort by giving
you some tools



Definition of “Big Kids”

Children between the ages of 9-18.

OR, anyone who is in the pre-adolescent or adolescent stage of maturation.

Assessment for Those Big Kids

Components:

- 1) Thorough case history/interview with:
- 2) parents/teacher/child
- 3) 2) Good description of features of child's stuttering
- 4) 3) Evaluation of awareness and attitudes of about stuttering
- 5) 4) Find out child's interests/goals

Interview

- Interview child, parent, teacher(s)
- Good templates for questionnaire forms in Guitar (1998) “Stuttering: An integrated approach to its nature and treatment”
- See slides of short questionnaires for teacher/parent

Teacher Questionnaire

sample questions

from Chmela & Reardon (2001)

Some things I have noticed about this child's communication are...

When this child answers questions in class he/she...

When this child speaks to me at my desk...

When this child reads aloud...

My knowledge about stuttering is...

Most importantly, right now I need to know...

Parent Questionnaire

(from Chmela & Reardon, 2001)

My greatest concerns regarding my child's speech problem are...

I feel my child is/is not concerned about his/her speech problem because...

When my child stutters, I feel...

When my child stutters, I say/do...

My knowledge about stuttering is...

From previous therapy, if any, I learned...

Description of Stuttering

- 1) Types of disfluencies
- 2) Presence of struggle behaviors
- 3) e.g. effort while speaking, tension
- 4) 3) Presence of avoidance behaviors
- 5) e.g. word substitutions, avoiding
- 6) speaking situations

Evaluation of Awareness/Attitudes

- Do not assume that a child is not bothered by his/her speech based on their verbal report.
- Older children and teens are prone to give non-specific answers.
- Give attitude scales/have them evaluate scenarios/etc.

Determine Child's Goals

- Ask your big kid what bothers them the most about their speech.
- Ask them what they are interested in or willing to work on.
- Just as importantly, ask what they are not willing or interested in working on.

Treating Stuttering

- Fluency-Shaping = train child to alter mode of speaking to produce speech that is 100% fluent.
- Stuttering Modification = focus on shaping stuttering to more easy, less disruptive form; focus on feelings/attitudes
- Best Bet = Combination of both, tailored to fit child.

Canned programs fit about as well as those chairs worked for Goldilocks.

Goals of Fluency Therapy for Children (Manning, 2001)

- A. Gain understanding of speech mechanism
- B. Enhance speech fluency
- C. Manage stuttering that occurs
- D. Deal with emotions and attitudes
- E. Address relapse

A. Understand the Speech Mechanism

- 1) How it works for normal speaking.
- 2) What happens to me when I get stuck on words.
- 3) ****Don't assume that an older child already understands his/her speech mechanism!!**

B. Help child choose tools that enhance speech fluency

Goal = speech that is smooth, produced without effort

Typical tools:

- gradual and relaxed use of vocal folds (easy onset)
- slower rate of speaking
- gradual, smooth transitions sound-to-sound
- light articulatory contacts (light touch)
- keeping an open vocal tract

Choosing Fluency Tools (continued)

When selecting tools be sure that:

- The tool(s) feels comfortable to the child.
- The tool(s) is/are used in such a way that speech sounds as natural as possible.

This will help *tremendously* with generalization.

C. Help child manage their stuttering

Goal: Learn to change the form of stuttering
that occurs, modify

Use terms and explain concepts .

May want to have child try new ways of
stuttering.

Voluntary stuttering as a tool.

D. Help child deal with emotions and attitudes related to stuttering

This area frequently needs to be addressed.

Some ways to do this:

- Desensitization Activities

- Focus on the Message

- Problem-solving

Desensitization Activities

- Voluntary stuttering-have a contest
- Water balloons, water pistols (Bill Murphy)
- Art work
- Journaling

BE CREATIVE!



Message Therapy

(Cooperman & Bloom, 2001)

What makes a good message?

- good content
- clear presentation
- good eye contact
- saying what you want to say

Get away from over-focus on fluency.

This therapy was designed for younger children, but I find the ideas very useful, even with adults.

Engage child in problem-solving

Child can learn to solve their own problems related to speech, e.g., teasing, oral presentations, etc.

- classroom presentation about stuttering, paper

- writing letters to teachers

- figuring out ways to tell people

 - not to interrupt

 - not to complete sentences

E. Address the issue of relapse

For older children, relapse is a likely possibility.

Important to help child and parents develop plan for how they will handle, if occurs.

Help child:

- see themselves as good managers of their own speech

- reduce likelihood of depression when relapse occurs

MAKE A PLAN WITH CHILD—”here’s what I’m going to do if I start to get stuck again...”

Indicators of Progress in Therapy

(Manning, 2001)

- Increase in ability to self-monitor
- Increase in ability to produce ‘open speech’
- Decrease in frequency/duration of fluency breaks
- Increase in normal speech formulation breaks
- Increase in naturalness of speech
- Metalinguistic changes
- Increase in open decision-making/decreased avoidance
- Increased sense of self-worth/self-esteem

Working with Classroom Teachers

Teachers and parents can be good allies in working with children who stutter.

Regular inservicing for teachers with students who stutter is vital—they need information and feedback.

Student can become more involved in dealing with teachers as he/she progresses through grades.

Working with Parents and Siblings

- Parent/sibling education about stuttering
- Engage parents in treatment when possible
- Creating a ‘Stutter-Friendly’ Home
 - Stuttering is O.K.
 - No teasing at home
- Involve in support group
 - FRIENDS Youth Day (March 15, 2003 in the St. Louis area)

Resources

- Internet resources
- IEP Goals
- Therapy Ideas and Materials
- Reference list

[See your handout]

Good Videos for Big Kids & Their SLPs

- SFA series
 - Straight Talk for Teens
 - Straight Talk for Teachers (watch this one)
 - Etc.

Putting my MSHA hat on:

Learn more about working with children who stutter by attending MSHA in 2003.

Jennifer Watson, Ph.D. of Texas Christian University will be presenting at one of the Day Institute sessions on March 28th.

Question & Answer Time

(The answers won't all come from me!)

Now get out there and have fun!

