Stuttering Prevention in the Home Environment - Checklist for Parents

- Reducing speech demands
  - Forget the manners for the time being!: try not insisting your child to say “please” or “thank you”
  - Eliminate requests for speech performance (“tell me a story, say the alphabet”)
  - Model what you would like your child to say (ie: tell me about........)

- Listening differently
  - Focus on content of your child’s message, not how they say it
  - Positively reinforce communicative attempts
  - Whole family follows communication rules: listen to the person speaking

- Slowing your rate of speech
  - Try talking as slow as your child talks
  - Model slower relaxed rate of speech
  - Increase pausing in your speech between conversational turns to reduce time pressure
  - Increasing silence: allow more time for silence

- Eliminate Interruptions
  - Turn taking while talking
  - Let your child finish talking before you start talking
  - Whole family follows communication rules: only one person speaking at a time, everyone has equal opportunities to speak

- Reducing Questions
  - Avoid asking complex WH questions that will require lengthy, complex responses
  - Comment on your own activities, and your child may begin talking about theirs

- Modeling Normal Disfluencies
  - Demonstrate that it’s ok for speech not to be completely fluent
  - Repeating a word/phrase or using interjections (“Go, go get your shoes; I want umm.milk)
  - Your clinician will teach you how to do this (what types of stuttering to model)

- Talk Time Activities
  - Allow your child to select the activity and follow their lead – be less directive
  - Talk and play with your child without demanding responses
  - Commenting on your play activity: minimize questioning

(Starkweather, C.W., Gottwald and Halford, S.) 1997
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