



celebrating culture - improving clarity

What is Stuttering

Stuttering is a communication disorder that affects the fluency of speech. It begins during childhood and, in some cases, persists throughout the life span. The disorder is characterized by disruptions in the production of speech sounds. Speech-language pathologists refer to these disruptions as "disfluencies." Most speakers produce brief disfluencies in speech from time to time.

Stuttering is a complex disorder that interferes with the forward flow of speech. There are many fallacies regarding the cause of stuttering. The fact is, experts on stuttering openly acknowledge that the cause of stuttering is unknown. Much of the recent research on stuttering, however, support possible neuromotor and / or genetic influences. Some specialists support a psychological or environmental cause or a combination of the psychological and physiological base for the problem. There are as many different patterns of stuttering as there are people who stutter. Also, if you stutter, you are about three times more likely to have a close relative who stutters, that is, stuttering runs in some families. However, there is little doubt that once stuttering is present, stress created from feelings of embarrassment, inadequacy and frustration over the problem makes speaking more difficult.

The current knowledge about this condition can be summarized in the following manner:

Stuttering is a devastating disorder that afflicts about 1% of the world population, that is, there are over 400 000 people who stutter in South Africa.

Stuttering is predominantly a disorder of childhood. Between 5% and 15% of children stutter at some point in childhood, but the prevalence drops to about 1% in adulthood.

Stuttering is more common in males than females, that is, 80% of adult stutterers are men. The sex ratio is approximately 3:1 in pre-school children and 5:1 by the fifth grade and remains the same through adulthood.

Stuttering is a disability which creates enormous difficulties in the lives of those who stutter. It's social, educational and vocational impact has been well documented.

Most people feel extremely uncomfortable when talking to people who stutter and do not know how to effectively deal with these encounters.

There are no easy solutions for the treatment of stuttering especially for adults, but available speech therapy techniques can lead to a dramatic reduction in the symptoms.

The younger the person the more effective the intervention.

The Speakeasy Stuttering Association of SA was established in FEBRUARY 1992.

The Situation

The environment may be strange and very formal.

You may not be familiar with the equipment or you fear that the equipment will fail.

VISION

To improve the lot of people who stutter of all ages in every aspect of their lives and to liberate them from the fear of speaking.

Aims of the Association

To provide education and information about stuttering and the resources of treatment for people who stutter.

To support and conduct research into cause, treatment and prevention of stuttering.

To provide continuing education and enhancement of skills for professionals working with people who stutter ? Speech Therapists, Community Speech and Hearing Workers, doctors etc.

To promote the prevention, early identification and appropriate treatment of stuttering.

To establish an outreach programme to make all facilities accessible and available to all people who stutter and those directly involved with them.

To represent people who stutter and promote their welfare.

To establish and maintain interaction with similar organisations internationally.

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