

A Compilation of Attitudinal Activities for School Aged Children with Fluency Problems

By Diane C. Games, M.A.

1. *Learn as much as you can about stuttering.*
 - *The Stuttering Homepage- JudyKuster; www.mankato.msus.edu/dept/comdis/kuster/stutter.html*
 - *Use successes of people who stutter as models (Stuttering Foundation of America, www.stutteringhelp.org)*
 - *Develop activities that allow the child to teach parents, friends or teachers about stuttering*

2. *Empower the Child to become an “expert” on his stuttering and speech!*
 - *Make a Movie- using teasing as a topic. Discuss how it feels, why people tease, how to react to teasing, role play typical scenes, etc. (Murphy, 1997)*
 - *Prepare a talk about stuttering. Video a tape with the child discussing what he knows about stuttering. Watch the tape with family and classmates.*
 - *Give a talk on stuttering to class. (PowerPoint show??)*
 - *Have him teach you how he stutters.*

3. *Find ways to focus on positive attributes.*
 - *Affirmation Cards (Fluency Friday Plus-Amy Lyons)*
 - *Practice positive attitude statements (Easy Does it for Fluency – Intermediate, Barbara Heinze & Karin Johnson, LinguiSystems, 1998)*
 - *Practice Positive Self Talk (The Source for Stuttering and Cluttering, LinguiSystems, David Daly, 1996) Positive self-talk can decrease negative responses or programming, help with self-assurance and eliminate helplessness.*
 - *Brainstorm Put-downs: These can be called bad thoughts or things people say to hurt others or themselves. Brainstorm “good” vs. “bad” thoughts about stuttering. Role play various speaking situations and have the child practice saying negative thoughts and then changing them aloud (reframing) to positive thoughts.(Chmela & Reardon, 1997)*
 - *Make a list of rights: i.e. the right to make mistakes, the right to feel and express anger, the right to tell others what you are thinking and feeling.*
 - *Hands Down-Trace hands on a sheet of paper. On the right hand, list the things that you may not like about yourself; on the left, the things that you like. (Chmela & Reardon, 1997)*
 - *Write a Word Picture about yourself. List 5 words about yourself. It can include things you like and things you don’t like. (Chmela & Reardon, 1997)*

- *Write refocusing sentences: I am fluent because..., I communicate well in..., I have good ideas like... etc.*

4. *Work on Cognitive Restructuring of beliefs about stuttering.*

- *Keep a journal. Journal on thoughts about a session, a topic of discussion, various situations that come up in therapy.*
- *Develop a Tool Box of Motor and Emotional Tools to manage speech. Actually draw or find tools to use in the box.*
- *Draw Your Stuttering: visualization helps children to associate feelings about speech about the objects or scenes developed.*
- *Discuss stuttering in an open, casual and comfortable manner. Stuttering is not something to hide.*
- *Use rating scales to help the child evaluate performance and feelings.*
- *Respond to the child's speech in behavioral terms; 1) describe what you see (i.e. great weekend! What a neat story! I noticed that you were pushing on some of your words. Did you feel that?) 2) followed by saying how you feel (i.e. I feel good that you decided to finish your story.) and 3) summing up with a positive feedback. (i.e. I like the way that you decided not avoid and to continue.)*
- *Validate Children's feelings: 1) Actively listen and acknowledge that you hear what the child is saying; 2) Reflect back what the child has said; 3) Discover the emotional connection (That must have been _____) and 4) Validate the child's feelings (It is ok to feel _____)*
- *Play the "I am a contribution" game. The child states "I am a contribution and then relates how he/she made a contribution or gift to others. (R. Zander, The Art of Possibility)*

5. *Teach Assertiveness Skills*

- *Recognize rights; self as well as others.*
- *Use "I" statements*
- *Strive to maintain eye contact during communication*
- *Have a relaxed body posture*
- *Role Play difficult speaking situations*
- *Game: I'm Glad to be Me! A circle game of starting with the child stating "I am glad to be me because....." followed by the next child restating the first child's statement and adding his own. A similar activity can be done with a Mirror. Mirror, mirror in my hand, Tell me why I am the best child in the land. (Bloom & Cooperman, 1999).*
- *Feelings and Choices activity. Write difficult situations on cards and have the children recognize feeling and choices.*
- *Discuss concepts of Motivation, Relapse, Teasing, and Responsibility. Use Concept Webs or develop questions to encourage these discussions.*

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Affirmations by Amy Lyons

Each child/student will receive cards (in their folder) with positive statements. These statements will be printed on colored paper squares that can be worn or kept in a pocket. Affirmations will reflect positive characteristics about speaking as well as other special qualities. The goal for each child/student is to collect 3 or more affirmations throughout Fluency Friday Plus. Supervisors and other support helpers will have additional Affirmations to pass out. However, the children/students will need to talk to these various individuals in order to receive more Affirmations.

I am intelligent. I am a good talker. I like to help people. I am honest. I am confident. I am smart. I am a good listener.
I am a good speaker. I am fluent. I am a leader. I am dependable. I am a good reader. I am a good communicator.
I am interesting. I am responsible. I like to talk. I am a good problem solver. I use good eye contact.
I am good at talking on the phone. I am assertive. I am likeable. I am friendly. I am a hard worker. I am a good teacher.
I am an advocate. I am admirable. I am amiable. I am an artist. I am a singer. I am knowledgeable. I am inventive.
I am a good writer. I know the speech helpers. I am tolerant of others. I am good at easy speech. I am nice.
I am a good speller. I am an athlete. I am likeable. I am intelligent. I am admirable. I am a good person.
I am assertive. I am fluent. I am a good in many talking situations. I am a good listener. I am responsible.
I am a good teacher. I am an advocate.

Irving Wollman's Bibliography

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