

What Causes a Child to Suddenly Stutter?

Stuttering is one of the most common speech disorders in children, and it can have a major impact on their ability to communicate. It is also very common for stuttering to start suddenly in young children, making it difficult for parents to understand why this is happening. Although stuttering does not have a single cause, there are some potential causes for your child's stuttering.

What is Stuttering in Children?

Stuttering in children is a developmental speech disorder, characterized by broken and staccato-like speech patterns. It can be temporary or permanent, but it is usually most noticeable when the child first starts speaking and learning to communicate. In some cases, stuttering may go away as the child grows older and their communication skills improve.

Early Signs of Stuttering

The earliest signs of stuttering in children are often times sudden changes in their speech patterns. You may hear them repeating certain words or phrases, stammering on certain sounds, and prolonging syllables. Stuttering can also cause the child to stutter when they are reading aloud or speaking at a normal pace. Potential physical symptoms that a child may exhibit when trying to communicate include excess blinking, lip tremors, clenched fists, and head jerks.

At What Age Does Stuttering Begin?

Stuttering can begin at any age, but it is most common in early childhood. Children who stutter typically start stuttering between ages 2 and 5, when they are just beginning to learn how to communicate. If a child suddenly starts stuttering after the age of five, it may be a sign of an underlying condition or issue, such as a neurological disorder or auditory processing disorder.

What Can Cause Sudden Stuttering in a Child?

Stuttering can have many different causes. Each child is unique and stuttering can be caused by a variety of factors, most of which are developmental or genetic. Common causes of sudden stuttering include developmental disorders, genetics, auditory processing disorders, and anxiety.

Developmental Disorders

Developmental disorders can cause some children to stutter. These disorders, such as [speech apraxia](#), can affect how the brain processes language and information and can lead to stuttering-like speech patterns. As developmental disorders sometimes affect speech motor control, they can often lead to speech developmental delays.

Genetics

According to research, stuttering can also be caused by genetic predisposition. Although there isn't a single gene responsible, stuttering is linked to several genes, which can increase the chances of stuttering in children if inherited from parents. Additionally, stuttering tends to affect more males than females.

Auditory Processing Disorders

Auditory processing disorder (APD), also known as Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD), refers to a condition where the brain does not process audio correctly. Although individuals with APD technically have normal hearing, the lack of processing often leads to communication issues. As children with APD may have difficulty understanding and interpreting sounds, this can lead to stuttering-like speech patterns.

Anxiety

Childhood anxiety and social anxiety disorder (SAD) may cause a child to stutter. When a child is feeling anxious or overwhelmed, he or she may stutter as a way of processing and dealing with stress. Stuttering due to anxiety is often caused

by environmental factors, such as negative social situations or a stressful experience associated with learning how to speak.

Speech Therapy for Child Stuttering

Early intervention and therapy can make a huge difference in stuttering in children. Speech therapists can help stuttering children by providing specific speech and language interventions. These may include stutter modification techniques, fluency shaping strategies, indirect stutter reduction approaches, and other treatment options. Speech professionals will also work with the child to build their self-confidence and develop effective communication skills.

Stuttering Treatment at Circle of Care

At Circle of Care, our experienced speech-language pathologists work with children on stutter modification techniques such as voicing strategies, relaxation techniques, and strategies to increase fluency. Our goal is to help stuttering children develop the skills necessary for successful communication, allowing them to express themselves effectively and build their self-confidence.

[Contact us online](#) or call us at [\(877\)-434-4317](tel:877-434-4317) today to get started.