

MYTHS ABOUT STUTTERING

One of the most frustrating aspects about stuttering is that it is a variable disorder. In other words, sometimes you may stutter quite a bit and other times you may not. Because it is so variable and complex, stuttering is often misunderstood. Here we discuss and debunk some common myths about stuttering.

MYTH: Stuttering is linked to intelligence.

REALITY: There is no link whatsoever between stuttering and intelligence.

MYTH: Nervousness causes stuttering.

REALITY: Nervousness does not cause stuttering. Nor should we assume that people who stutter are prone to be nervous, fearful, anxious, or shy. They have the same full range of personality traits as those who do not stutter.

MYTH: Stuttering can be “caught” through imitation or by hearing another person stutter.

REALITY: You can’t “catch” stuttering. No one knows the exact causes of stuttering, but recent research indicates that family history (genetics), neuromuscular development, and the child’s environment, including family dynamics, all play a role in the onset of stuttering.

MYTH: It helps to tell a person to “take a deep breath before talking,” or “think about what you want to say first.”

REALITY: This advice only makes a person more self-conscious, making the stuttering worse. More helpful responses include listening patiently and modeling slow and clear speech yourself.

MYTH: Stress causes stuttering.

REALITY: As mentioned above, many complex factors are involved. Stress is not the cause, but it certainly can aggravate stuttering.



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