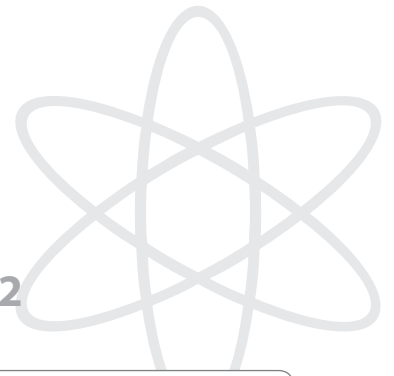


'My rate of talking and use of pauses' handout 1 of 2



Think

When I am playing with my child, what speed or rate does he typically talk at?

Do I talk as slowly as my child or do I go faster?

Do I make use of pauses when I talk?

His speed: Slow / Moderate / Fast / Variable _____

My speed: Same as his / Slower / Faster / Variable _____

My pauses: Hardly ever / Sometimes / Often _____

Why might it be helpful to think about my rate of talking and make use of pauses when talking to my child?

What do I need to 'do more of', or 'do differently' in order to talk a bit more slowly and make use of pauses?

You and your child do not necessarily speak any faster or slower than anyone else. However, a child who stammers usually finds it easier to be fluent when he speaks more slowly. Each child seems to have a different rate at which he is able to achieve fluency. You can help your child to take his time when talking by modelling a slower rate and using pauses, particularly if you naturally use a faster rate than your child does.

My rate of talking and use of pauses 2 of 2

Why might it be helpful for me to talk more slowly and to make use of pauses?

- ✧ It gives the child more time to think and plan what he's trying to say.
- ✧ It gives him more time to organise what he would like to say when it's his turn.
- ✧ It makes your speech easier for him to understand.
- ✧ It gives him the feeling that there is plenty of time so he doesn't need to rush.
- ✧ It gives him time to go at his own pace.
- ✧ It encourages him to take his time, talk more slowly and use pauses.
- ✧ Generally, when a child talks more slowly it is easier for him to be more fluent.

What do I need to 'do more of' or 'do differently' in order to talk slowly and make use of pauses?

- ✧ Listen to how your child talks when he is relaxed and calm.
- ✧ Try to go at about the same rate or even a little more slowly.
- ✧ Try to pause before you say something as well as between sentences.
- ✧ You may find it helpful to tape-record yourself to listen to how slowly you are both speaking. You can then decide whether you need to make any changes.
- ✧ Even though you are talking slowly, try to keep it sounding interesting and as natural as possible. Try not to be 'choppy' or to speak like a robot.
- ✧ Remember that talking slowly or pausing more may feel rather strange to begin with - it takes practice.

Remember, although it may be tempting to ask your child to 'slow down', the best way to help him give himself more time when talking is for *you* to talk slowly and make use of pauses.