

Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

Cluttering





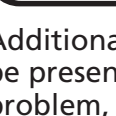
by Kevin Stuckey, M.Ed., CCC-SLP

What Is Cluttering?

Cluttering is a fluency disorder where an individual speaks rapidly and/or with an irregular speaking rate and demonstrates excessive dysfluencies such as blocks, repetitions, prolongations, etc. Other symptoms can include language or phonological (sound pattern) errors as well as attention deficits. There is no “cure” for cluttering; however, an individual can learn certain techniques to improve speaking rate, language skills, and attention.

What Are Cluttering Characteristics?

The following are some common symptoms of cluttering:

-  • **Rapid rate** (talking too fast)
-  • **Overarticulation of words** (putting additional emphasis on speech sounds)
-  • **Inappropriate breaks in speech patterns** (pauses where there shouldn't be pauses)
-  • **Monotone speech** (little inflection—sounding like a robot)
-  • **Excessive dysfluencies/ stuttering behaviors**



Additional symptoms that may or may not be present include lack of awareness of the problem, family history of fluency disorders,



poor handwriting, confusing and disorganized language or conversational skills, temporary improvement when asked to “slow down” or “pay attention” to speech, misarticulations, poor intelligibility, social or vocational problems, distractibility, hyperactivity, auditory perceptual difficulties, learning disabilities, and apraxia.

How Do I Treat Cluttering?

A speech-language pathologist can provide treatment for cluttering. The following are some ways to treat cluttering:

-  • Start treatment by **encouraging the person to speak slower**, allowing the person to “control” the rate of speech.
-  • Use **visual aids** such as a speedometer for monitoring the rate of speech—Keep speech rate below the “speed limit.”



Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students
(cont.)



- **Begin with highly structured utterances** such as “Hi, my name is ____.” Then, move toward a more typical flow of language and conversation.



- Have the person who clutters **exaggerate stressed syllables in words and articulate all syllables**. The goal is to have the individual learn to self-monitor his/her speech.



- Have the person who clutters **listen to a disorganized speech sample and then listen to a sample of clear speech** to increase awareness of the correct production.



Resources:

Ramig, P. R., & Dodge, D. M. (2005). The child and adolescent stuttering treatment and activity resource guide. Canada:Thomson Delmar Learning.

St. Louis, K. O. (last updated 2009). Cluttering: Some guidelines. Retrieved April 6, 2009, from <http://www.stutteringhelp.org/Default.aspx?tabid=82>

For more **FREE Handy Handouts®**, go to www.handyhandouts.com