



# REACHING OUT

Publication of FRIENDS: The National Association of Young People Who Stutter

Sept/October 2011

## Kids Showing Courage Everyday



My name is Ryan. I am 9 years old. I like to build Leggos. I want to be a race car driver and be #88. I was afraid but told my whole class and their parents that I stutter

My name is Patrick. I am 8 years old. I like cars. I like to play baseball. My favorite color is black. I was afraid but I told my friend that I stutter!

My name is Elli. I am 7 years old. I like to play soccer. I am beautiful. I was afraid to tell Alex to stop teasing me about stuttering, but I did.

My name is Samantha I am 9 years old. I like dogs. I like to run. I like to listen to music. I was afraid to come to a girl's stuttering group but I did.

My name is Zachary. I like hockey. I like math and am good at it. I have a fish named Max. I was afraid to meet other kids who stutter but I did.

My name is Ryan. I play hockey. I play piano and drums. I have a 12 year old brother. I was afraid to wear my FRIENDS tee shirt but I DID ANYWAY. My friend Aidan read my shirt and said "oh" .

My name is Yarelis. I am 11 years old. I stutter. I am a girl. I wanted to watch a show on TV and knew I would stutter, but talked anyway.

### Fast Facts:

October 22 is International Stuttering Awareness Day. Kids, teens and adults from all over the world, their families and professionals are going to teach people more about stuttering and what it is like to manage our stuttering in every day life. What can you do?

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**These Kids Rock! Way To Go! FRIENDS Is Proud Of You!**

**If You Stutter, You Have FRIENDS**



# KIDS Corner - Music To Our Ears

We asked children and pre-teens at a workshop at the FRIENDS convention in July to fill in the blanks to the following statement. Look what they came up with. Music indeed!

If my stuttering was a musical instrument, it would be \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

A **Piano** because you can press the same key over and over again which represents repetitions (Lilly)

A **Drum** because the beats are like stuttering (Joshua)

A **Saxophone** because it takes breaks and pauses when it plays (Calvin)

A **Flute** because he stops and breathes sometimes (Lily about her brother)

A **Trumpet** because you have to catch your breath after a long blow (Gianna)

A **Violin** because violins have a "pop" after the strings move (Sophie)

A **Trumpet** because you pause a lot (anonymous)

A **Trumpet** because it can be loud and sectioned (Ryan)

A **Saxophone** because it helps me not to think about stuttering (Tillman)

A **Trumpet** because it's loud (Nick)

It would be a **Flute** because it is soft and smooth like when you pull your words (Carly)

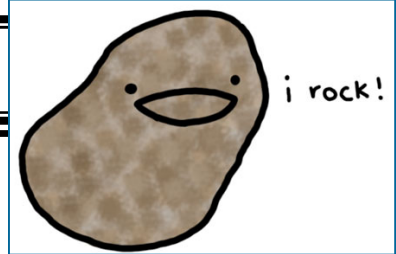
A **Drum** because it makes different sounds (Isabella)

A **French Horn** because if you don't do the notes right, it doesn't come out right like when you talk fast and don't take your time, you stutter more (anonymous)

A **Harp** because you can drag your thumb over several strings and create beautiful music, just like I do when I stutter (Pam)



## Parent's Rock!



### We had a voice.

As a first time family at the FRIENDS Conference this year, we didn't know what to expect when we arrived in sweltering Washington, DC. Our son Billy stutters, and I have a family history of stuttering, as well.

Last year, we attended our first NSA conference in Cleveland (being from Pittsburgh, that was difficult in more ways than you can imagine). We found it to be an interesting experience and the people were very nice.

There were kids at the NSA conference and they had kids programs. This year, we were going to try NSA again but the dates conflicted with our schedule (it was a blessing more ways than one.)

Since we did not want to go a whole year without some kind of family event that revolved around stuttering, we asked our son's former speech therapist if he knew of any other conferences. He immediately told us about "FRIENDS". He said that FRIENDS is geared more for kids and it is smaller in size. So we booked our spot, jumped in the car and headed to the nation's capitol.

It didn't take long for us to realize that this conference felt different. It was relaxed, casual, and totally focused on kids and families. We were hooked. At the orientation, we met another family similar to ours and we instantly became "friends" with them. From that point on, we can't remember having a more enjoyable, rewarding experience about such an important part of our family life.

The speakers and featured guests were outstanding, too. We had t-shirts made up in honor of David Seidler that read, "We have a voice." His speech proved to be as moving and inspirational as *The King's Speech*.

Our son participated in virtually every program at FRIENDS (our daughter did, too). Another thing that was really amazing to us (and we wonder if other parents experience this) is that for several weeks after the conference, our son was more fluent, confident and relaxed than ever.

The strength, enthusiasm and camaraderie of being with other kids who stutter had a profound effect on him. It was like a drug that we wished we could bottle and bring home.

Thanks for a great conference; you made believers out of us. We look forward to a Rocky Mountain High in Denver in 2012.

**Submitted by Bill and Amy Garrison** (first time parents at a FRIENDS convention)

**Special Announcement:** There is a small little city in upstate New York called Troy. On Saturday October 29, Troy New York is having a special day for the community, especially geared for kids and families. The day is called "Uptown Community Harvest Festival." People in Troy worked really hard to win a Pepsi Refresh grant for the festival. That means the Pepsi company is giving money towards food, rides, music, and games There will be community people having tables making kids and families aware of all kinds of resources available for all kinds of things. For the first time ever, there will be a stuttering table. FRIENDS will be represented by Pam Mertz! Yahoo!

# Doing Surveys With Children



Stuttering surveys are often used as an activity in therapy, particularly with teens and adults, as a vehicle for desensitization. The person giving the survey most often introduces themselves as someone who stutters while stuttering openly, and then asks questions such as whether they know people who stutter, what stuttering is, or what causes stuttering.

This activity can be adapted to younger children quite successfully by gearing the survey to the child's interests and abilities. Children as young as kindergarten or first grade can have fun with this activity, and it can be used for several purposes.

For children who seldom talk to others, a survey can be a way for them to simply begin talking to other people in a structured activity. If this is the purpose, then there is no need for them to do anything other than carry out a survey with other people of their own choosing, familiar or unfamiliar.

A child who is sensitive about stuttering openly might be asked to consider putting voluntary stutters in their speech when they give a survey, or a child wanting to learn how to use one or more of their speech tools outside of therapy may find it easy to do while giving a survey. Whatever goal is chosen by the child and therapist, the child is put in charge of coming up with a survey topic, generating both the questions and the survey response forms, and selecting the audience to be given the survey.

Below are examples of survey activities that were designed by two of our children:

**Jeff, a seven year old**, agreed that it would be a good idea to learn to put easy stutters in his speech when talking to unfamiliar people. He decided that he wanted to do a survey to find out about people's favorite food. He chose to limit the choices to hot dogs, hamburgers and chicken nuggets, and told us that he was sure that hot dogs would be the favorite. He drew pictures of the choices on a piece of paper with a box beside each one and put it on a clip board. After practicing what he planned to say with several familiar listeners, Jeff went out to find college students and staff on the campus of the university where our clinic is located. He stopped about a dozen people and asked them, using some easy voluntary stutters, if they would tell him which they liked best, naming the three food choices, and then marked their choices on his form. He thanked each person for taking his survey.

To his surprise, hamburgers were favored overwhelmingly. He said that he thought this was because everyone he talked to was 'old', and that the outcome would be different if he asked kids. On his own, he decided to repeat the survey at his school, and happily reported to us at the following session that hot dogs won hands down.

**Adam, 10 years of age**, set a goal for himself to use pull outs in his speech when talking with people outside of clinic. He chose to survey students, faculty and staff around the clinic, where some people were familiar and others were not, but all were in a familiar location and all knew about therapy. He chose three jokes, writing them down, along with a script of how he would ask people to participate. He asked each person if they would listen to his jokes and then tell him which they liked best. Adam successfully surveyed the clinic secretary, office manager, two faculty members, and a number of university students. He was pleased that his favorite joke was most often picked by the survey-takers, and reported that it felt good to tell his jokes while not worrying if he stuttered or not, because he was looking for a stutter to happen so he could pull out of it.

Each of these children had control over the survey from the planning through to reporting what was good or not good about the experience, and as a result, the experiences were perceived as being positive by both of them.

**Written by: Lynne Shields, CCC-SLP**, as a paper for the 2011 International Stuttering Awareness Day on-line conference. Lynne gave us permission to reprint her great article here. Lynne is a friend of FRIENDS.

Visit the on-line ISAD conference here: <http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/isad15/isadcon15.html> (live discussions until October 22; archived and available any time after that for reading, as well as past conferences).

# Breaking The "Cycle of Stuttering"

I've stuttered for as long as I can remember. I was homeschooled until 3rd grade, so my speech never bothered me much until then. During the 2 years I spent in public school, most people I knew in school were accepting or supportive, but on occasion there was a jerk who would make fun of me for it. I left public school in 5th grade for reasons unrelated to stuttering and returned to homeschooling, where I remain today.

Even though I never had any cataclysmic events that shattered my self-esteem, my stuttering and my attitude about it grew steadily worse over the next several years. My social life slowly dwindled; I started seeing fewer friends from school as time went on and various engagements died off, as they often do on their own. The problem is that my stuttering robbed me of my confidence to find new friends and social circles.

In an effort to combat this, I first sought speech therapy some time around 2006, during which time I made improvements. But the problem was that the therapist I saw at the time did not truly understand the root of the problem, and worked on only the physical aspects of stuttering, not even mentioning or acknowledging the immense mental and emotional baggage.

My stuttering returned to its old severity over time, even becoming worse than it ever had before. I stopped interacting with people I didn't know entirely; I didn't even speak to store clerks or wait staff at restaurants unless absolutely necessary. I didn't know where I'd gone wrong; I felt very much like both my old therapist and myself had failed. My parents suggested that I seek a new therapist, which I was originally very opposed to, as it obviously hadn't worked the first time. But eventually I had fallen so far that I was willing to do anything.

Thankfully, my new therapist understood the true nature of stuttering; that as bad as the physical symptoms and mechanics are, the heart and majority of the disorder lie in the stutterer's mind. The thoughts they have and emotions they feel that eat away at their confidence and self-esteem. It was with my new therapist, who is co-writing this paper with me, that I began to learn how to analyze not only my speech but also my thoughts and feelings surrounding it, and to gain the confidence to start undoing the layers of avoidance behaviors I had built up over the years.

As much as we might wish otherwise, there is no 'cure' for stuttering. But there are things you can do to improve your speech and, more importantly, to become comfortable enough with yourself that you, and by extension, those around you, won't care that you stutter.

My current therapy helped me understand that stuttering is composed of three central components, each leading to the next in an endless cycle that will continue until one aspect of it is stopped.

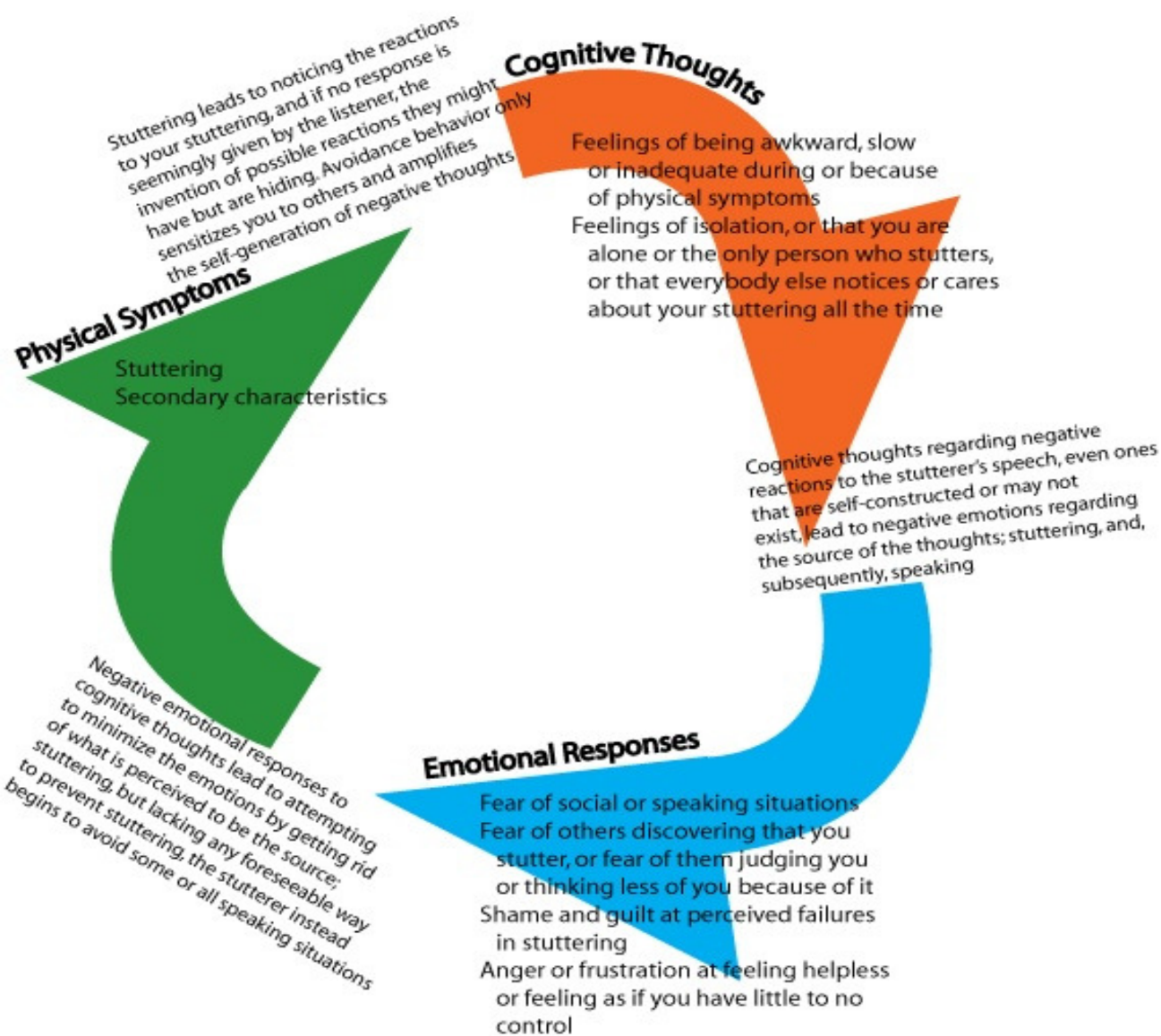
I created a model of my understanding of this important insight. (See Tim's model on the next page!)

Finding a therapist who understands this model and working with them can help you break this cycle. It is a long and arduous journey, filled with hardship and facing your fears, but it is the most rewarding and enlightening thing a person who stutters can experience. However, you must want to make this journey. You can be guided, but you cannot be carried.

**Written by: Katie Dauer CCC-SLP and 16 year old Timothy Koch** as a paper for the 2011 International Stuttering Awareness Day on-line conference. The authors gave us permission to reprint their article here.

Visit the on-line ISAD conference here: <http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/isad15/isadcon15.html> (live discussions until October 22; archived and available any time after that for reading, as well as past conferences).

# Timothy's Model on the "Cycle of Stuttering"



### Stopping the cycle:

If no physical symptoms occur, then fewer cognitive thoughts are generated during speaking, leading to fewer negative emotional responses.

If no cognitive thoughts are generated, regardless of the existence of physical symptoms, then no emotional responses are generated and there is little to no subsequent avoidance.

If no emotional responses are derived from cognitive thoughts, then there is little to no avoidance behavior, thus reducing self-constructed responses to stuttering.

*I was a little scared . . .*

*and I did it anyway*



We will introduce these young people in our newsletter and let others know that there are many cool kids who are doing what they want to do ...and stuttering.

If you would like to send in a photograph with your submission, please do so. We would love to print it.

Mail to:  
Lee Caggiano  
38 South Oyster Bay Rd.  
Syosset, NY 11791

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you live? \_\_\_\_\_

Three things you want us to know about you

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I was a little scared and

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**My name is Zachary**

I am 7 years old and live in Iowa.

I really love football. My favorite player is . .

I stutter and talked to my class about stuttering so they would know why it takes me a longer time to talk sometimes.

I was a little scared and I did it anyway!

**My name is Kristen.**

I am 11 years old and live in Tampa.

I have two sisters

I love acting.

I stutter and wrote a letter to all my teachers telling them about my stuttering.

I was a little scared and I did it anyway!

**My name is Michael.**

I am 9 years old and live on Long Island.

I love baseball. My favorite player is . .

I stutter and I ran for student council at my school. I won!

I was a little scared and I did it anyway!

**My name is Ashlee.**

I am 13 years old and live in St. Louis.

I love playing soccer.

My favorite band is . .

I stutter and volunteered for a part in my class play.

I was a little scared and I did it anyway!

FRIENDS, the National Association for Young People Who Stutter  
and  
The Stuttering Foundation present:

# 2012 One-Day Conferences

## CHILDREN, TEENS AND ADULTS WHO STUTTER

Families, Professionals and Friends Working Together



February 2, Orange, CA  
February 25, Edwardsville, IL

March 3, Raleigh N.C.  
April 28, Chicago IL  
October 13, Long Island, NY

## JULY 19-21, 2012 Convention, Denver, CO

### Young People

- Meet others who stutter
- Have fun talking!
- Learn about stuttering

### Parents

- Find out how to support your child
- Meet other parents and share experiences

### SLPs and SLP students

- Learn more about stuttering, current treatments and the support services available to people who stutter

### CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:

At the completion of the conference, participants will be able to:

- Describe effective intervention strategies for children who stutter and their families.
- Understand need for management approach to childhood stuttering that includes parents, professionals and support networks.
- Identify specific social and clinical strategies for supporting children who stutter and their families.

**For more information, call 866-866-8335 or visit [www.friendswhostutter.org](http://www.friendswhostutter.org)**

### Reduced registration fee for SLPs whose clients attend conference

ASHA CEUs Sponsored by:  
THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION  
P.O. Box 11749 • Memphis, TN 38111-0749  
[www.stutteringhelp.org](http://www.stutteringhelp.org)



[www.stutteringhelp.org](http://www.stutteringhelp.org) [www.tartamudez.org](http://www.tartamudez.org)



The Stuttering Foundation of America is approved by the Continuing Education Board of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to provide continuing education activities in speech-language pathology and audiology. See course information for number of ASHA CEUs, instructional level and content area. ASHA CE Provider approval does not imply endorsement of course content, specific products or clinical procedures.



*This course is offered for 0.5 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional area)*

### FRIENDS News & Notes:

If you know someone who could benefit from Friends, make an extra copy of the newsletter for them, or give them a copy of the Mentor program application form.

Parents—leave newsletters in your doctors or dentist's office and at your child's school. Good old-fashioned word-of-mouth really does work. Spread the news!

\*\*\*\*\*

\*We want to feature articles from kids about kids on our KIDZ Corner page. If you have anything to share, please email it to Lee. We also want to hear from parents. Tell us what successes your child is having at school or sports. We want to keep a very active "Parents Rock!" page going.



The National Association of Young People Who Stutter

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Website: [www.friendswhostutter.org](http://www.friendswhostutter.org)

## Find FRIENDS On Facebook

Hey Kids, Teens, Adults, Parents, Professionals and Anyone who cares about people who stutter, FRIENDS has their own [Facebook](#) page! Check it out, see what everybody's up to, post messages, tell us how your doing, share pictures, stay connected throughout the year.

[www.facebook.com/youngpeoplewhostutter](http://www.facebook.com/youngpeoplewhostutter)

## 15th Annual FRIENDS Convention 2012



Thursday, July 19 - Saturday, July 21, 2012

Embassy Suites Denver - Aurora

4444 North Havana Street, Denver CO

(303) 375 - 0400

12 miles from Denver International Airport and minutes from Downtown Denver

**CEUs offered for Speech Language Pathologists \* Educational Grants Available \* Discounts for Speech Language Pathologists who attend with a client.**

For more information: Online: [www.friendswhostutter.org](http://www.friendswhostutter.org) or Toll-free: 866-866-8335