Building Children’s Confidence:
Please note these resources can be used universally with all children who lack confidence.

Using Effective Praise
Page 2

Good News Diary
This diary will help children to reflect on something positive that’s happened during their day rather than negative thoughts
Page 3

Strength Cards
Page 4

Supporting Children who Stammer:

Getting to know your stammer – The Iceberg
Page 6-7

The Microphone Game
Page 8

How to talk about stammering
Page 9

Useful websites
Page 10

If you would like further support with any of the resources listed in the pack, please speak to your Speech and Language Therapist.
Confidence Building and Effective Praise

Children who require support with their stammer often present with low confidence. Giving praise is one way of building their confidence and helping them to recognise their achievements.

Why does it help when I give praise?
- Praise helps the child feel good – confident, special, happy with him/herself
- Giving a child praise helps them to focus on the good points and realise that there are many things they can do well

How do I give effective praise?
- Look for something to praise the child about (even if this is something small)
- Describe what you notice the child is doing, and add a positive descriptive word:
  
  “you walked quietly to the classroom – that was really sensible”
  “you helped me tidy up – that was kind”
  “you took turns in the game – you were very patient”

Try using descriptive praise rather than saying “good boy/girl”

- Remember to praise the effort not just the achievement e.g. praising a child for writing one neat word or sentence when they have poor handwriting – to encourage them further
**What made you smile today?**

Write down something that went well or made you happy once a day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>GOOD NEWS</th>
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</table>
Complete this activity with a small group of 3-4 children.

Encourage children to choose a reason they like their peer. Then ask each child to choose a strength for themselves. Try to reinforce the strengths children choose i.e. “yes Johnny you are very friendly, I notice you say hello to everyone in the morning”.

Caring
Arty
Friendly

Brave
Strong
Clever
Getting to know your stammer – The Iceberg

(Please see Iceberg on next page)

This activity can be a way for children to begin to be open about their stammer and even discuss this with others.

Explain to the child that stammering is a bit like an iceberg. Part of the difficulty can be seen by others and are above the water line, e.g. repeating sounds, getting stuck etc. Other things cannot be seen (how you feel, things you avoid etc) and these and are below the water line.

Encourage the child to write or draw about their stammer. If they are stuck for ideas, you could ask them:

- What does your stammer sound like?
- What do you do with your body when you stammer (tap your hands, blink etc)
- When they stammer, what does it feel like? (e.g. do their words get stuck somewhere?)

If the child feels comfortable ask them to explain what they have written or drawn. Let them know that it is ok to stammer.

There can be times where the child may describe their stammer negatively. If this happens say to the child “I’m really impressed with how you’ve described your stammer to me – you’ve been really honest and brave”.

The child may then want to use this resource to talk about their stammer with their parents, teacher or friends, starting off with a close friend or teaching assistant they feel comfortable talking to, first.
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The Microphone Game

The Microphone Game helps children understand the concept of taking turns to talk and gives them a concrete format for practising turn taking. Children who stammer sometimes find turn taking challenging or their peers are not always aware that the child who stammers needs extra time to talk.

1) All children to sit in a circle
2) Place a microphone/pen/wooden spoon in the middle of the circle
3) Explain the rules (see below) – it might be useful to add symbols that the teacher can draw the children’s attention to at the beginning /throughout if necessary and to point out specifically what she observed children were doing, at the end?
4) Take turns to pick up the microphone and talk (they must put the microphone back in the middle after their turn).

Conversation Topics:

My favourite ..... (colour/animal/football team/sport)
Build a story
Fortunately, unfortunately

Rules:

• Only the person holding the microphone can talk
• Each person should have a turn to talk
• The length of turns should be fair
• Nobody can interrupt
How to Talk About Stammering

Should I acknowledge that a child in my class has a stammer?

Yes, it’s okay to acknowledge a child’s stammer; as long as you do this in a non-confrontational/pressured way.

For example, you could say:
- was that a bit bumpy?
- it’s ok if that’s a bit tricky to say
- sometimes we all get stuck

This can help reduce anxiety around stammering for the child and reinforce to them that they won’t be ‘in trouble’ or receive any negative reaction to their stammer from the communication partner/listener.

What language is okay to use about children’s stammering?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t Use</th>
<th>Do Use</th>
<th>Why Not?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘person who suffers from stammering’, or ‘person afflicted by stammering’</td>
<td>‘person who stammers’ or ‘stammerer’ or ‘stutterer’</td>
<td>‘Person who stammers’ is objective and factual. ‘Sufferer’/‘afflicted by’ assumes stammering has to be a negative in their life, which may not be the case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘speech impediment’ or ‘speech defect’</td>
<td>‘speech impairment’, ‘stammering’, ‘speech dysfluency’</td>
<td>Speech impediment implies the stammer gets in the way of talking. People may just speak with a stammer and it is not necessarily in the way or a problem. ‘Defect’ is worse, giving a strong message there is something wrong with the person. ‘Impairment’ is more neutral language, used both medically and in equality law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘grow out of stammering’</td>
<td>‘regain fluency as they grow older’, ‘regain fluency naturally’,</td>
<td>‘Grow out of stammering’ is commonly used when describing children who stop stammering. It suggests those children who have not stopped stammering have failed to grow up, lack confidence, and have lower intelligence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘bad’ or ‘debilitating’ stammer</td>
<td>‘severe’ stammer</td>
<td>‘Severe’ is a more neutral word, rather than saying a severe stammer is a ‘bad’ thing. Also ‘debilitating stammer’ is a stereotypical phrase implying people who stammer cannot live a full life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘defeat’, ‘overcome’ or ‘conquer’ stammering</td>
<td>‘accept’, ‘learn to manage’, ‘found their voice’, ‘embrace’</td>
<td>‘Defeat’ and other fighting language imply stammering is an enemy that can be beaten if enough effort were applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘struggle with a stammer’</td>
<td>‘live with the negative stigma of stammering’</td>
<td>‘Struggle with a stammer’ is a stereotype feeding into the preconception that people who stammer will struggle in life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Taken from British Stammering Association: The Way We Talk (Patrick Campbell)

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Useful Websites

http://actionforstammeringchildren.org/support/support-for-schools/primary-schools/

A charity who are based in the Michael Palin Centre and commission the centre. They also coordinate various projects across the country aimed at boosting the confidence of young people who stammer and allowing them to have a voice in the direction of the Charity.

https://www.whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=26681

The Michael Palin Centre website – the centre provides assessment and therapy for children who stammer.

https://stamma.org/

A new campaign from the British Stammering Association. The campaign is raising awareness about stammering in the general public so that the hurdles that people who stammer face are more widely understood.