



## Overcoming the Struggles of a Stutter

Jennifer Slater knows first-hand how her daughter Lauren feels when she struggles with stuttering. Lauren started speech therapy when she was in pre-school. She was having trouble getting words out, and would often become frustrated to the point of tears. This especially struck a nerve with Jennifer since she also had a stutter during her school days.

It is estimated that over three million Americans stutter. According to Stuttering Foundation of America, “Stuttering is a communication disorder in which the flow of speech is broken by repetitions (li-li-like this), prolongations (lllllike this), or abnormal stoppages (no sound) of sounds and syllables. There may also be unusual facial and body movements associated with the effort to speak.”

Jennifer is glad resources and services are available for Lauren. “I don’t want it to affect her life and career choices,” said Jennifer. “I remember working as a nurse and having to call family members or talk to a physician...it was scary. I know, at times I sounded less intelligent than I was, due to the stutter.”

Despite her independent research, Jennifer says there is only so much you can pick up on your own. “A half hour session gives you ideas on how to talk to your child,” said Jennifer. “It’s nice to have a place to go with experts,” like Columbus Speech & Hearing Center, because “they understand both the kid’s and the parent’s frustration.”

Jennifer and Lauren are not alone. Kellie Winkle signed her daughter Lexi up for speech therapy at Columbus Speech & Hearing Center to help with her stuttering problem. “We noticed Lexi started ‘tripping’ over her words when she turned five. Lexi was trying to rush through her thoughts and would not get the words out in time,” said Kellie.

After only a month they saw improvement in Lexi’s speech, and about 6 to 8 months later they hardly (if ever) heard the rushing through of words which caused her to stutter. “It is amazing the progress Lexi has made with her speech therapist.”

It was not just Lexi who benefited from her time at the Center. Kellie admits that she also learned to become a better communicator. “Observing the sessions has also helped me slow down when I speak. That has helped me speak to my children more effectively and has helped me become a better speaker in general,” said Kellie.

“One small step we took by making the appointment at Columbus Speech & Hearing will affect her confidence for life,” shared Kellie.