Early Stuttering Treatment
The Lidcombe Program

The best time to treat children who stutter is between 3 and 5 years old, preferably at least a year before they start school. The Lidcombe Program is a stuttering treatment for children of this age that is provided by speech pathologists. Depending on the country where you live, speech pathologists may also be called speech-language pathologists or speech-language therapists.

Many children grow out of stuttering during the preschool years. This does not mean that you should not seek advice or treatment.

It is quite normal for parents to have questions about their child's stuttering and to seek proper advice about what to do. It is not possible to know in advance whether your child will recover without treatment, so if your child begins stuttering it is recommended that you seek the advice of a speech pathologist as soon as possible.

The speech pathologist will advise you whether treatment is needed and when it should begin. Clinical trials around the world have supported the use of the Lidcombe Program to treat preschoolers who stutter.

Parents do the Lidcombe Program treatment by gently encouraging children during everyday situations to speak without stuttering, and measuring their stuttering severity each day. It is important that the treatment is done with guidance from a speech pathologist.

The average time until there is little or no stuttering is around four months. However, that is only an average and it may take more or less time than that.

Your speech pathologist will show you how to do the Lidcombe Program and will make sure that you do it correctly. You will visit the speech pathologist at the clinic each week.

The most important part of the treatment is that your child enjoys doing it.

After your child has little or no stuttering, another important part of the Lidcombe Program begins. This is called maintenance. You will visit the speech pathologist occasionally for around one year. During these months the speech pathologist will show you how to do all you can to ensure that stuttering does not re-appear. You will need to continue treatment during the maintenance period, although not as much as before.

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The Lidcombe Program treatment guide can be downloaded from the website of the Australian Stuttering Research Centre. This guide is useful to you and your speech pathologist for being sure that the treatment is being done correctly.

As with all health care, a first and important choice is which speech pathologist will show you how to do the Lidcombe Program. Naturally, it is best to see someone who is experienced with this particular treatment. This is something that you might wish to discuss with a speech pathologist you are considering.

The Lidcombe Program Trainers Consortium provides training internationally each year to hundreds of speech pathologists. You can get advice about speech pathologists closest to you who have received this training. Contact the Consortium by emailing the trainer who is closest to you. All Consortium member email addresses are listed at the weblink below.

The Lidcombe Program Trainers Consortium

http://sydney.edu.au/health_sciences/asrc/health_professionals/lptc.shtml