

Pointers For Parents

New Research on Children Who Stutter— Situation Should Not Be Ignored

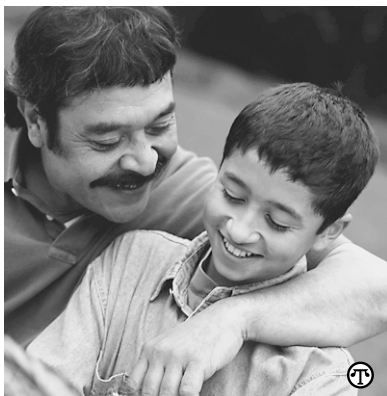
(NAPSA)—Parents who notice their young child beginning to stutter should seek help right away.

In the past, experts incorrectly believed that paying attention to a child's stuttering would exacerbate the situation. It was even feared that offering the child therapy "would arouse the child's awareness and cause more stuttering," said Ehud Yairi, speech-language pathologist and researcher at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and Tel-Aviv University.

Research by Yairi published in a recent issue of the *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, however, reveals that all children may be aware of the differences between fluent speech and stuttering as early as age three and that they often display a social preference for fluent-speaking children by the time they are four years old.

"These findings should provide support to the important idea that we should shift from a 'hands-off' approach to more direct therapy techniques, and even more so with school-age children," added Edward G. Conture, Ph.D., of Vanderbilt University.

"Any time parents are concerned about a child's fluency," notes Jane Fraser, president of the Stuttering Foundation, "they should educate themselves about the disorder and the many ways they can work to prevent stutter-



ing from becoming a chronic problem."

A new brochure, *If You Think Your Child Is Stuttering*, available in English and Spanish, answers questions parents and teachers often have. Written by Edward G. Conture, Ph.D., and Barry Guitar, Ph.D., of the University of Vermont, it describes the difference between normal disfluencies and stuttering and gives seven tips parents can use to help their child immediately.

For a free copy, parents, teachers and others may contact the Stuttering Foundation, P.O. Box 11749, Memphis, TN 38111-0749; 1-800-992-9392; e-mail stutter@vantek.net; or download directly from www.stutteringhelp.org. The 55-year-old nonprofit foundation also offers 24 books and 20 videotapes on stuttering, including the 30-minute video, *Stuttering and The Preschool Child: Help for Families*.