

When our child cannot speak fluently

LECHTA, V., KRÁLIKOVÁ, B. *Když naše dítě nemluví plynule*. Praha: Portál, 2011. ISBN 978-80-7367-849-4.

Reviewed by Monika Weilová

This year there has been published a specialized publication written by Viktor Lechta and Barbara Králiková called *When our child cannot speak fluently*, and it is now available from bookshops. Viktor Lechta has been dealing with stuttering therapy now for already 36 years and he is also the founder of the Centre for dysfluency – a workplace which is specifically focused on disorders of speech fluency in Bratislava. PhDr. Barbara Králiková works has been working as a clinical speech therapist. Currently, dysfluency of the speech of children is a hot topic that cannot be overlooked nowadays. When recognized an early intervention is appropriate to prevent any social, psychical or other complications from developing which can affect the lives of children suffering from dysfluency of speech.

The book is written using clear and intelligible style and is systematically divided into chapters. It is intended primarily for the parents of children, who suffer with dysfluent expression. There are some demonstrations of the author's own experience in this book, hence the readers will have the opportunity to clarify their theoretical knowledge with these practical examples. A positive aspect of this book is a brief exploration of the technical terms used directly in the text, and a glossary of the technical terminology which can be found at the end of the publication.

This publication is divided into segments, each that having their own signs that facilitate the reader's orientation in the text (these signs deal with questions, basic information, importance of, mistakes, and correct behavior). The first two chapters are an introduction into the problem of dysfluency, and it is here is where the manifestation of dysfluency is clarified (and this is not just about stuttering). There are some examples of these dysfluencies and the possible circumstances for the rise of dysfluency are also here explained. The authors tried to explain why some of these dysfluencies are received with fear and why others are not. They also ask themselves the question: "Are these phenomena around us actually fluent or non-fluent?" (p. 13)

The authors' answer to this is a contemplation about whether everything that is fluent is really positive and everything non-fluent negative.

In the next chapter the authors explain what can actually be counted as dysfluency and what the difference is between these kinds of disrupted communication abilities. The content of the next chapter includes the most common causes of dysfluency. Lechta and Králiková try at least theoretically to prepare parents for the course of these disorders themselves and their possible complications.

The authors pay special attention to the most noticeable symptoms of stuttering in the fifth chapter. They distinguish between the symptoms of audible and visible ones. A separate subsection is created by symptoms that are detectable only if the reader (parent) understands the child's feelings.

The sixth chapter is called *How to give help to a child effectively*; this chapter continues on from the previous quantitatively. The main subsections are created by describing developmental dysfluency, the beginning of stuttering and fixed stuttering. The authors place here emphasis on the intervention in the given phases of a child's dysfluent speech. Next, there is some good advice for parents as to how they should behave if they have a child with dysfluency. This chapter is focused primarily on the most common questions of parents and to the answers of these questions and to the explanation of the problem. The chapter called *The child with dysfluent speech at school* follows, and this one is focused on advice for teachers.

The chapter called *The myths about stuttering* is also very contributive. It presents some anachronisms that have been handed down often over the centuries. As an example can be mentioned the citation: "people suffering from stuttering are possessed by the Devil". (p. 112). Very useful is the chapter that summarizes the information about where the parents can look for professional help and where they can find more information about dysfluency of speech.

The facts in the book are accompanied by a series of black and white illustrations which complement and illustratively explain the information contained in the text.

We can conclude by saying that the publication of Viktor Lechta and Barbara Králiková called *When our child cannot speak fluently* is successful and we can recommend it to all those who care about the quality and problem-free development of children in the area of communication. The book will certainly be beneficial not only for all those who are interested in problems of disrupted communication abilities but above all for persons with dysfluent speech themselves.

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