

Neuroplasticity in Children Who Stutter (CWS): investigating any behavioural and neurological changes after stuttering therapy

ACTRN12622000694718

Status	RECRUITING
Sponsor	Wallis Grout-Brown
Enrollment	40 participants

Plain Language Summary

Stuttering is a common speech condition that usually begins in early childhood, and while many children grow out of it naturally, others do not. For decades, researchers have looked for the underlying cause of stuttering and have found that people who stutter show differences in how certain areas of the brain function compared to fluent speakers. However, we do not yet know whether effective speech therapy actually changes these brain differences — or whether changes in the brain explain who benefits from treatment.

This study uses advanced brain scanning (EEG) to measure brain activity in children aged 4 to 7 who stutter, before and after they receive speech therapy. A matched group of children who do not stutter are also scanned as a comparison. The goal is to find out whether therapy normalises brain function and whether brain changes relate to how well the child responds to treatment.

Your child may be eligible if they are between 4 and 7 years old, are a New Zealand English speaker, and have been diagnosed with developmental stuttering by a speech-language therapist. Children with other developmental conditions, neurological disorders, or who stutter due to causes other than typical development (such as stroke) are not eligible.

Key Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion (5)

- There will be two groups of participants:
- CWS: children who have been diagnosed with developmental stuttering by a qualified speech and language therapist.
- CWNS (control): children who have fluent speech and are matched for sex, age, and handedness with the CWS.
- Children of any sex aged 4 to 7 years.
- Monolingual New Zealanders English speakers.

Exclusion (4)

- Child younger than 4 or older than 7 years of age.
- NZ child speaking more than one language fluently.
- Child presents with developmental or neurological disorders (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD, learning delay or any obvious speech and language disorder other than stuttering). children presented with mild speech delay are included.
- Child presents with stuttering that is not developmental (e.g. due to stroke).

Locations (1 total)

Christchurch, New Zealand

<https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/TrialReview.aspx?ACTRN=ACTRN12622000694718>

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