

HCRI

Hollins Communications
Research Institute



Hollins Communications Research Institute, Roanoke, Virginia

A world-leading center for the investigation and treatment of stuttering





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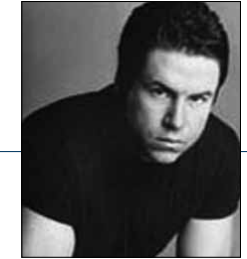
Over 3 million Americans and over 66 million worldwide...

That is the estimated number of persons who stutter. There is no “cure” for stuttering; however, there is a treatment center that has a strong history of success in helping those individuals who stutter achieve and retain fluent speech.



Stuttering has been with us since people first began to talk.

It has generated its own myths and superstitions, yet its cause remains a mystery. For most of the last century, experts believed that stuttering had psychological roots. The physical act of stuttering, they said, was just the tip of the iceberg and the person who stuttered had to deal with the shame and guilt beneath the surface before the problem could be resolved. Counseling, acceptance of the problem, and traditional speech therapies were common treatments.



Winston Churchill, Bruce Willis, Marilyn Monroe, James Earl Jones, Greg Louganis, Carly Simon, and John Melendez all suffered from stuttering. Other stutterers in history include Moses, Aristotle, and Isaac Newton.

*Speech is
the mirror
to the soul.
As man speaks,
so is he.*

Pubilius Syrus





The Hollins Communications Research Institute (HCRI) in Roanoke, Virginia is a nonprofit, tax-exempt treatment and research center dedicated exclusively to the problem of stuttering. HCRI has a substantial record of innovation in the treatment of this uniquely human disorder. The internationally recognized Hollins stuttering treatment program was the distinguished recipient of the First Award for Scientific Merit at a national convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. The Institute has also been featured on such programs as *Today*, *Good Morning America*, *20/20* and *Nightline*. At HCRI, we teach persons who stutter how to train and adapt muscle behaviors to produce fluent speech.

HCRI's behaviorally-oriented stuttering treatment program, the Hollins Fluency System™, evolved from research by Ronald L. Webster, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology (Emeritus) at Hollins University, Roanoke, Virginia and Director of the Institute. Dr. Webster is also a licensed clinical psychologist who has received the *Outstanding Contributions in the Application of Psychology* award from the Virginia Psychological Association.



Dr. Ronald Webster
HCRI Founder

Stuttering happens in your **muscles**, **not** in your mind.



Extensive research studies conducted by Dr. Webster and his HCRI scientists have strongly indicated that stuttering has a physical basis. One of the important findings has been that muscle activation patterns during speech initiation are higher in persons who stutter than they are in fluent speakers. An important suggestion derived from this research is that the speech muscle control systems do not function normally in those persons who stutter.

Meticulous research was conducted at HCRI in order to define specific fluency skills and to apply scientifically derived principles of learning to the acquisition and long-term retention of fluent speech. The goal at HCRI has always been to make stuttering therapy practical and effective for the greatest number of people.



From the beginning, Dr. Webster's research clearly indicated that many people who stutter could be "re-taught" to speak fluently. Gradually, through intensive research, a series of "target behaviors" was identified involving muscle movement details for respiration, vocalization and articulation that were effective in generating fluent speech.

Research on stuttering and the therapy program continue to be major efforts at the Institute. HCRI's therapy program, the **Hollins Fluency System™**, is continually monitored, with each step carefully examined for effectiveness. This process facilitates discovery of new information that can be used to improve the therapy program. The Institute's research has drastically enhanced the quality of treatment by expanding the understanding of the subtle details of speech muscle movements in stuttering, and the precision procedures by which fluency skills are taught. **HCRI continues to be a leader in discoveries and developments that improve the reliability and quality of stuttering therapy.**



The Hollins Fluency System™ is an intensive therapy program that has been extremely effective with a wide range of ages and stuttering severities.

HCRI's therapy program involves participation for only 12 days. The primary focus is upon learning new speech motor skills. Fundamental, distorted speech movements of stuttering are modified through carefully defined steps into newly reconstructed speech movements that generate fluent speech. This new speech pattern can be transferred readily into everyday life. In most cases, fluent speech is retained after the completion of therapy without continuing "carry-on" programs or post-therapy support groups. In addition, balanced attention is also directed within the therapy process to understanding and modifying cognitive and emotional components that accompany stuttered speech.

Full-time professional staff members who specialize in the treatment of stuttering administer the Hollins Fluency System™ therapy. Each client is guided on an individual basis through the therapy process by highly trained and experienced staff clinicians who provide detailed instruction and monitoring of client skills at each step of therapy. Most program graduates stay in touch with "their" clinicians after therapy is concluded, and the warm relationships established during therapy remain for years and years.

HCRI researchers have developed a powerful, but easy-to-use computer to assist with therapy. This is no ordinary computer. At various stages in therapy, the computer introduces new information and checks an individual's understanding of what has been presented. At other stages, the computer speaks and asks the client to use newly learned information to determine whether the examples spoken are correct or incorrect.



In its most advanced application, thanks to special electronic circuits and software developed at HCRI, the computer “listens” as the user practices various sounds, syllables, and words; measures and evaluates what is spoken; and provides immediate, accurate feedback about the correctness of the spoken responses. This innovation in real-time physical measurement of speech has made treatment more efficient and more effective for each participant. Accurate and sophisticated information is gathered from the computer about individual performance, and helps clinicians personally guide each person’s learning of fluency skills.

Participation in the 12-day therapy program involves sustained and intensive work; however, there are some things that make the going easier. There is the support of Dr. Webster and his staff, people who demonstrate enthusiasm for their work and empathy for those who stutter. There is the strength gained from others who will be attending the same session, who have shared the same frustrations, and who expect to share the same positive results. There is also the comfort factor that comes from realizing that this treatment has been very effective with literally thousands upon thousands who have participated in the same program.

A documented record of success.

An effective therapy should have a strong history of producing positive results.

HCRI's therapy has that record:

Over 5,500 people have completed HCRI's therapy program. This therapy has been used at HCRI in 14 different languages with people who have come to the Institute from 23 foreign countries.

Data show that 90% of those who have participated in the Hollins program attained normal levels of fluency by the time therapy was completed. Follow-up studies verified by independent sources showed that 75% of program graduates retain normal fluency and normal reactions to everyday speaking situations two years later.

Another important observation that underscores the quality of the HCRI therapy program is the illuminating experience of attending the annual HCRI reunions along side of many alumni who have been fluent speakers for the past 25 years!

HCRI Introduces New Stuttering Therapy Program: **Hollins Fluency System II™**

Hollins Communications Research Institute (HCRI) has introduced an innovative, new stuttering therapy program that builds on the success of our 35 years of research and clinical experience. Our new **Hollins Fluency System II™** incorporates the most advanced behavioral and electronic technologies available today in order to provide the best possible therapy to persons who stutter. The new program adds power and precision to the therapeutic process.

The HCRI experience has had a profound effect on many of those who have attended. How did it change their lives?

“It’s the most wonderful thing that ever happened to a person who stutters,” said one woman. “I had crawled into a shell and would not make any attempt to talk. When I left HCRI, I was a different person.”

One HCRI graduate spoke at his commencement exercises. “It was one of the proudest moments of my life,” he said.

Near the end of one therapy session, a man who was in his early 50’s came out of one of the HCRI offices crying. A staff member stopped him in the hallway and asked him what was wrong. “Today is the 25th wedding anniversary for my wife and me,” he said. “I’ve never talked to her on the phone before; but, I just called and wished her a Happy Anniversary.”

“For the first time, I can talk without fear,” wrote one man who completed the HCRI therapy program. “I have always tried not to allow my impediment to hold me back in any manner. Now I have attained a goal neither words nor money can express.”

HCRI participants include over 5500 people who have carried the burden of stuttering. Most have tried other programs with little success. The dedicated staff at HCRI has demonstrated that it does not have to be that way. Among those who have received help at HCRI are: wife of U.S. Senator John Glenn, Annie Glenn, who was uncomfortable in public speaking situations; Arthur M. Blank, co-founder of Home Depot, for whom stuttering had been a persistent problem; Lester Hayes of the Los Angeles Raiders, who feared the torture of post-game interviews; and 20/20 Co-Anchor John Stossel, whose speech problem interfered with his career.

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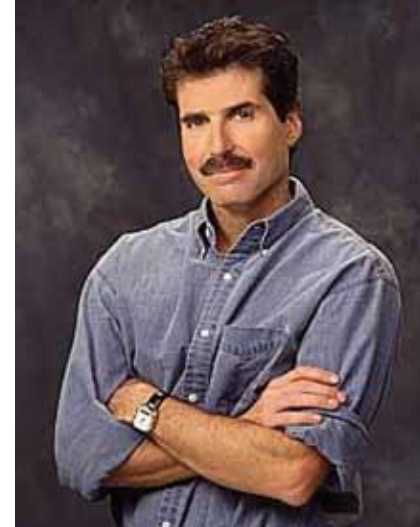
Annie Glenn
with husband,
John Glenn



Entrepreneur
and CEO Arthur
M. Blank



Lester Hayes
of the
Los Angeles
Raiders



20/20
Co-Anchor
John Stossel

HCRI remains available to support and assist its program graduates.

Researchers at HCRI have developed a new internet based practice system (*named **FluencyNet™** and available on a 24/7 basis*) that makes it possible for program graduates to practice fluency skills at home or at work while receiving the same type of computer speech evaluations that were used during therapy. FluencyNet™ is almost like having your personal clinician working directly with you! Other online self-evaluation tools produced by HCRI allow long-term documentation of fluency progress, including ***StutteringEvaluator.org** and **PSItest.org***.

An annual fluency skills conference and reunion is held at HCRI during the second weekend of July that provides our alumni with opportunities to visit with old friends, meet new friends, catch up on new developments in stuttering research and therapy, and to polish their fluency skills.

In addition, the HCRI newsletter is published twice a year in order to provide updated information about the program and its alumni. There is also a private alumni section on HCRI's website (www.Stuttering.org) where information can be shared with all program graduates.





Thank you for your interest in the Hollins Communications Research Institute and our scientifically-based stuttering treatment program. Please contact us at any time if you have questions or are ready to schedule therapy. We are here to serve you.

HCRI

www.stuttering.org
(540) 265-5650

