



MEDIA KIT

# CHANGE & IMPACT FOUNDER MICHAEL KIDD-GILCHRIST

**M**ichael Kidd-Gilchrist is widely recognized for his stellar basketball career as a University of Kentucky Men's Basketball Champion and as the second overall pick in the 2012 NBA Draft by Michael Jordan and the Charlotte Bobcats (now Hornets). Over his eight-year NBA career, he played for the Charlotte Bobcats/Hornets and the Dallas Mavericks. His numerous high school, collegiate, and professional accolades solidify his legacy in basketball.

Beyond his athletic achievements, Michael is a leading advocate for the stuttering community. In 2021, he founded Change & Impact, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to improving healthcare access and expanding resources for individuals who stutter. As Founder and CEO, Michael travels the country on the Change & Impact Stuttering Awareness Tour, engaging universities, corporations, and children's hospitals nationwide. Through this initiative, Change & Impact partners with agencies to provide free speech therapy services for children and teens who stutter, conducts complimentary continuing education programs for speech-language pathologists and hosts special events for the stuttering community.

Michael's personal advocacy extends to the legislative arena, where he collaborates with federal and state lawmakers to drive systemic change. His efforts culminated in the 2023 launch of the Bipartisan Unified Voices Caucus on Capitol Hill, advancing stuttering awareness at a national level. In 2024, Michael secured bipartisan support for groundbreaking state laws in Kentucky and then Pennsylvania, expanding healthcare coverage for stuttering therapy.

In recognition of his transformative leadership and impact in the stuttering community, Michael was honored with the 2024 Annie Glenn Award by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).



# CHANGE & IMPACT

## MISSION & GOALS

Michael Kidd-Gilchrist has been stuttering since a very young age. He is proud to say he stutters, showing and sharing his imperfection. His vision is to be a leader within the stuttering community, serving as an example of how best to stay strong and help others along the way.

Through the essence of that very vision, Michael Kidd-Gilchrist founded *Change & Impact, Inc.*



### CHANGE & IMPACT MISSION

**To improve access to healthcare and expand services and resources for those who stutter.**

### CHANGE & IMPACT GOALS

- Support our Founder & CEO's personal bi-partisan legislative efforts to pass healthcare bills that improve insurance coverage for the stuttering community.
- Work with key stakeholders to establish a standardized definition of stuttering that has a global reach to all involved in access to healthcare, services, and resources for those who stutter.
- Educate insurance providers on the efficacy and efficiency of stuttering therapy to improve speech therapy coverage.
- Target efforts towards primary care provider education to understand speech therapy, strategic referral of patients, to the right specialists, and through the right protocols.
- Empower families to gain a better understanding of how to navigate the complex healthcare system for speech therapy.
- Enhance graduate education in stuttering for future speech-language pathologists.
- Explore research funding to expand outcomes data on the efficacy of speech therapy.

“What I want the public to know about those who stutter is that we are no different. When you fall you get up, and you're going to fall again, and you're going to get back up. That is the type of example I want to set and show to my family, my friends and the public eye about those who stutter.”

— MICHAEL  
KIDD-GILCHRIST

# STUTTERING FAST FACTS

## HOW STUTTERING CAN IMPACT QUALITY OF LIFE

People who stutter are more likely to:

- Rate themselves as poor communicators
- Demonstrate social anxiety, high stress
- Present with reduced self-esteem and self-image
- Experience teasing and bullying
- Report a reduced quality of life
- Be rejected socially, viewed as unpopular by peers
- Avoid interactions with teachers, peers, employers
- Demonstrate symptoms of depression or suicidal ideation
- Be aware of negative stereotypes/perceptions of people who stutter
- Be reluctant to apply to a career with increased opportunities to communicate verbally

## MYTHS VS. FACTS

**MYTH:** Nervousness can cause stuttering

**FACT:** *Nervousness does not cause stuttering, nor should we assume that people who stutter are prone to be nervous, fearful, anxious, or shy. They have the same full range of personality traits as those who do not stutter.*

**MYTH:** Stuttering can be “caught” through imitation or hearing another person stutter.

**FACT:** *You cannot “catch” stuttering. Imitation or hearing another person stutter are not factors that contribute to stuttering.*

**MYTH:** People who stutter are not smart.

**FACT:** *There is no link whatsoever between stuttering and intelligence; cognition is not impacted.*

**MYTH:** Stress causes stuttering.

**FACT:** *Many complex factors are involved when stuttering. While stress can aggravate stuttering, it is not a cause.*

**MYTH:** It helps to tell a person to “take a deep breath before talking,” or to “think about what you want to say first.”

**FACT:** *This advice can make a person who stutters more self-conscious and can cause a stutter to worsen. A more helpful approach is to listen patiently and model clear and slow speech.*

*Source: Five Myths About Stuttering | Stuttering Foundation: A Nonprofit Organization Helping Those Who Stutter (stutteringhelp.org)*

## STATISTICS

More than  
**70**  
MILLION PEOPLE  
worldwide  
stutter



Roughly 3 million  
Americans stutter



Affects males four times  
more than females



Most children start  
stuttering between  
2 to 5 years of age



Stuttering is genetically  
based. Approximately  
2 out of 3 people who  
stutter have at least  
one family member  
that stutters.

# BARRIERS & RECOMMENDATIONS

EARLIER  
SPEECH THERAPY  
INTERVENTION LEADS  
TO HIGHER RATE OF  
RECOVERY

## BARRIERS TO SPEECH THERAPY FOR STUTTERING

1. **Lack of a standardized definition for stuttering.**
2. **Inconsistency in defining the medical need for speech therapy.**
3. **Difficulty navigating a complex healthcare system and the referral process to find the right specialist for speech therapy.**
4. **Access to speech therapy**
  - **School setting.**

To receive speech therapy in a school setting, there must be an identifiable concern or negative educational impact for a student who stutters to be considered for a Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) and school-based speech therapy. More than half of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) are working in schools; many of whom lack expertise in stuttering. Without insurance coverage or the ability to pay out-of-pocket for private speech therapy, students who stutter are often limited to school-based therapy options with no access to an SLP with expertise in stuttering.
  - **Medical or private setting.**

Clinical specialists in stuttering work primarily in private practices, at hospitals or at universities. In some cases, patients and families face no medical coverage for speech therapy, or coverage with limitations and restrictions to speech therapy. This can create financial barriers due to an increased out-of-pocket cost for therapy and other ancillary costs (travel time, time off work).
5. **Gaps in the continuum of care for speech therapy insurance coverage.**
6. **High out-of-pocket costs due to limited or no insurance coverage.**



**4 YEAR OLD:**  
**75% CHANCE OF  
RECOVERY**



**6 YEAR OLD:**  
**50% CHANCE OF  
RECOVERY**



**10 YEAR OLD:**  
**25% CHANCE OF  
RECOVERY**

*Source: Andrews et al., 1983;  
Craig et al., 2002; Yairi &  
Ambrose, 1999, 2005*

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO OVERCOME BARRIERS

- Create a standardized definition for stuttering.
- Collaborate with insurance carriers on education and access to improve and increase speech therapy coverage.
- Target stuttering education efforts towards primary care physicians, speech-language pathologists, patients and families.
- Enhance the documentation of outcome measures of speech therapy intervention.
- Create a step-by-step process that navigates families through the complex healthcare system.
- Increase access to communities while driving down costs through teletherapy.

# NAVIGATING THE ROAD TO SPEECH THERAPY

Navigating the road to effective speech therapy can be challenging for parents or caregivers of a child who stutters. Speech therapy services may be sought in either a school and/or private setting. Parents and caregivers, school teachers, healthcare providers, insurance carriers and speech-language pathologists must all work together to ensure that a child who stutters receives the speech therapy services he or she deserves.



# CHANGE & IMPACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



**Michael Kidd-Gilchrist** is a professional American basketball player who has played in the National Basketball Association (NBA) for the last eight years and is Founder of Change & Impact. As a person who stutters, Michael is focused and committed to leading the change needed to make

a positive impact on the accessibility of health-related services and resources for all those who stutter. Currently, Michael is an undergraduate pursuing a degree in Communications Sciences & Disorders and appears as a guest speaker sharing his personal story as a person who stutters at colleges and universities, camps and conferences all across the country.



**Joseph Donaher, Ph.D., CCC-SLP** is the Academic and Research Program Director of the Center for Childhood Communication at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Dr. Donaher is an Assistant Professor of Otorhinolaryngology at The University of Pennsylvania. He is a Board Certified

Specialist in Fluency and Fluency Disorders. Currently Dr. Donaher serves as treasurer on the American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders. His clinical and research interests focus on the assessment and treatment of school-age children who stutter and disfluency patterns secondary to neurological conditions such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.



**Kristen Peifer** is a seasoned public relations and marketing executive with more than 20 years of experience. With a highly-performing tactical success record covering a variety of industries such as sports and entertainment, healthcare, legal and non-profits, Kristen leads strategic

communications and creative marketing campaigns to create, elevate and expand brands. She harnesses the power of public relations to cultivate partnerships, and boost community impact and reputation. As Founder and CEO of LiftU Public Relations, she serves as an advisor and publicist to high-profile celebrity clients, executives and corporations.



**Dr. Cami Jordan** is a board-certified pediatrician with 25 years of experience. She earned her medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine, completed her pediatric residency at the University of Virginia, and is a fellow of the American Board of Pediatrics. She has a strong

commitment to integrated medicine incorporating mental health care into her practice. Dr. Jordan currently provides care to children at a community health center. She is a certified health coach and enjoys cooking and traveling. She has been happily married for 30 years and has two sons, a French Bulldog, and a Labrador Retriever.

## MISSION & VISION

### OUR MISSION

Founded in 2021 by NBA player Michael Kidd-Gilchrist, Change & Impact is a 501(c)(3) organization with a dedicated mission to improve access to healthcare and expand services and resources for those who stutter.

### OUR VISION





To change the social stigma of stuttering through awareness, education and empowerment.

## CONTACT & FOLLOW

### MEDIA REQUESTS

For media inquiries, please contact Kristen Peifer at [kristen@liftupr.com](mailto:kristen@liftupr.com).

### FOLLOW US

-  [changeandimpactinc.org](https://www.changeandimpactinc.org)
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