(The Speechie Show Ep.10)

Welcome to the Speechie Show! Being a speech language pathologist often means having too much work and not enough planning time. To beat the overwhelm, we’re bringing you the tricks and tools that will make your job a little bit easier.

**Carrie:** Hey everybody, welcome to the Speechie Show. I'm Carrie Clark from [speechandlanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and we are here with Kristie Knickerbocker from [A Tempo Voice Center](http://www.atempovoicecenter.com/). How are you Kristie?

**Kristie:** I'm well, Carrie, how are you?

**Carrie:** I'm good. We're so glad to have you here. Today we are talking about what to do if you are not super jazzed about treating voice disorder children. So, if you have some children on your case load with voice disorders and maybe it’s been awhile since you've talked about that in grad school, we're going to give you some tips today to help you with the voice disorders. If you are new to the show, this is the Speechie Show. We do this once a week. I get on with another speech language pathologist and we talk about whatever comes up. We talk about one topic each week and try to share about 5 tips with you. So today we're here with Kristie. We're going to have some giveaways here in a minute if you are watching on Facebook Live. So stay tuned and while we are getting started here, go ahead and type in what kinds of voice problems are the children that you work with having. So are you having problems with nodules or polyps or maybe you don't even know. You're just having some voice problems with your students and you’re not even sure what’s going on. Go ahead and type that in so that we know what we're looking at today and if you have any specific questions we can answer those as well. While people are doing that, Kristie, why don't you go ahead and introduce yourself and your business.

**Kristie:** Thanks, Carrie. So my name is Kristie Knickerbocker. I am a speech language pathologist and I specialize very specifically in voice disorders. I was a classically trained singer in college and I had a voice disorder myself. I had a cyst on my left vocal cord and I had to get it surgically removed and I had voice rehabilitation before and after surgery and I really liked what my voice therapist had done for me. So I decided that I wanted to change majors and wanted to give back to everybody. And I could do such a good job with that because I had been a patient and I can really understand. Maybe not every disorder everybody has, but I can understand how frustrating it can be and how scary it can be.

**Carrie:** Absolutely. Being able to take that perspective with a patient is huge.

**Kristie:** Yeah. And so I run my own private practice in Fort Worth, Texas. It’s called [A Tempo Voice Center](http://www.atempovoicecenter.com/). I am currently setting up a mobile video stroboscope and fees clinic called Voice Diagnostics. It's in the pre-stages and so we're looking to grow that within this next year, as well.

**Carrie:** Fantastic. Wow that sounds fun. Very cool. Alright let’s see, so we're going to talk about these 5 tips to share with you today. We're working with children with voice disorders. Go ahead and share this on Facebook so that other people who are also working with voice disorders can see this, as well. And if you guys have any questions as we're going along, go ahead and type those in. Don't forget to be typing in what kind of voice disorders your students are working or dealing with right now. Ok, the first point we're going to be talking about today, the first tip is flow phonation. Kristie, can you tell us about flow phonation?

**Kristie:** So flow phonation is a type of intervention that is really helpful with your children with hyper function and what I mean by that is that they're squeezing too tightly with their vocal cords and their voice box to try and get the sound to come out. And sometimes that’s what they’re doing and that's the weird behavior or sometimes that has resulted in some physiological changes like vocal modules or a polyp or even a hemorrhage. So this type of therapy you can use visual feedback for in the form of a Kleenex. And so all we do is we tear down the side of a Kleenex where the fold is. Here I can demonstrate that. So you're just tearing it like this about an inch in width and you're working on going from just air flow to blowing a little bit of air and sound-about 20% sound kind of like the sound over a coke bottle would make if you were to blow and make noise and it sounds like this. And then you work to add that sound to rote tasks like counting. And the idea is to get the child to be voicing and making noise without doing this breath whisper type of thing or a breath talk, kind of like this. So doing it with or without this visual aid and really trying to help kind of circumvent the child’s phono Tory patterns that they are using to speak and introducing something that they can do that's fun and visual. But hopefully getting them to practice and have that be their new normal.

**Carrie:** Awesome. So do you do that as like activities that you're doing in the therapy and then you expect them to carry it over or is this just king of to show them the opposite side of that phonation that they're doing?

**Kristie:** So, both. Using the technique in therapy secessions with different words and then sending home words, sentences and things, whatever they advance to that day. You don't want to send them home with sentences they couldn't even get past the initial sound because parents would be frustrated and the child would not practice. And if you're wondering how to do that, in my voice agenda for pediatric clients, it has plenty of flow voice tasks in very easy to follow how-to’s on that. Step one, step two, phase one and two. And then things to help carry over with voice journals.

**Carrie:** Oh awesome. Ok so if you're watching, that is an activity book. We're going to be giving one away here in just a little bit. Hang tight and you can get access to that activity book and we'll show you how to get a hold of that. Ok one additional question I have on this...Do you need to wait, let’s say they have nodules or hemorrhage or something like that, do you need to wait until that's cleared up before you do this therapy or can you do that while they're still healing from the other things?

**Kristie:** So, two-part answer to that question. You should not begin any intervention until you've had an examination from an otolaryngologist, the fancy word for and Ear, Nose, Throat doctor. If they can do visual if you have access to at least a nasoendoscopy where the camera is going in through the nose to see the vocal folds or at best a video stroboscope where the flashing light shows the vocal cords in slow motion. So you can actually see what’s really going on and how they're preforming during a phono Tory task. When you're doing that you're helping yourself by not causing any further damage by your treatment. Nodules do not disappear unless the child stops the abuse to the vocal folds. So nodules are forming because the vocal folds are colliding so hard and so many times, very intense being a loud voice over and over and the only way that's going to happen is if you introduce a behavior that will stop that from happening. It's kind of like if you were wearing a pair of new shoes...there was some shoe that's been all over Instagram that everybody’s been buying...what is that shoe?

**Carrie:** I don't remember...hahaha.

**Kristie:** But wearing a new pair of those shoes, they start rubbing a blister. If you keep wearing the shoe your blister will pop. It will hurt but it will eventually callus over and you won't even know that it use to hurt but your skin is forever changed until you've stopped wearing that shoe. Shoe stops being worn, skin goes back to normal but it takes a while with that new way of voicing.

**Carrie:** Sure. So you get the clearance from the ENT and you can start these after you get the clearance?

**Kristie:** Yes

**Carrie:** Alright perfect. So if you guys have any questions on any of this as we're going along, go ahead and type those in now. Ok, so we talked about flow phonation. The next one we're going to talk about is vocal health and hygiene. Kristie, tell us how this looks for our children clients.

**Kristie:** So this looks in the form of making sure that your child on your case load is very well hydrated. And this can be topically or systemically and that just means from the outside and from the inside. You need to make sure that you are limiting second hand smoke for this child. Obviously your 4 and 5 year old kiddos aren't lighting up cigarettes, but they might not be able to help being in a home, you know visiting grandma where you've got smoke in the air. Trying to teach them not to yell or not to talk loudly for long periods of time is another piece of this hygiene. So try telling a child you know, don't yell on the playground...hahaha. This to help entice them, these games that I’ve come up with and then this is available for free on my website. These are bookmarks to help teach good vocal hygiene and vocal health. But trying to keep it fun and keeping them engaged in that. Obviously they shouldn't be drinking caffeine, but you never know. That can aggravate reflux and it can dry out your vocal fold tissue. Then trying to encourage them not to grunt when exercising or make weird character noises. Sometimes they come in and the talk like this...not that that is going to cause them to have a voice disorder, but it kind of continues to put pieces together if they have the genetics, if they're dehydrated...if all the things come together and become a perfect storm they may develop something like that. So if they have already developed, making them very aware of how to be healthy and have vocal hygiene.

**Carrie:** Absolutely. Yeah that sounds great. And we will share the like for that bookmark. We'll share that on the Facebook comments and also in the show notes of this over on my site. We will also share the link to the activity book that she's doing a giveaway on here in just a little bit. Ok so talk about straw phonation. That's our 3rd tip today.

**Kristie:** Ok so this is another really visual great idea you can kind of just go with this and it's based on research done by a man named Ingo Tetsa. It is to create this back pressure in the back of your mouth to help the vocal cords vibrate without excess tension. So what you're doing, you can't, it's very hard to do this incorrectly, so that's what makes this tool so fantastic. So you can get a cup with water. I get these straws at the dollar store, the Dollar Tree. You don't want to go too narrow in diameter. Although that creates a more official effect, it's harder for the child to do, so you can kind of get to find a happy medium with the diameter about that much. So all you need to do is put your straw in about an inch or so of the water and then blow bubbles and then add sound. Can you hear that ok?

**Carrie:** Yeah, I can.

**Kristie:** So you can do hills and accents, sing songs. Ok just to encourage. All of that is making the vocal folds release that grip of tension that the child is most likely using when their hyper function in their phono Tory behavior. So it's an excellent way to do this. I've got a relatively inexpensive product on my Teachers Pay Teachers website, as well as my website with these cards to help vary the sounds and it kind of, you know can get boring. You could add glitter to the water. You can add food coloring. As long as they don't drink the glitter, that's kind of hard when you bring that out and you're like please don't... hahaha.

**Carrie:**  Hahaha...yeah that would not be ideal.

**Kristie:** But you know growing loud and growing soft cards. Making it fun to do that task.

**Carrie:** Awesome. I'm taking some notes of the things they need to like to. So we're gonna like to the bookmark, the cards for the straw phonation and the voice activity books. So stay tuned we'll get you those links. And don't forget we have some giveaways coming up in just a couple minutes. We're almost to our five tips. We have two giveaways for you today. The voice activity book, as well as, two free months in my membership program. So stay tuned if you're on here with us live. Ok, so the next tip we're going talk about is #4, resonant voice.

**Kristie:** Ok so resonant voice is a type of therapy that is going with how you hear yourself and how you feel the sounds. So it’s a tactile sensation. And roots are in Mark Madson and Arther Lee Sak. Kitty Verdalini has done a program that you can take webinars on to learn more about this technique. But basically you’re just trying to put the sound out of the throat and into the front of your face. Encouraging this forward focus resonance. So the target in isolation for this is a hum and there's many ways to do a hum and I talk with my kiddos about this. We practice the idea of negative practice, which I'm sure you may be doing...(video cut out)...in the back of the throat...mmmmm...and then try to throw it forward like an egg is in your mouth with your lips closed trying to buzz your nose and cheek bones like this...mmmmm. So as we go back and forth...mmmm...mmmm...they can start hearing and feeling the difference as we encourage that hum to go into M words and sentences. It's something that you probably remember learning about in grad school if you haven't heard of anything else that I've introduced. But that's what the basis is and again I have in the voice pediatric addition there are journals, coloring pages and lots of activities for single word sentences conversation and then advanced tasks after that including masking, things like that for carry over purposes.

**Carrie:** Perfect. That's the best explanation I've ever heard of that cause I've never quite understood what people were supposed to do with that. Like yeah that’s a thing. I just don't know how to do it so thank you...hahaha.

**Kristie:** I would always get so confused because in school it was...there are so many ways you could go, you know what do I do, how do I choose what’s the right route. And it’s like well there’s only just a hand full but I wanted it more specific because with everything else it’s very specific. The best thing about this activity book I've created is a flow chart on which technique is best so you can flow down and say "does your patient have a breathy voice and you can go yes or no. And it takes you through what the patient is stimulable for and then when your kiddo can do one of them you can try that. I switch all the time in my secessions. So if something was working one day and the next day the child is doing it completely wrong, I am never afraid to switch gears right in the middle of things. Because if they're doing it incorrectly and it’s not producing the target sound you want, you know, pick something else.

**Carrie:** I love flow charts! I just love flow charts. I think that's great. Ok so we've got one more tip and then we're going to do our giveaways. So the last tip is reducing phono traumatic behaviors. Let's talk about how that looks for our children.

**Kristie:** Ok, so phono trauma is just a fancy word for the vocal folds colliding in a way that's traumatic. Too hard, too fast. So loud talking, long talking without a break. And we want to do this in our kiddos by way of saying, not only fixing the way they're speaking but they're vegetative sounds, as well. So I mean throat clearing, I mean coughing. I understand if they're sick, you can't really help if your child is sick but trying to make those coughs not so abrasive when they're happening. As well as, introducing diaphragmatic abdominal breathing. You hear that word and you don't really remember what that means. So can't breathe air into your diaphragm, you can try, it's a muscle though. All it's really talking about is trying not to take a deep breath like this. Because it's not very efficient. It's not going to promote your voice to carry over on the breath that you're taking. So encouraging the kiddos to breathe in. And I've got a product for this called birthday candle breathing, as well as, there's a little blurb about it with a couple tasks in the book. We're talking about the Voice in a Jiff Pediatric edition about why is breathing so important. Breathing inward to expand your belly and then blowing air out through your mouth like you're blowing out birthday candles and then squeezing, and here's the tricky part because you don't want them squeezing their throats, you want to have all of the effort being in the abdomen. So squeezing their belly muscles like they're doing a sit up. So that idea of (blowing) let’s let the belly go in even though you may be running out of air, don't squeeze at the throat level. So trying to have that as a basis for everything that you're working on with target issues as well as keeping the throat clearing and the coughing down.

**Carrie:** Perfect, I love that. So you would teach the breathing and then maybe do some speech exercises where you're having them speak on a breath like that?

**Kristie:** Yes. And working to how long can you speak on that breath. So you can go from..and this is included in that book too..you can go from single words...my...my mom...my mom mails me money. And then you're trying to go for a long....I love my dog with a tail wagging when I arrived home with treats. And seeing how long. You know kids like to be competitive so keeping them saying how long can you do without squeezing from your throat. And without going into vocal fry because we don't want to talk like Kardashians ok...hahaha. Use some air when you are talking.

**Carrie:** Hahahaha...use some air. Oh I love it! I think those are 5 really great tips. I hope that was helpful for all of you watching. We are going to go ahead and do our giveaways now. So Kristie's been teasing this book. Tell us what all is in this book that you're going to give away today.

**Kristie:** Ok so this is Voice in a Jiff pediatric edition and it specifically voice rehabilitation for kids. It includes everything you need basically. This is a one stop shop for you...there are other activities for sale in my store that dive a little deeper into these things and kind of can get a variety of activities for your kiddo. But if you have no idea how to begin treating the child that just landed on your case load with voice disorder, this is for you. Because you'll look like a voice expert when you have this and I specifically made it where it’s easy to follow for the kids and really for you guys. Because who's been in a secession and it's like crap I forgot to grab that. And then you're frantically trying to read in all this text which you're supposed to be doing. So why not make it where these are not only accessible for homework handouts to send home, but you've got easy to read, large print things that you can follow and wing it. Because let’s face it, we're doing that on a daily basis right.

**Carrie:** Right, absolutely. Hahaha.

**Kristie:** But you can really act like you've prepared and just pull this out.

**Carrie:** Tanika says nice ideas. She's excited about that too.

**Kristie:** Yeah it's got vocal tract exercises with just the straw phonation, the bubbles in a cup, vocal resonant and then it has flow phonation, as well. I've got carry over tasks, the breath training like I was talking about and then an awesome vocal hygiene check list that's a great tool to send home with your kids and give to your teachers. So there's nothing more embarrassing than having to go to speech when you’re a kid. So I know that trying to sit in and give education to the kids in the classroom who may not know what voice disorders are, or may not know what speech therapy is. You know encouragement with handouts for parents and teachers to help kind of break that ice and say yeah Johnny's going over here to help his voice and you can help him too. Let’s all get our straws out, you know that will encourage carry over because the friends, the family, that's who’s with that kids all the time, teachers as well.

**Carrie:** Absolutely. Alright so we're giving away one copy of that. For the people that don't win the giveaway today though, where can they find that?

**Kristie:** So they can find that and other voice related resources on my Teachers Pay Teachers website. You go to the search bar and you type in A Tempo Voice Center and you can go there. They're available on my website, as well and there's freebies also, lots and lots of freebies that are helpful.

**Carrie:** Perfect, ok. So, we're going to give that away in just a minute. We're also giving away two free months in my membership, the Speech Therapy Solution. If you're not familiar with that, that is my exclusive membership for speech language pathologists. Once you get in, you get access to training videos and a materials library with things that you can print out and use right away in therapy. I also answer questions in a Facebook group and on the website. Plus there's a monthly webinar. So all kinds of good perks in there. And I'm giving away two free months to the person who wins my giveaway. So here we go for the giveaway, are you guys ready? I'm going to ask a question and the first two people to respond on Facebook Live here today on January 30th, are going to win. So the first person to respond is going to win the voice book. The second person to respond will get the two months in the membership. So here we go, ready? Get your thumbs ready to type. Ok, name one cause of voice problems. The first two people to type in a cause of voice problems will win the giveaways. Drum roll please. I keep talking about how I need to get some suspenseful music in here because there’s a delay. So Deanna says nodules. Deanna Rabbanobitz. I totally butchered your last name. And Jenna Douglas says polyps. Wonderful. Ok ladies, so Deanna wins the voice book. How do you want her to contact you?

**Kristie:** Via email, or Facebook is fine. Let’s do that. Through my Facebook page A Tempo Voice Center on Facebook and I'll get that sent to you via email. It’s a digital copy of the book and so you can print it off and get it bound.

**Carrie:** Alright and Jenna you win the two free months. Go ahead and email me a Carrie@speechandlanguagekids.com. And my assistant Kena will get you set up with your free membership. Alright and we had a bunch of other people chime in too. Wonderful, thank you everyone. Ok we hope that that helped you with your voice cases. If you guys have more tough cases that you need help with, you are welcome to join us in the Speech Therapy Solution, my membership site. You can find that by going to [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). Alright Kristie, where can people find more about you if they'd like to see what all of what you have to offer?

**Kristie:** So I blog on my website, which is [atempovoicecenter.com](http://www.atempovoicecenter.com/). I'm on Facebook and I'm on Instagram as well and its @Kristie\_Voice. And my Teachers Pay Teachers website. You can follow me and get alerts when I post a new product that you must have in your voice treatment if you like it.

**Carrie:** That's wonderful. You showed a ton of really good stuff so I'm sure you have even more goodies on your Teachers Pay Teachers store. Alright, thank you all for joining us today. Tia says great info and thanks for the session and Amy says thanks for the helpful tips. We got some good feedback today. So join us here next Monday. We're not sure who's gonna be the guest next Monday. It may just be a solo show with me, but we will shoot that out on Facebook so you will know what's to come next Monday. Or if you're watching the recording after the fact, you can always head over to the Facebook page on Monday afternoon and see what our latest Speechie Show live is. Alright, thank you all for joining and we'll catch you next time...bye.

Thank you for joining us today on The Speechie Show. We hope today’s tips have helped you feel a little less stressed and a little more confident about your work. If you’re looking for more stress busters and confidence boosters, we’d love to have you join us in The Speech Therapy Solution, where you’ll get access to a huge library of premium training videos and another library of print and go therapy materials. You can also get help with your tough cases by Carrie on the weekly Q&A calls, or by posting in the exclusive Facebook group. Plus, group members can join us for a monthly webinar that can be used for a continuing education credit. Head on over to [SpeechandLanguageKids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) to check out all the amazing benefits of the speech therapy solution membership. Bye for now.