(The Speechie Show Ep.18)

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 and welcome to the Speechie Show. I am your host Carrie Clark from speechandlanguagekids.com and I am here today with Kelly from [speech2u.com](http://www.speech2u.com/). How are you today Kelly?

**Kelly**: I am great, thank you.

**Carrie**: Thank you so much for being on the show today. We are talking today about what to do when your students shut down and don't want to participate in your session. So, Kelly is going to be sharing some awesome tips with us today about how to get some engagement. How to get those students a little more focused and excited about doing what you want to do. So if you are new to this show, this is the Speechie Show. I do this once a week every Monday afternoon, more or less. And what I do is I interview a speech language pathologist and we talk about one topic. We share 5 tips and then we do some fun giveaways and talk about our favorite resources. So if you are watching with us today live on Facebook, welcome. Hang out with us for a while and you'll have a chance to win our giveaways today. I don't know what that chirping is, so sorry about that. So, here's my question to you. If you are watching with us live today, do you feel confident about what to do when a student refuses? So, you're doing therapy and the student is just not having it. Do you feel like ok I got this, I've got some things in my bag, I've got a bag of tricks? Or do you kind of freak out. Let us know in the comments how you feel when your students don't participate. And while you're doing that, Kelly why don't you go ahead and introduce yourself and your business for us.

**Kelly**: Sure, so I have been a speech language pathologist since 1997. So, I usually have to pull up the age calculator since it's been so long...hahaha...and I forgot to do it before I was on here so you can do the math for that. I also have a blog that's called [speech2u.com](http://www.speech2u.com/) and I also create some resources for speech language pathologists on [Teachers Pay Teachers](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech2u).

**Carrie**: Fabulous, fabulous. And what ages are you working with right now.

**Kelly**: I am working with ages 2-17, so kind of all different ages.

**Carrie**: Perfect, alright. So, we're going to be sharing tips with you today about how to get engagement across ages, not just specific to preschool or a certain age group. Ok so we're going to go ahead and get started. We are going to share 5 tips with you today. If you have any questions, you can type those in and we'll take those as we go. Also, don't forget to share this on your Facebook page so other people can find us as well. Ok so the first tip we are going to talk about today is finding special interests and following the student's interests during your session. Kelly tell us how that looks for you.

**Kelly**: So for me I'm going to think that our kids, and a lot of the kids that I work with are on the Autism spectrum and they have kind of very unique interests from maybe being interested in fire extinguishers, sprinklers, to Star Wars, to Minecraft. And being able to have a basic terminology for that can be kind of huge. Like Minecraft has been really big with my adolescent boys lately and so I have an 8-year-old, so I have a little extra knowledge with that. But you know being able to throw out, oh is that a creeper or is that Hero Brine. And I don't completely know all of it but I know enough to get them engaged and they can explain and then we can start that conversation.

**Carrie**: Perfect, yeah. One of the things I really like to do for that is I will open up a PowerPoint presentation on my computer, like just a blank one, and I'll ask them what topic they want to talk about and it's usually one of their preferred topics. And we'll type in the topic and then we'll go over to Google image search, with SafeSearch on, and type in the topic and then pictures will come up and then you can kind of ask, oh what’s this. And if you can't understand them you can click on it and it will usually tell you what it is. I did that with Ninjago because I knew nothing about Ninjago and had to figure that one out. So yeah, I love that. I think that's really fun. Alright so, first tip, following special interest. The next tip is to make adjustments instead of corrections. Kelly, tell us how that looks.

**Kelly**: So this is really the students that really maybe don't accept feedback very well or are very sensitive to it. So, I think a lot of times about my students who have articulation issues and instead of saying like that didn't sound right or not that's not correct, I really should be saying like oh let's try that again but this time let's move your tongue here. Or let's try that again and this time I want you to bite on your tongue and I want to blow for the like the TH sound. And a lot of times that, because they're not hearing it wasn't wrong, you can kind of keep them kind of engaged. It's like oh yep, let’s try this again but let's do it in kind of a slightly different way.

**Carrie**: Yeah, I love that. I feel like a lot of our kids shut down as soon as they hear the, nope wasn't right. For sure. Alright if you guys have any questions, go ahead and type those in as we go along. Or any tough cases, we can help you with those as well. Alright so the next one we're going to talk about is errorless learning and how that can play into your sessions. How do you do that Kelly?

**Kelly**: And so this depends on I think on the age of the child. I think that a lot of the times you can give a lot of prompts to them before hand, so you are almost giving them the answer, if I was doing a WH question. But you can also do, with kind of thinking with questions, is you can really pre-teach the answer beforehand. So, if it's something that I want them to do maybe, giraffe, the word is giraffe. And so, I've got my giraffe toys out there and we're playing with them and I'm like here's the giraffe and the giraffe is coming out here and the giraffe has a long neck. And I'm trying to really give them that word giraffe a bunch of times before we come to the question and then I can say what is this and hopefully they've heard that enough times so they can get the word giraffe out. And then they've gotten the answer correct.

**Carrie**: Definitely. So, do you like to start with those kinds of questions early on in the session where you're giving them lots of answers and then king of fade back on how much support you are giving them?

**Kelly**: Right, yes. So instead of doing you know like...I mean I would think that this is actually kind of an errorless learning technique too where it's like, what is this, giraffe, and you give them the answer. You are just kind of giving them that beforehand and then hopefully you know continuing to kind of prompt and walk through that so that they can do it independently.

**Carrie**: Perfect. I've also used that same technique with my children with echolalia. So, if you ask them a question and they just repeat the question. So, you say, what is this, and they say what is this. Then you can do...what is this? Giraffe. And you hop in with the answer before they repeat you. And then you can fade that back. So, then it's...what is this? Grr..and then have them finish it or then you just mouth it so you can kind of use it in that errorless learning in that way to if they are doing that echolalia.

**Kelly**: Mmm Hmmm

**Carrie**: Perfect. So far, we've talked about following their interests. Getting to know what they like and using that Interapy. Making adjustments instead of using corrections. And we've talked about the errorless learning or pre-teaching them and giving them the answer ahead of time to set them up for success. Alright so Jessica says...'My son completely shuts down if he thinks he can't say something'...oh I've had kids like that too.

**Kelly**: Yep

**Carrie**: 'He refuses to try anything at that point. He has articulation and receptive language disorder'. Kelly, do you have any thoughts on that one? What to do if the student thinks he's not going to be able to do it, so he just shuts down?

**Kelly**: Shuts down beforehand. That's tricky. I mean I think that there's a lot of giving him a lot of feedback beforehand on kind of anything that he says. And also, being able to look at content versus articulation. So, depending on where she is with kind of practicing with him or really valuing the content of what he's saying. And, sometimes it can be tricky especially for younger kids where we can't understand what they are saying. And a lot of times I'll put it on me. So, I'm like, oh my gosh my ears are clogged, I just can't hear you right. And try to kind of put it on me so that they maybe don't feel as bad about saying that. I think you can also do choices. So that would be another thing. So instead of, so if you want them to say a word with an S, you can give them kind of two choices. So, like do you want spaghetti or this. And then it doesn't seem like a 'you need to say this word', but you can get that practice in.

**Carrie**: Yeah, absolutely. I've also noticed that if you have a child who maybe like, every time you sit down to do your speech work they shut down, you can try switching and instead of sitting down to work on hard things, sit down and work on something they can already do for a little while. And so, you say ok we're going to sit down and we're going to do this and if they can't do any speech stuff, maybe it's just like clapping hands. Ok do this and then they clap their hands and you get real excited and you celebrate their victory and you say wow you did this, look see you can do this. And then once you build up their confidence of maybe these actions or easier words, easier sounds, then you start throwing in some of the harder ones kind of in between the easier ones just to try to build up their confidence and show them that sometimes it's hard and sometimes it's not but that's ok, you can do this.

**Kelly**: I was going to say that's a really good idea to that building of that success of like, I can do this, I can do this, I can do this. And then there's a hard task and they're already on that momentum of, I'm saying it, I'm saying it, I'm saying it. I did it!

**Carrie**: Oh wow look at that...hahahaha. Definitely. Also, going back with speech sounds, back off to a level that they are successful at. So, if they can't say the S sound in words, just do a bunch of activities where they just go ssssss. Maybe you're pretending to be snakes or something fun where they get to practice the sound but in an easier way. Because that's still developing those brain pathways and really making sure that they are able to really feel that sound and understand where it is. Even if they are not practicing it in words yet. So that's good too. Alright we had another comment here, let's see. Any special tips for bright but stubborn teens who refuse to carry over the learned sounds outside of the therapy session? Alright let’s see. You got some ideas for teenagers for carryover. Hahahaha.

**Kelly**: Teenagers are also kind of a tricky group. I mean I think it's coming back to that idea of motivation of is it that their refusing, or that they don't necessarily have the skills to do it automatically. Because if we think about change and we think about breaking habits and especially as a teenager. If they haven't been practicing the sound for 14 or 15 years, we want them to do it habitually, but it also takes time. So, some of it is trying to get them on board with that motivation piece of feeling like they can do it and that they can be successful. And then trying to take it outside of the speech room. So maybe we're practicing it in the hall or I'm going to pop into your room and try and listen to you there and try to kind of you know get into their space a little bit as unobtrusively as possible.

**Carrie**: Yeah. I think going off of what you're saying about getting by in, you’re really. If they're not motivated to change that behavior, they're not going to change it. You know so I think that if you can do some activities where you talk about, ok well why would it be important to work on this. I think the example was a TH sound for this one. Ok what do you want to do in your life that is going to be harder because you can't say this TH sound. So maybe that's ok well I would like to get a job. Ok how might that affect your job interview. Ok I want to go on dates. Ok what do you think somebody's going to think when they hear your talking and you can't say all your sounds. Do you think that they're going to want to go on a date with you? You know so I mean you don't have to be mean about it. But trying to figure out what is it that they really want and tying the skill into that so that they see that there is a reason to work on this. Because a lot of those teenagers have been in therapy since they were 3 and they are done. Hahaha...they're all done. So definitely try to get some buy in there as well. Alright. Ok we've shared quite a few tips. We've got a couple more and then we're going to do some giveaways so hang tight if you're on Facebook live with us. The next tip we are going to talk about is changing the structure of your sessions. Kelly how do you change structure to try to get engagement?

**Kelly**: Ok so this is where I try to go back to when I first started. I feel like one of the things that I use to do that I don't do now is I would have them, you know some sort of sticker chart or something where they could earn a reward at the end of the session. And for some kids that works well, but for a lot of the children that I see, they don't have the capacity to be able to wait maybe for a 30-min session or a 20-min session to kind of get that reward. So, what I try to do now is have some sort of really fun and really motivating activity in the first 3-5 minutes that we start with. You know sometimes that can me talking about Star Wars characters. Or sometimes it can be you know a popper toy or playing basketball or something that kind of gets that adrenaline going. If you can think of activities that you can do within your speech room. I'm at a clinic setting right now so sometimes we do a pool noodle sword fight. I mean I wouldn't be able to do that at a school obviously so you have to kind of work with the session where you are at. But what that does is it kind of released endorphins and they're feeling really positive. They're feeling like you are really fun and now you have that buy in at the beginning of a session and you can transition into your work. And then also kind of end with an activity at the end. I think sometimes we get taught that you know we shouldn't you know like speech only plays games. Actually, this is really building motivation. We do it all the time for ourselves. We like to start with something really fun at the beginning of our day, so.

**Carrie**: Absolutely, I love that. I love the pool noodle sword fight idea. That sounds like fun. I'd get enjoyment out of that hahaha. Perfect, ok if you guys have any other questions, type those in as we're going. And then the last one we want to talk about today is giving specific feedback and praise. Kelly tell us how that looks for you.

**Kelly**: So for most of my kids that I am working with or my children or my students that I am working with, I try to be really specific. I think we really tend to assume that the bad things that happen to us are our fault and the good things happen by accident or happy accident. And so really you know telling them you know you worked really hard. You've been practicing this sound in my therapy room for three weeks. And you know looking back at like before I needed to give you all of these ques and now you don't and that's because of your hard work. And letting them know that they are really that active participant in it. And then also, we do a lot of like 'we are friends, I love this' about you. I love that you are opinionated and you have really strong feelings about things. And really giving them, for those difficult kids. You really think a lot about Legos. So, you are really giving them positive feedback so they are mobilizing to be interactive with you. If I had to go to the gym and work out with a personal trainer and he was just like hmmm those squats are horrible, I mean you ate horribly. I mean those would all be accurate things to tell me but I probably wouldn't be as motivated as if I had a trainer that was like wow, look it, you did ten more squats than last week.

**Carrie**: Hahahahahahaha...oh I love that, I love that! I'm just imagining me with my trainer and yeah, she's very, very encouraging even though I'm doing terrible squats. Hahahaha. Oh, I love it. Another way I've used that specific concept is to do bar grafts with my students over time and let them chart. Especially the older children. Ok this was your percentage this day so they can actually see how much progress they've made. And it always amazes me how much pride they can take in that when they see, wow I was down here and now I'm up here. It's just a really fun way to do that as well. Alright so those are our tips today. If you have any questions type them in and we'll help ya out with your tricky kiddos. But we are going to talk about our favorite resource. Kelly is going to share her favorite toy for her tough kids and then we are going to do some giveaways. So, what's your favorite activity to get your students motivated?

**Kelly**: Ok so this one I actually had to go, I'm on vacation right now, I had to go to target and buy another one which I was really sad. So, this is a popper toy and there's all sorts of different ones that you can get. But they are really fun for activities that you can do at the beginning of a session. So, I'll take painters tape and put little targets on the wall that they can get and you just let's see if I can do it...hahahahaha

**Carrie**: Hahahahaha, Oh I love it!

**Kelly**: But that is an easy thing that you can do. It doesn't take up a lot of space and it can be really motivating. Ya know who pops the farthest or anything. So that's one of the activities I use a lot in the 3-5 minutes at the beginning of a session.

**Carrie**: Fantastic and you said those are at target?

**Kelly**: Yep you can get them at target and online for like $4.99.

**Carrie**: Ok I am going to put a like to that in Facebook. Jessica say's 'too cute'. I agree those are adorable. Ok so it's time for our giveaways today. We're going to do two winners today for our giveaways right here on Facebook live. Kelly who, what is the prize that you are giving away today?

**Kelly**: So, I am giving away a pragmatic language product that kind of focuses on nonverbal pragmatic language and it uses the theme of zombies, which a lot of my students also like or my clients like. And it's called Don't be a Zombie pragmatic language bundle I think.

**Carrie**: Fantastic, fantastic. And if somebody is interested in getting that bundle and does not win today where can they go to find that?

**Kelly**: They can find that on my Teachers Pay Teachers store. And I think it's [teacherspayteachers/speech2u](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech2u).

**Carrie**: Perfect. So that's over on Teachers Pay Teachers. The second giveaway today is going to be 2 free months in my membership the Speech Therapy Solution. If you are not familiar with that, that is my premium membership program just for speech language pathologists. We just actually released a new feature today where you get to create your own SLP survival kit in the membership. And I'll send you everything you need to get it set up. It's a nice backup system for when you get into a session and you either didn't have time to plan. Or you planned something awesome and it went totally awry. You have a kit that you can grab and you have ready to go activities. We also have training videos, webinars. You can ask us questions. All kinds of benefits to that. So, the second person in the giveaway today is going to win two free months into that membership. If you don't win today you can head over to [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) and hear all about my membership to the speech therapy solution. It sounds like there is like a whistle in here...sorry, it's driving me nuts. Ok so I'm going to ask a question and the first two people to respond here on Facebook live are going to win. The first one is going to win the zombie pragmatic pack and the second one is going to win two free months in my membership. So, here's the question. What is the toy or activity that is your go to for your tough students? So, something that always gets engagement like the poppers. What's your poppers? Write that in and hopefully we'll have a nice list here on Facebook of all of the fun activities and toys that everyone uses to try to get those students engaged. My go to is always my Huberman’s sphere. It's one of those balls that collapses and expands. That one gets them every time. Especially if they can get in it. Alright we got a couple here so ok Amy Willfu Forest says bubbles. Alright so Amy you are going to win the zombie pragmatic bundle. And where can, how can she get ahold of you to get that Kelly?

**Kelly**: If she emails me, will that work?

**Carrie**: Yes

**Kelly**: My email is speech2u@gmail.com. I will send that out.

**Carrie**: Perfect. And that is the number 2, speech2u. Alright and then Amity Johnson says playdough. So, Amity you're going to win the two free months in my membership. You can email me at carrie@speechandlanguagekids.com. And my assistant Kena will get you all set up with your two free months. Let’s see what else we had. We had iPad vet doctor. That's a good one. Another bubble. Pass the pigs game. Chalkboard markers on the table. Oh, I like that. And Cariboo of course, always a good one. Awesome, well thank you everyone for participating in that. And we're going to wrap it up for here. We hoped that helped you with those stubborn kids on your caseload. If you need more help with tough cases head on over to speechandlanguagekids.com/join and you can learn more about the speech therapy solution and get your SLP survival kit setup. And Kelly where can people find more about you and speech2u?

**Kelly**: They can go over to my blog which is [www.speech2u.com](http://www.speech2u.com/). It's the number 2 and the letter U.

**Carrie**: Perfect. And you have a Teachers Pay Teachers store too, right?

**Kelly**: And I also have a Teachers Pay Teachers store with the same name, [speech2u](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech2u).

**Carrie**: Perfect. Alright everyone, thank you for joining us today. We will see you next Monday over on the Speechie Show. And in the meantime, head on over to [speechandlanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and check out all our free resources over there. Alright thanks everybody.

Thank you for joining us today on The Speech 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.