(The Speechie Show Ep.21)

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**: Hi everybody and welcome to the Speechie Show. I'm Carrie Clark with [speechandlanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and we're here today with Melanie Potock from [mymunchbug.com](https://mymunchbug.com/). Thank you for joining us today Melanie.

**Melanie**: Hello Carrie!

**Carrie**: Hello! Alright, so we are talking today about picky eaters. So, if you are a parent of picky eaters or a speech language pathologist with a caseload of picky eaters, stay tuned with us today we're going to share the three E's to encourage a child to try new foods who is a picky eater. If you are new to the show my name is Carrie Clark and I am from [SpeechandLanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and this is The Speechie Show. We come on once a week. We hang out with a speech and language pathologist and we share some tips and we help you with a very specific Speech & Language or speeding problem and give some good giveaways at the end. So, if you are joining us on Facebook Live stay tuned for the giveaways here in a moment. And as we're getting started and everyone is rolling in go ahead and type in the comments where you're joining us from today, we'd like to see where everyone is. Alright, go ahead Melanie and introduce yourself and talk about what's going on over at [mymunchbug.com](https://mymunchbug.com/).

**Melanie**: I'd love to. One thing all the listeners need to know is we're having a little bit of a delay and so if I pause for a second to wait for the processing I'm just waiting for the conversation to finish on your end so bear with me. My name is Melanie Potock and I am a speech and language pathologist. But my specialty is eating. Either it's a child that's the garden-variety picky eater that's also common. In fact, if you look on the American speech-language-hearing Association website you'll see that 25 to 45% of typically developing children will have feeding difficulty. That's how common it is. Or whether I'm working with a child with Autism or perhaps a child with Down Syndrome or maybe it's just a premature baby who's really having trouble moving through what we call the developmental process of feeding, that's what I get to do. I'm All About Kids in food. And I'm an author of four books on the topic that we will be talking about a little later. And I'm off Chelan National speaker on feeding therapy.

**Carrie**: We had a little bit of a technical problem we are sorry everybody, but we're going to try to push through and get this interview to work. We lost just a little bit at the end, but we heard that you are an author and you are a speaker, as well.

**Melanie**: Terrific! If there's anything I can fill in just let me know. But we can certainly just get to the good stuff which is how do we help kids learn to eat.

**Carrie**: Absolutely, absolutely! Alright we have a few people joining us. We've got someone from Florida, well a couple from Florida. Welcome everyone we hope you're getting some good information and hope the technical trouble is not too much. Alright so we're going to go ahead and share the three E's that are the ways that you're going to be able to encourage a child who is a picky eater. So, the first E we are going to talk about today is expose. Melanie talk to us about what expose means for the 3 E's.

**Melanie**: Absolutely! So, the three E's is a concept I came up with a few years ago. And the very first eat is expose. Expose means that we provide opportunities for kids to just get to know, let's say vegetables, that's always the big one, right? We get to know vegetables, for example. Or making friends with vegetables. It's their first play date with vegetables. So that might include gardening, going to the produce aisle, going to the Farmers Market. It might include being exposed to vegetables via picture box. There's good research that shows that toddler to read picture books about vegetables with their mom and dad actually are more likely to try that new vegetable. So, it's that simple daily routine that actually help kids learn to become more adventurous eaters.

**Carrie**: That's wonderful. I had never heard the bit about vegetable books. That sounds fun. Wonderful! Okay that's the first one you said was expose and how long do you do this before you start moving on to one of the other E's? Or are you doing these things all simultaneously?

**Melanie**: it's really up to the family. You don't have to wait for a specific time, but certainly keep in mind that if you have a very hesitant eater and your family, that we're going to take this process very slowly step by step. So, you might just want to first start with exposure. Because you don't want to push children to do any more than they can do on that particular day, but our job is just too gently encourage. So, if we move on to the next E which as you said is exploration, that has more to do with getting our hands involved. And there's lots of good research that shows that kids who explore new food groups and vegetables and making crafts and cooking with those vegetables it gives them exposure and exploration. So, they are pretty tight connected there.

**Carrie**: Okay we had just a little bit of an audio glitch there but you were talking about using cooking and crafts as your exploration activities. Was there another one we missed in there?

**Melanie**: well just keep in mind that exposure and exploration are very closely connected. So, you might include as we say gardening, but you might include cooking. You might include crafts. We were talking about something as simple as chopping up a beet and putting it on a sponge or better yet give it a little lick and making beat pictures and beat stamps with it. Those are just one of the ideas that I have in raising a healthy and happy either. And I have much more in my new book, Adventures in Veggie Land.

**Carrie**: Oh that sounds like fun adventures in Veggie Land, I like that! Okay perfect, so we've shared to expose children to these vegetables just by having them in their environment, talking about them, reading books, taking them to the farmers market, and grocery store. And then we were talking about getting a little more hands-on with exploring those vegetables and other foods, if there's other things they need, as well. So, a question here is, maybe this is going into the 3rd E, but how do you know which types of food to expose them to an explorer? Do you try to do everything or do you just focus on a little bit at a time?

**Melanie**: It really depends on the child's learning curve. So typically, with the garden-variety picky eater, I suggest that parents start with exposure with anything that their family often eat. So, I'll say tell me you're five top foods. And you know we all have our favorite foods and oh gosh we all love pizza on Friday night. Or when we start gardening we'd love to have tomatoes because they come up first and there so many of them. That sort of thing is what I want to hear from parents. And I'll just suggest that we start with just one tablespoon of a new food on the child's plate. But also through activities throughout the day, for example if it's a tomato. Maybe we start with something as simple as having a tomato roll on tracks. You know set up your tracks for your matchbox cars or your marble works, but send tomatoes through there. Have some fun with it. And if you think your kid is ready to perhaps taste a tomato, he does not have to chew and swallow it right away. Tomatoes are the perfect food to have a squirting contest. So, take a tomato and go outside and bite it as hard as you can and see if you can't squirt each other. That's a sure-fire way to get kids involved because they love to see if they can squirt you with something like a tomato!

**Carrie**: I love that! It sounds like the key here is really to make it fun and not stressful.

**Melanie**: Keeping it fun is the key.

**Carrie**: Perfect, perfect! Okay if you're watching here with us on Facebook Live and you have any comments go ahead and type those into the comments and we will answer those as we go along. Okay so we've talked about Expose. We've talked about Explorer. Now we're going to talk about Expand. So, tell us what that looks like Melanie.

**Melanie**: Expand is really what happens after you've implemented the first to E's. So first we started with Exposure and then a little bit more Exploration and now we're going to begin to Expand what we do with those foods and the types of recipes we use to cook with them. Show in my new book that's coming out in October, but is available for pre-orders now, actually I think we might have the mirror image, but this is Adventures in Veggie Land. I don't even have the real book yet. I just have this little card that shows you the cover. But you can find it on my website [MelaniePotock.com](https://mymunchbug.com/). And to answer your question a little bit better, Expand means for example in my book, I'm going to start you with an activity. Perhaps it's the beet stamp that we talked about. And then we're going to do a little bit of exposure, where we start with very simple recipes. And if the best of what the kiddo can do that day, even if it's a school kid, is just chop the beets with some child-safe knives and help you arrange the beets on the platter, that's okay. But slowly we begin to expand what they do and offer them opportunities with something even more advanced. It might even be a beet smoothie. And making sure that when you put that beet in there with all the other ingredients it makes it taste really good. So, one of the things we do in terms of exploration and expansion, is we use tiny teaspoons like professional chefs, and we encourage kids to actually take a taste as we cook. It's absolutely fine if they don't like the taste. I always say to the kids that I'm cooking with "it's okay if you don't like it, let's see what we can do to make it yummy". And maybe we'll add a little bit of salt, that's okay. Or maybe we'll add a little bit more apple juice. Whatever we need so that it is yummy to our taste buds. We've got to taste it a few times to get it to that place. And now we've got a kid tasting foods. And once you have a kid taking a tiny taste he'll eventually learn not only to accept that food but it's very likely he'll learn to like it, as well.

**Carrie**: Very cool! So, the only part that we cut out there was the Smoothie part. So, you were talking about taking those foods and putting them in smoothie foods that they do enjoy so that they don't taste that food as much correct? And then taking a little taste along the way to figure out what a good flavor combination is?

**Melanie**: Yeah almost, but the key is that the child is making the smoothie with you. So, I'm not saying, and I don't think this is what you were saying Carrie, I'm not saying to hide the food in the smoothie. I'm saying to get them involved.

**Carrie**: Yes

**Melanie**: As a matter of fact if you Google Potock and the cooking connection, you'll see the cover story for the April issue of the leader which is our American associations of speech-language magazine. And I was really honored to be able to write that story. It's all about cooking with kids, especially kids with Autism. And there are strategies in there. It's also available online to help kids expand their repertoire.

**Carrie**: Very good, wonderful. Okay, so those are the three E's. We've talked about exposing kids to new foods. We talked about helping them explore them with some more hands-on activities. And eventually expanding what they are able to do. Now one of the things that I really liked that you are saying is talking about meeting the kid where they are that day. So, you're going to have good days where they're going to be more tolerant of some of these trials, and you're going to have those days where everything sets them off and you can't make any progress. So, I want to get your take on this. This is something that I learned for my son who has sensory processing disorder is, you think about it as a bulls-eye. So right in the middle is their comfort zone. That's where everything is comfortable. Nothing is new and nothing is scary. And then outside that, it's just a little bit bigger ring that's just outside the comfort zone where we try new things and we learn and we grow. And then outside of that is what I call Meltdown Zone because that's what happens for my son. Where if you push it too hard you're going to cause a meltdown and you're going to be done. So, is that kind of the same way that you're thinking of trying to stay in that middle ring when you're introducing new foods?

**Melanie**: Absolutely. And always keep in mind that you want to consider the whole child. And whether we have the challenges of sensory processing or whether we are just having an off-day in terms of our senses. We all have days like that. Remember this is a new kid on this day and just because he was able to take a bite of it yesterday that doesn't mean he's going to be able to do it today. Our job is to provide opportunities for the kids to interact with the foods and to gently encourage them to do that through play and through fun. Like cooking. And actually, Carrie, did you know there's research that shows that if you present a new food with a smile on your face the child is much more likely to try it. So, there's a little bit of Sales 101 in here to.

**Carrie**: Hahahaha, I love it! Okay alright well we're going to go ahead and move on to the last part of our show. We're going to do some giveaways here in just a minute, so hang tight if you're on Facebook Live with us. But first, Melanie tell us about your picky eater course which is our favorite resource for the day.

**Melanie**: Oh awesome, I'd love to be able to tell you about this. I have an online course on [MelaniePotock.com](https://mymunchbug.com/), that’s also my [munch bug.com](https://mymunchbug.com/), same website. And I am so proud of it. It is a five-hour video course that I did with the co-author of raising a healthy eater which is an award-winning book written by me and Dr. Yum, Dr. Nimali Fernando. And Dr. Yum and I created a video course for parents, but I've had over 500 speech therapist and occupational therapist take this course. You can get CEUs for it. That information will be on the website. But they're taking it to learn practical strategies to share with parents. So, whether you're a parent or you're a speech pathologist, for less than $10 an hour, I'll give you a code to make it less than that, you can watch live videos of strategies that are taken from my two-day course that I teach to professionals. So, the code is MYMUNCHBUG20. That's going to give you 20% off, which means you can get that course for only $40. And you can share that with friends so use it as much as you want, it's totally fine. I call my kids my Munch bugs so that's where that came from.

**Carrie**: I love that. Okay so we're going to put that code in the show notes. So, if you're watching on the Speech & Language Kids website you should have that in the notes. Or will have that you know available once the recording is up, as well. So, wonderful that's the picky eater course over [at MelaniePotock.com](https://mymunchbug.com/) or [mymunchbug.com](https://mymunchbug.com/). Check that out. And now we're going to do giveaways. We are going to do three giveaways today. So, the first two giveaways are Melanie's two books. So, what are your two books again? Tell everybody so we know what we are playing for today.

**Melanie**: Well I have four books that you can find on my website, but today we are going to do the latest. So, we have the award-winning Raising a Healthy Happy Eater by Dr. Fernando "Dr. Yum" and me and the new book which is much bigger than this in real life, which I've just got this little card to show you, is called Adventures in Veggie Land. It has 101 recipes and activities to help your kids learn to love vegetables. It comes out in October but I'm going to send the winner one today. It'll arrive on their doorstep this fall but they'll be one of the first people to get it.

**Carrie**: Perfect! So, we're going to do to giveaways for Melanie. We have the two books and then the third winner today is going to get two free months in my membership, the [Speech Therapy Solution](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). That is a speech membership just for speech language pathologist. You're going to get access to training materials, webinars. We are working on getting CEU approved. So that is coming down the line. And planning materials. You get worksheets you can use in therapy. All kinds of great stuff. So, you can check that out over at [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). But we're going to give away two free months to someone today. So, here's how it works. I'm going to ask a question and the first three people to answer are going to win. The first two will win the books and the third one will win the two free months in my membership. Alright, are you ready Melanie?

**Melanie**: I kind of want to raise my hand and win! But I guess I can't hahahaha.

**Carrie**: Alright, here's the question if you're watching with us on Facebook Live. Name one way to explore a new food. Remember we were talking about how exploring is a more hands-on approach. So, a hands-on activity that you can do with a child to explore a new food. The first three people to type in an activity are going to win. Alright, Ashley Warren says ‘play with it’. And Ali Manahan says ‘cooking’. Tiffany Hayworth says ‘visit the farmers market’. Wonderful, thank you ladies. Okay, so Ashley Warren you are going to win Raising a Healthy Happy Eater. And Ally Manahan you are going to win Adventures in Veggie Land. So, Melanie how do you want them to contact you to get their books?

**Melanie**: if you would just contact me through the contact page on my website or you can message me on Facebook. Go to [My Munch Bug is my Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/MyMunchBug/), my Munch bug don't use my name that's just a different page, and I'd be more than happy to correspond with you, get your address and I'll send it to you right from Amazon.

**Carrie**: Perfect all righty. And Tiffany Hayworth, you win the two free months in the Speech Therapy Solution. You can email me at Carrie@speechandlanguagekids.com and my assistant Kena I will get you all set up with your two free months in the membership. Alright and we had a whole bunch of other people chiming in with their answers, as well. Wonderful. Someone said ‘presented with a smile’. I love it! Alright thank you so much for joining us today and Melanie thank you. Where can people find more about you and get in touch with you?

**Melanie**: Definitely go to [MelaniePotock.com](https://mymunchbug.com/) and you can find my workshops and seminars. I have a free 6-hour seminar coming up next week in Albany, New York. And be sure to follow [My Munch Bug](https://www.facebook.com/MyMunchBug/) on Facebook and all of my other social media and I look forward to hearing from everybody. Carrie this is been very fun and I look forward and hope we can do it again.

**Carrie**: Absolutely, I agree! And if you need help with your tough speech therapy cases or help with planning head on over to [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) and get all the information about the speech therapy solution and all that we can do for you there. Alright thank you all so much for coming and we will see you next week on the Speechie Show. Bye for now.

Thanks for joining us today on The Speechie Show. We hope, that 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 joining 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 to check out all the amazing benefits of the speech therapy solution membership. Bye for now.