(The Speechie Show Ep.24)

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**: Welcome to the Speechie Show. I am your host Carrie Clark from [SpeechandLanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and I'm here today with Kayla Redden from [KaylaSLP.com](http://www.kaylaslp.com/). How are you Kayla?

**Kayla**: I'm fine, how are you?

**Carrie**: We are excited to have Kayla on today. We are talking about alternatives to the treasure box. So that is the reward system that kind of becomes the default, is having a bunch of treasure in the corner and we're going to talk about some alternatives today to motivate your students so that you don't have to be going out and buying new “Treasures" all the time. Okay so if you're new to the show, I am Carrie Clark from [SpeechandLanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and this is the Speechie Show. Every week we hop on with a new speech and language pathologist and we chat about something and give you some tips. We also share some resources and we'll do a giveaway, here in just a couple of minutes. So, stay tuned if you're joining us on Facebook Live today. Alright so before we get started talking about alternatives to the treasure box and the new reward systems, Kayla why don't you tell us a little bit more about yourself and your background.

**Kayla**: Yes, I'm Kayla SLP and I'm all over social media if you're looking for me. I graduated from grad school about 3 years ago at North State University, which is in Western Kentucky and I've been working in a rural Elementary School for the past three years. We are very rural with just one elementary, 1 middle & high school. There's one full-time SLP. It's a small school. I love it and it's a great job. And I work with mostly preschool to 3rd grade and SMD students.

**Carrie**: Okay, so you probably see the whole range of students than if it's just you doing a lot of kids at the same time you know.

**Kayla**: Yes, I do.

**Carrie**: Okay perfect. Okay so if you're just joining us we are talking today about alternatives to the treasure box and talking about some reward systems here today with Kayla. So, we're going to go ahead and jump in with our five tips and then we're going to share some resources and do some giveaways. So, the first take away today is just to get rid of the treasure box. Let's talk about what that can look like.

**Kayla**: Yes, my first year when I started working at the school the other SLP had used a treasure box with all of her students. I was like cool, I'll just use that because that's what everybody uses. I picked it up and used it and kids were complaining that the toys were not cool enough for them. Obviously, preschoolers and kindergarteners didn’t want the same thing that 5th and 6th grade was wanting. I was having a hard time keeping it stocked with enough stuff to keep everybody happy. And when it came time to go ahead and fill it up again, well, there went another 30 bucks possibly filling up the treasure box. So, I decided to use my school funds on things that were better than Dollar Store toys to put in the box. And over the summer actually, on the last day of speech, I said pick whatever you want out of the box get two or three things because we're cleaning it out, it's not coming back. Over the summer I dumped it. And now it's the summertime so you know, go ahead dump your treasure box if you're interested in this. Now is the time to do it because when they come back it's a fresh start. It's like, hey guys we're doing something even better! You know we don't want the treasure box anymore and a few will ask, but most of them will be excited about whatever else you have to offer.

**Carrie**: Absolutely! I think framing it in a positive manner and talking about how exciting it is to do something new I think that can be really cheap when you're making a big change like this. Okay, so if you're watching with us live, comment if you have a treasure box and kids complain about their treasures. I feel like that's got to be a common theme.

**Kayla**: Yes, I've heard a lot of SLP's say I can't keep the kid's happy no matter what I put in there. And I've heard people say that the toys go on the bottom of the backpack and they never actually make it out to do things with. So, it's just junk a lot of times.

**Carrie**: Yes, I can say from experience with my own son doing his therapies, every time he brings a toy home from therapy I'm like, oh really. Because he's not going to use it for more than like 5 minutes and then it's just clutter. So yeah, I agree. Heather says she does not do a box. Good for you Heather, don't start! You can start with some of these alternatives. Alright, so first it's just get rid of it and give away the prizes that are already in there. You know, tell them we're starting over with something new. Okay so Tamara is saying I've had it in the past, but it's hard because she's per diem. Yeah, that's hard. Stella says grad student equals can't afford extra things for a treasure box. Absolutely!

**Kayla**: No grad students cannot afford it!

**Carrie**: Yeah even like working SLPs who have a full salary can't afford it either, hahaha! Oh, I love it! So, the next one we have for you or the next step in this process is going to be to think about what motivates your students. So, Kayla tell us about how we can tap into that and their own motivation to figure out what will be good for good reward systems?

**Kayla**: So, the first thing in my thought process was to look at your age ranges because it's going to very drastically depending on, you know, the ages of your children. So, preschool to first grade I can usually pick one thing for them. Then I've got to look at my older kids and pick something for them. Well, then you have to think, well I have some students who are more severe than others. Will this same reward actually reward them? Will it make sense to them as a reward? So, you really just have to look at your caseload. I know middle and high schoolers are very different than even elementary school for what they're going to want as far as their rewards go. So, you just have to think what age groups you have to work with and what disabilities you have to work with and just kind of tap in and the best thing that you can do with some kids is ask their teachers. Hey what are some cool sayings that you hear your kids talking about in the classroom. We wish we could do this or oh that's really cool. Just kind of ask the teachers and ask the parents. I have some students that are so hard to motivate. Ask their mom or dad. They usually know what the kid likes. So, you have to look at your spectrum and things you've got going on.

**Carrie**: Absolutely! I definitely agree with talking to the teachers and parents because they may have already been through this and figured out something that really works well to motivate that child. Because chances are, parents and teachers really need this child to do something as well, and they've probably tapped into something that works. So, I think that can be a huge resource especially for those really difficult to reach kids that you're like, man I've tried everything in my bag of tricks and he still won't do anything for me.

**Kayla**: Right, absolutely.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Okay, so the next step in this process then is going to going to be to decide on 223 reward systems that are going to cover your entire case load. That sounds kind of hard, Kayla…hahaha.

**Kayla**: The problem is, if you pick one thing like I said it's not going to suit everybody. If you try and do individual for each kid you're going to drive yourself crazy trying to keep up with your own reward systems. So, what I've done for the most part is my little kids, like I said preschool to second grade, I pick a reward system for them. I'll go ahead and tell you what I did with them. I do what's called Smelly's. And you may have heard of those before. I've blogged about it before. But it's Chapstick. I give two options-do you want watermelon or strawberry. They pick if they do what they were supposed to do. I open it and put it on the back of their hand. It's there for at least a few hours if not for the rest of the day if they don't wash their hands. Some of them won't because this is on there. This is like the best thing that has ever happened for my younger students. And even my older students asked for it. And I also want to say to think about modifications for your students. A lot of times they'll need something right then. Like they need a reward right then. It's not, wait till the end. It's like I've done what I'm supposed to do I need a reward. These are awesome. Because you can do different scents. I put one here and I start going up the arm for some kids. These are just really cheap and really great and I bought a huge pack and they last me a couple years.

**Carrie**: That's fantastic! Okay, so I have not seen that idea yet and I did not know that you were going to share that today. But that is amazing! Oh my gosh, I am getting so many thumbs up and like, laughing faces going across the screen right now. That's amazing because they're super cheap and it doesn't leave a mark so they're not like marked up all over themselves. My son goes to gymnastics and he gets tattoos like all over his stomach, for some reason that's the thing. So yeah, I love that idea. I'm going to get some Chapstick and use it on my three-year-old.

**Kayla**: And they tell their friends. I'm like listen, it's secret no one else can see it. You've got a smelly that no one else knows about. And it's worked awesome.

**Carrie**: Alright I want you guys to type in if you're going to go buy some Chapstick at Sam's or Costco after this…hahaha. Oh my gosh, that's awesome. Madeline says tap into the senses. For sure! That's great. Okay what else you got? I'm excited!

**Kayla**: That's for my little kids. Other kids from like 2nd grade all the way through 6 grade I use reward cards and again, that's something that's a little different because it's not really tangible. I know I'm kind of skipping ahead but we have these little cards like, Place cards. And it's got their name on them and every time they follow the rules and I have rules displayed, they know they are to follow these rules over here. Hands to self, inside voice, wait your turn, be a friend. I keep this visible at all times. If they can do this, you know during a session, then they get a punch on their card. When they fill up the punch card that's going to give them a reward card. And reward cards are reusable. I laminate them and they have different options like sitting in the teacher's chair, taking your shoes off or 10 minutes on the iPad. Just little things that don't require you to go out and you know, buy things to refill your card. Here's my little book of reward cards. I keep them in here and they just pick one. And they can use it during the next session or whenever they can redeem it and get a few minutes of a reward of some kind. And so far, my entire reward system is this. Like I just have a little station for everything. So that covers my whole caseload.

**Carrie**: That's fantastic! Okay, we're getting a lot of questions so let's pause here for a sec. Okay so Meredith Avron, I love her she says so creative Kayla buy all the Chapstick! hahaha! Okay, Tamara is asking where is the best place to buy flavored Chapstick? Where do you go?

**Kayla**: I went to Walmart. Walmart had a 10 pack and I think it was like $7. And like I said a tube of Chapstick will last you most of the year. I take them out every once in a while, so I can decide on different smells to pick from.

**Carrie**: Yes! I would guess Amazon would have them. They have everything.

**Kayla**: Yes, Amazon has everything.

**Carrie**: Alright Della says love the rules and visuals. Can you share?

**Kayla**: I can share. Right now, they're not posted. I just have some old visuals but I can post those to [Teachers Pay Teachers](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Kayla-Slp).

**Carrie**: Yes, that would be great. And she has visuals for the reward cards, right?

**Kayla**: Yes, and my reward cards they're available on [teacherspayteachers](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Kayla-Slp) and I just let them look at the book at the end of the session. And these have things like 10 minutes of coloring, sit in the teacher's chair, have lunch with me is a favorite. I've had to hide that one a time or two so I can have lunch by myself on occasion. But yeah, I just laminate and you can use dry erase on the back and write their name if you want to or I just paperclip it to their card. That way I know, oh yeah you do have something, check your card. You have a reward. Use it for reading a book and color or whatever you want to do.

**Carrie**: Okay so if you go to teacherspayteachers.com search for KaylaSLP and you will find her and you can find her more cards in there. Or is it today?

**Kayla**: Yes

**Carrie**: Alright you might win some. Okay, let's see what else we got. Tanika says, love the punch card idea, great motivation. Absolutely. Heather Kelly McKay says buy flavored Chapstick at Marshalls. Oh, that's a good idea. And Target, she says. And Madeline says Big Lots has lots of choices for you. Find the one that's nearest you. And Meredith Avron says that Kayla has so many great things on [teacherspayteachers](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Kayla-Slp). Thanks, Meredith. And Lauren's on, Hi Lauren. Okay, so we kind of went ahead. So, our next point was to go beyond the tangible and talk about those special privileges, which we have talked about. Can you give some more examples of some of those non-tangible privileges that you like to give out or maybe the ones that are most popular for your students?

**Kayla**: Yes. I can also say that scented markers like the Mr. Sketch markers, I'll use those sometimes for preschool. Sometimes even when I just go in their classroom at the end of the day and they're getting ready to go home and I'm like listen if you guys just sit on the carpet for five seconds I will give you a :-) with a banana flavored marker. And they are just there, the whole class is down. It's amazing! If you just hype it up enough and are like this smells so good, they'll all want one. Yeah you know Chapsticks, scented markers, stamps. Some people do stickers. I've never used stickers because the kids usually lose them before they get back to the classroom. Dams work pretty good. I have one for each month for certain kids. You know like a snowflake for January and a heart for February. Just mix it up a little bit. But again, it's not something they're putting in their pocket and taking home with them. It's just a little something to motivate them for 20 or 30 minutes.

**Carrie**: Yes, fabulous. Okay and talk about some for the older kids, as well. What are some of the more popular of the privilege cards that you have?

**Kayla**: For the older kids they really like obviously iPad time, but you would be surprised even for the older kids who want to come in my room and eat lunch with me. Or it's sit in the spinning chair for a session. Or take their shoes off, that's a really popular one for the older kids because stinky feet are hilarious. Or you can even use like, I know some middle and high school therapists that use a speech buck. They're not really taking anything home with them and if you don't want to use a punch card you can say, hey I'm giving you a couple of speech bucks and you can redeem that for a reward card. If that's something you wanted to do. And these are editable if that's something you wanted to do. There are blank ones in there and you can type your own rewards if what's in there doesn't suit your caseload. Because I know there's always things out there.

**Carrie**: Fantastic I love it! Okay, so our last step of this process then is to be flexible yet persistent and keep in mind that all children's interests are going to change. So, talk about how you kind of mix it up to make sure everyone stays motivated all year long.

**Kayla**: Yes, I have had some students like we were talking about earlier who are just so hard to motivate. And there are going to be kids who this does nothing for them. They do not care for this. It does not matter and Smelly's do not make a difference. And that's where I was talking about talk to their teachers, talk to their parents, be flexible. I'm not really one for giving snacks or drinks or anything in therapy, but I've had one student that that was literally the only thing. So, I stocked up on Little Dixie Cups and Sun Drops. And actually, I just bought this, it's a new timer. My little timer this actually came from Goodwill for 2 bucks.

**Carrie**: Oh wow!

**Kayla**: Yeah pretty exciting. But yeah, I have a timer and I said it and tell them if you can get through 5 minutes of what we're doing because he hated speech, he hated speech and he hated me, if you can get through 5 minutes then I've got Sun Drops waiting for you. And that got him through speech therapy. So, you have to be flexible even if you don't want to give food really, but if you have to do what you have to do it.

**Carrie**: So, I want to tell a funny story on this one. When I was in grad school I was in like the research class for you had to do a research study and they assign everyone a case. It was in the clinic. And then they said okay, you have to come up with a research design and you have to do an experiment. And so, I had this little adorable girl with Down Syndrome but she would not do anything for anyone. And so, I literally the only thing we could figure out to do was to give her many M&Ms like the little tiny ones. And that was my research design and it was like an AB AB study on whether or not she'll work for M&M's hahaha. So, I actually did a poster presentation at our conference and it was like will edible reinforcement get this child to do something. Oh gosh, it was so funny, but yeah there are some children that that is all they are going to work for and you just have to be flexible.

**Kayla**: I've had kids work for looking at pictures of Star Wars characters. They love Star Wars. I'm like cool, that's fine. You do what you got to do. Then for the last 5 minutes or two or three minutes let's talk about the Star Wars characters on the iPad and look through them. You just need to use your resources because I've tried so hard on my own to find out how to motivate some of these kids and I mean I was wasting time because I wasn't getting anything done. I talked to his mom and she told me what he liked and then there you go.

**Carrie**: Yes, the other thing I was going to say on this is sometimes you just need to change your ratio of work to reinforcement. So, like you had the punch card and maybe that child isn't going to work for one punch every session. Maybe they need a punch every time they do a trial to get to a reward faster. So, you can always change that ratio up and provide the reinforcement more quickly and then work on gradually backing that off so you're not popping an M&M in their mouth every time they say something. Not that I did that at all…hahaha.

**Kayla**: Wean them off the M&M's after a while. If at first, you have to at first you have to.

**Carrie**: Exactly, exactly. Okay if you guys have any questions on any of this that we're talking about please go ahead and type those in now. But we are going to go ahead and move on to our giveaways. So, for the giveaways today tell them what you're giving away.

**Kayla**: I am giving away the reward cards that you saw in here. And they come with the Punch Cards and there are like 10 or 15 options that are made for you with visuals or without visuals. There are two different sets. Then there's like cards that you can open up and PowerPoint and type on yourself. So, you can add your own motivation or whatever your kids need to be motivated on these cards.

**Carrie**: Fantastic. I would recommend to laminating one or putting it in a dry erase sleeve and then having one that you can just write on in the moment because I've definitely had children that are like, no I don't want to do that. I want to do that thing over there. And you're like, okay we’ll work for that. Sure.

**Kayla**: Like I said, I laminated these and printed them on cardstock so they last me forever and ever. I've never had one getting torn up in years. So, I just hear it is if this is what you want that I'm going to keep it right in front of your face so you know you remember this is what you're working towards and we'll get there.

**Carrie**: I love this-this is fantastic! Thank you. Okay, so we're going to do to giveaways today. If you're new to the show we do this every week for the people that are watching on Facebook Live. If you're not on Facebook Live you don't get to participate. So, make sure you join us on Facebook Live in the future if you're watching this recording later. But I'm going to ask a question and the first two people to respond are going to win. The first one is going to win the reward cards from Kayla. The second person to respond is going to win my giveaway, which is two free months in the [Speech Therapy Solution](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). And that is my membership for speech-language pathologist. We have a library full of worksheets you can print out. We have training videos on all different topics. We have where you can ask questions. And we just got approved, today I found out, we just got approved to provide actual CEUs. Woohoo! So hopefully starting this fall, maybe late this fall we will be working on getting that in place. Where we can start offering CEUs in the monthly webinars, as well. So, if you'd like to see more information about that head on over to [SpeechandLanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). And Kayla where can people find your reward cards if they don't win them today?

**Kayla**: I am Kayla SLP on [teacherspayteachers](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Kayla-Slp) and also on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and anywhere else you looking for me Kayla SLP.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Okay so here's a giveaway, are you ready. The question is name one reward that is not. I'm hoping after this we'll have a nice list of everyone's favorite non-tangible rewards in the comment section. And while we're waiting for people to come in are you wearing a Peachie Speechie shirt?

**Kayla**: Of course, I have tons of her shirts.

**Carrie**: hahaha. I was just looking because it says speech right there. There we go speech therapy. I was wondering if that was one of hers. Meredith was on, but I don't know if she's still on. Meredith over at PeachieSpeechie.com. She has all kinds of fun speech therapy T-shirts if you haven't checked her out, you should do so. Alright, here we go let's see. Oh, we got lots of them perfect. Okay Amy Sluvka, hopefully I said that right, says play a game. That's a perfect one. Amy, you are going to win the first giveaway, which is the reward cards. Kayla, how do you want Amy to contact you?

**Kayla**: She can just email me at Kayla.Redden.slp@gmail.com.

**Carrie**: perfect. Alright and Tamara Francis Greenbaum you said sitting in the teacher's chair and you won the giveaway for me. So, you can email me at Carrie@speechandlanguagekids.com and my assistant, Kena, will get you all set up with your two free months and we'll get you rolling then. Alright, perfect we had so many people chimed in. Again, this is wonderful, love it. Alright, we hope that helped you guys today and we hope you've enjoyed this and you are looking forward to starting your new reward system this fall with your students. Maybe this summer if you've got some summer caseload kids going on. So, head on over to [Kayla's Teachers Pay Teachers store](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Kayla-Slp) and get those resources and check out the rest of what she has. Where else can people find more about you Kayla?

**Kayla**: I also have a website at [Kaylaslp.com](http://www.kaylaslp.com/) and I blog about things like this and so much more first Elementary SLP so if you're interested in anything like that [KaylaSLP.com](http://www.kaylaslp.com/).

**Carrie**: Perfect! And head on over to [SpeechandLanguageKids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). A little bit of insider info for you, we will be upping the membership when we start the CEUs, but if you get in now and lock in your current rate you won't have to do the price hike. You can lock it in for your life. The whole time you're in. So, head on over to [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) and get signed up for the Speech Therapy Solution before we get all of that in place. Alright thank you all so much for joining us today and we will see you next week on this PC show. Bye.

Thanks for joining us today 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 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](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) to check out all the amazing benefits of the speech therapy solution membership. Bye for now.