(The Speechie Show Ep.29)

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**: Hello everybody and welcome back to the Speechie Show. I am your host Carrie Clark from [speechandlanguagekids.com](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) and today we are talking about increasing parent and family engagement and helping out with carry over. We're here today with Lia Kurtin from [speechandlanguageathome.com](http://speechandlanguageathome.com/) right?

**Lia**: Right.

**Carrie**: Welcome and thank you so much for being on the show today.

**Lia**: Thank you for having me, Carrie.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. If you are joining us on Facebook Live we did have a false start hahaha. So hopefully everybody who was trying to watch that one will come on over and watch this one. This is our second go at it. We were trying to get the cool new Facebook Live two and one feature going but it didn't work out for us today. Next time. But today we're here and we got the Skype call going so we're good to go. So, we are going to share with you today some tips for increasing parent and family caregiver engagement and having them help in the therapy process. We all know that that can increase the speed that are children make progress in therapy. So excited to talk about this topic today.

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 do this once a week. We have a new guest on each week and we talk about whatever topic is interesting to that guest and hopefully will interest all of you, as well. So, if you are watching with us on Facebook Live go ahead and type what setting you are working with. So are you working with preschoolers, early intervention, we want to make sure we're getting the right information to you. So, go ahead and type that in the comments. And while they're doing that Lia, why don't you go ahead and tell our guests or our audience a little bit more about you.

**Lia**: Okay so, I am a speech and language pathologist in Denver and I worked in the school setting for about 15 years. So, I saw kids from preschool all the way up to high school. And then about 4 years ago I switched to home health. So, I started seeing little ones like birth to three. But I still see kids who continue to have a diagnosis where they need therapy at home so I also see older kids on my caseload, as well.

**Carrie**: Perfect. And tell us a little bit about [speechandlanguageathome.com](http://speechandlanguageathome.com/).

**Lia**: So when I made this transition, I realized that it was really important to help connect with families. So, I wanted a resource that I could share with them. So, I started a website and I started making materials and I wanted to share those. So, I'm sharing them on [Teachers Pay Teachers](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech-And-Language-At-Home) because there's not really a lot out there for early intervention. So that's what I kind of have been building up my website to help families and caregivers and other professionals, as well.

**Carrie**: That's great. It's so wonderful to have more resources out there so that we can share with everyone else. Okay let's see we've got a lot of people chiming in. We've got outpatient pediatric clinic, middle school and early intervention, K through 6, elementary school, preschool through fifth grade and elementary 1 through 6. So, we've got a lot of span there. So, we've got a lot of different people joining us and we will share some tips that will help all of you today. So, we're going to go ahead and get started with our five tips for you today on increasing caregiver and family participation in the therapy process. If you have any questions as we go along please type them into Facebook Live and we will answer those as we go. All right so our first tip today then is to think about our families as learners. Lia, tell me what it means when you think of families as learners.

**Lia**: Well when I switched settings I really had to do some more research because this was a new setting for me and I learned how important it was to really... we are really the educators and support for families. So, we can come in and do therapy but it's more important if they understand what we're doing. So, I had to learn a lot about that relationship and how we see the families and learner's. That might mean that they really have to see what's in it for them. So, families really want to know why you're coming into their home. How is it going to benefit them? And that's important in the school as well, too, because you can communicate at home and they might be a little bit faster than spending more time in class. So, it's really important to communicate that to the families.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. I think a lot of times when we're in the home, sometimes it just looks like we're playing and they don't really understand the meaning behind it. So of course, they're not going to say, oh well, the speech therapist played with you I should go play with you. But if we can really give that education and teach them about the process you're right, you're going to get better by in.

**Lia**: Exactly.

**Carrie**: Wonderful. Alright so that's our first tip. Thinking about those families as learners. Getting them on board with the process educationally. And then the next step is going to be to provide a variety of resources. What kind of resources do you look for when you're sharing with your families, Lia?

**Lia**: Well I'm sure like all of you, we work with lots of different kinds of kids, lots of different kinds of families and all have different backgrounds. So, for some they want the books. They want to know where they can look at the library and recommendations. Other people want shorter maybe articles, handouts that you can give them. But now there are so many possibilities. We can share Facebook groups, we can share podcast, we can share even Instagram accounts. I think if we're creative to see how these families like learning to make that as easy as possible so that they're getting the information that works best for them.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Now I'm thinking in terms of our viewers who are maybe in the school setting and don't have time to talk to each family and see what they want, would you recommend something like a handout that just lists all the different types of resources? Or how would you suggest doing that?

**Lia**: Yeah so, I started collecting... I just made a list for myself and it included resources in the community. Like when are the library times, so those kinds of resources. But then also ways that they can access information. Websites I thought would be important. So, I've collected those on my website and I have a little Resource Center. So, if you have your own little bank of library or whatever system works best for you, then you have that to go to when you get a new kid on your caseload and you can share. Just kind of start collecting as you go.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. I think that's a great idea. I never thought about sharing, like even Instagram accounts. I never thought about sharing that with parents but there are some parents that that's all the time they're going to have is to swipe through an Instagram and be like, oh yeah, I could do something like that. So that's a great idea.

**Lia**: Yeah. I mean that's how we get information. It's quick, it's on your phone. Whatever is easy I think. And sometimes I have more buying it because they're already on Facebook. I share a Facebook group with...that talks about early toddler infant and development and there's parents and speech pathologist on there and it's just a good open communication. But I think it's just letting people know that there are opportunities like that out there.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. Funny story, I took my child to a new co-working space and we were in the child care area and I was talking to the child care worker and I said, oh I'm a speech language pathologist and she says, oh my gosh have you heard of…yells its group. And so, she's already in your group. So, what's the name of that Facebook group?

**Lia**: [Let's talk infant and toddler development](https://www.facebook.com/groups/letstalkinfantsandtoddlers/).

**Carrie**: [Let's talk infant and toddler development](https://www.facebook.com/groups/letstalkinfantsandtoddlers/), all right. So maybe after the show if you link to that in the comments of this post then that'll be a good resource to either share with families or if you are a family to be on there, as well. Plus, there are speech language pathologist in there as well, right?

**Lia**: There are, yes.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Alright, great. Okay, so that's our first two tips. Stay with us and if you are here on Facebook Live we are going to be doing some giveaways here in just a moment so hang tight with us and will share some fun resources. Let's see, Lisa says I use Bloom's app to communicate with parents and provide resources. Perfect! That's a great one, as well. Thank you, Lisa. So, the third tip is to take time to find out what's important to families. How does this look for you, Lia?

**Lia**: So I get the luxury of being in the home. You know we spend a lot of time with the families and so we have that open dialogue. And I've learned in working with them how important it is because I always learn something new. I think it's good for an early interventionist to be open to that. I know that also having been in the schools that it just seems like one more thing and can feel like a lot to have that parent communication. So, this is a perfect time of year when you're doing the about me getting to know your kid's worksheets like this where they're filling in the foods they like. I'll include this in the notes, as well. But you can find out what their favorite sports team is. What they watch on YouTube. I think just thinking outside of what your favorite color and what's your favorite subject in school. Spend a little longer and really ask them more questions about home and keep notes of those because those will be good to use in therapy. So, you can do therapy a little more individually.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. And going off those same lines, my son is in therapy for sensory processing disorder. And we have these exercises that we have to do and it's hard to work it in. Even if it's like a 2-minute exercise. Finding time to make my child sit down and do this thing that's really hard for him, it's kind of a nightmare sometimes. So, what I found helpful is when I'm talking with our therapist, I'll say okay you know we're really struggling right now with swimming lessons. He won't lay his head back in the water. And so, they're able to say okay that's what you need help with? We have an exercise for the steps of it. We'll work on that right now. So being able to have that relationship where you can say okay what are you struggling with at home right now, I can help with whatever it is. We'll work on the communication piece of that. Have you found that as well to be helpful as your families?

**Lia**: Absolutely. Like I said back to that first point of what's in it for them. If they see that, oh they're really here to help me, not just my child. But we're here to help to make their lives easier. And those struggles that they're dealing with on a daily basis, their frustrations, that's where the communication breaks down. So, when we can help support that. And we don't know unless we talked with the families. So, communication is really important.

**Carrie**: Yeah. Because you might think that the most important thing is getting this child to ask for a snack and they're saying, dude mealtimes are no problem he eats great. What we need help with you know, is the pottying routine it's a nightmare so.

**Lia**: Exactly. And you make it a referral from a teacher who you know, they can't say they're R's or something. But if you talk to the teacher maybe the child isn't participating in social groups. They might have other weaknesses they didn't get referred for, but having that open communication with teachers and staff works the same way. So, knowing where the communication is breaking down.

**Carrie**: Absolutely, absolutely. Okay, stay tuned guys were going to do our giveaways in just a minute. If you have any questions go ahead and type those into Facebook Live. Okay so the next thing or tip were going to share is how to make it simple for these families so it doesn't feel like one more burden that we have during our parenting day.

**Lia**: So one thing that I found was really helpful if I created these, it's a calendar. And therefore, all different levels. Well, I've got three different levels for kids that are just they don't even have words yet. So early communicators. Those kids that are in that learning first words stage. And then the ones that are expanding their language. Phrases and sentences. So, something like this you can either make your own. These are free to download on my website. But it's just one daily thing. Just a reminder to sing a song with them. Like go outside and look at the moon at night. It just gives parents very simple one way to incorporate language into their daily activities. It could be at meals. It could be when you're out for a walk or could be at the grocery store, but I think parents need that. They just need to know what to do and to reinforce what they already are doing and that that is helping their language, too.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. So, do you have a recommendation for an amount of minutes per day that you usually shoot for with families?

**Lia**: I think it depends on the family. I think there are families who kids that I work with sometimes they have two or three hours of therapy at home during the day. So, feeling like it's one more thing. Like a lot of families, it feels like a lot. If you can incorporate it into a meal time and say do it for 5 minutes. It doesn't have to be like a drill for practice. But for other kids, like it's cool like if you want to say here's your new five words-check it off. As long as the families know that it's going to be something simple then they're going to be more likely to follow through.

**Carrie**: Definitely. And that leads us into our 5th point today which is incorporating these things into daily routines. Talk about what that looks like for our Speech & Language practice.

**Lia**: So I didn't really think about this too much in the school as now it's so much of what we do in early intervention. Really building the language into the children's daily lives. So that could be mealtimes and like I said at the grocery store and how can we build language in. But we can also think about this in the school too. so, our kids follow a schedule during their classroom day. So, if you go around at the beginning of the school year and maybe collect your teacher's classroom, they probably have a handout on what their daily routine looks like but it could also mean using like the cafeteria lunch menu. That's something that the kids look at on a daily basis. So, use words off of materials like that, that are built into the kid’s daily routine and you know have them sequence how do you take your backpack and hang it on a hook. Or think about the types of routines they are doing during the day already.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. One of the ways that I have done this in the past is use my push in therapy time for this. So, if I have some time where I'm pushing into the classroom I will model for the teacher some strategies she can use to incorporate language into whatever activity. So, let's say I get there at the beginning of the day and the children are putting their coats and backpacks away and I model how they can work on two-step directions without visuals for these couple of children that are working on that. Or I model how the teacher can get down with the student and say good morning how are you and expect that reciprocated greeting. So, I am thinking about what are their goals and how can those be worked in and then I model that in the classroom during my push in time so I think that's a great way to do daily routines, as well.

**Lia**: Exactly. And teachers may not even realize that that that's something you can even help them with. They might not even know how to communicate that to you. Like oh this kid never pays attention when you know I'm giving directions but it's so great that you can be in the classroom to help see that.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. Perfect. Alright, those are five tips for you today. We are going to share some resources here and some giveaways, so stay tuned if you're on with Facebook Live with us right now. But let's go ahead and talk about resources. You said you have a special link for us, today right?

**Lia**: Yeah so if you go to my website, up at the menu at the top, I have a [resource section](http://speechandlanguageathome.com/resources/). See, you can find links to Speech Pathology blogs, I have free Asha CEUs, plus other things like Facebook groups and things like that. So that's a resource for you. I also give away lots of [free stuff on my website](http://speechandlanguageathome.com/speech-and-language-calendars/). Like I have these monthly calendars that I send out. And I know we're going to give away something to one of your viewers, but if you didn't get to watch this live and you're watching later, anyone that goes into my website and does a backslash of Speechie Show, and I'll put the link below I'll have a link to this handout. Oh, and I also forgot to mention, I made some resources. These are school words that you might see during the day that you wouldn't really think of. It's probably not going to be words that you find in your speech materials like drinking fountain or construction paper, in a classroom, words that they see or hear every day. So, I have a list of school words that are broken down into... by speech sound. So, if you head over there you can download those, also.

**Carrie**: Perfect. So that would be [speechandlanguageathome.com\speechieshow](http://speechandlanguageathome.com/speechieshow), right?

**Lia**: Yeah

**Carrie**: Okay. We'll put a link to that below in the comments and also in the show notes once we get the recording up on the [Speech & Language Kids website](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/). So, look for that link and you can get all of these resources plus check out everything us we got over there. Perfect. Thank you. Ok so we're doing giveaways here on Facebook Live if you're watching with us today live you can participate. The first giveaway is going to be Lia's and this is…why don't you tell them? What are you giving away today?

**Lia**: Well I know that there are, maybe some of your viewers working early intervention or some with the school, so I do have an early intervention notebook. If that's an area that fits your needs. But I also have some materials that may be more appropriate for school-based kids. I have these flip books. So, I'll let the winner choose whichever one.

**Carrie**: Perfect, it's a, you pick. Alright so we'll do a you pick. You get to pick between the early intervention or the elementary school resources. And where can people find those if they don't win here today? Are those going to be on that link?

**Lia**: Yes. So, you can find the link off of my website but I also have a TPT store which is [speechandlanguageathome](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech-And-Language-At-Home). And in case any of your viewers don't know, they are going to have their sitewide sale over the next two days. So, everything in my store and many other speech therapist stores are going to be 25% off for the next two days.

**Carrie**: Perfect, you'll have to do that. Okay so that's the first giveaway. The second give away is going to be two free months in my membership, the [Speech Therapy Solution](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). And if you haven't heard we just got approved to do Asha CEUs. So, starting in September we will be offering Asha CEUs. It is a membership site for speech language pathologists where you get training. You get to ask us your questions and we help you with your tough cases. There is a whole library full of printing go resources and the price is going to go up in September when we start offering the CEU's. So, if you get in in the month of August, you can lock in your rate before that price hike and your rate will stay the same for the lifetime of your membership. So, you definitely want to get in before the end of August 31st to lock in your lower rate. But that you can find over at [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). And we will be giving away two free months to one person today here on Facebook Live. So here we go are you ready? So, I am going to ask a question. The first people to respond are going to win the prize. So, the first person is going to win Lia's and the second person is going to win the membership here. So, here's the question, are you ready? Name a routine that a family could use to work on speech and language skills. So, this is a routine at home that you can instruct a family how to work on some speech and language skills while they're in the midst of that routine. And while we are waiting for people to chime in, I will say I just bought a book called Breathe Mama Breathe, hahaha and it's all about how to do mindfulness while you're in parenting routines. So, it's the same thing but with mama self-care. Which this mama desperately needs, hahaha.

**Lia**: Yeah, hahaha

**Carrie**: So I'm excited about that one. That's a good book. Okay so we've got Blake Brown who said brushing teeth. So, Blake, you are going to win your choice of Lia's resources. Lia how do you want her to contact you to get her prize?

**Lia**: She can reach me at lia@speechandlanguageathome.com.

**Carrie**: Perfect. And that's L-i-a correct?

**Lia**: Yes.

**Carrie**: Okay. And the next person, we got a bunch of them here. Okay the next one was Lisa Jorgenson and she said mealtime. Lisa, you are going to win the two free months in my membership. I can't remember if you are already a member. If you are, will just add it onto your current membership. Or if not, we'll set you up with a new one. So, you can email me at carrie@speechandlanguagekid.com and my assistant, Kena, will get you all set up your two free months. Congratulations guys. We had a whole bunch of other people chiming in as well, that's wonderful. Alright thank you all so much for participating and joining us today and, Lia, thank you so much for coming on the show. Where can people find more about you?

**Lia**: So on my website at [SpeechandLanguageAtHome.com](http://speechandlanguageathome.com/). But I also have a [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/speechandlanguageathome/) and all social media accounts.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Wonderful. And to find out more about the Speech Therapy Solution and the upcoming Asha CEU’s we will be offering, head on over to [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) and don't forget to sign up in the month of August to lock in that lower rate. Alright thank you all so much for joining us today and we'll see you next week on the Speechie Show. Bye for now.

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.