

Making Neuroscience Fun



A Brain Awareness Program for All Ages
It's SPECTacular!

Story General Information

What Do I Do? (🧠 A Social Health Story)

(K – 5-6 yrs.)

Children learn from watching others beginning from the time they are born. This story looks at social development and how children learn to trust themselves and others to make the right decisions.

- 🧠 There are a lot of choices to make in this world. Making good choices means you first need to know what you know.
- 🧠 When you do not have all the information to make the right choice, you need to know who to ask for help.
- 🧠 Making good choices will help you feel good about yourself and makes your brain happy and healthy.

The facilitator begins by introducing themselves, neuroscience, and the program: Brain Health: It's SPECTacular. The facilitator breaks down the meaning of SPECTacular for the children and discusses the importance of keeping their brain healthy and happy. The facilitator points out the **S** in SPECTacular and how it represents Social Health. Good Social Health is loving and being kind to yourself and others.

In this story, the facilitator guides the children through the decision-making process. Just as a scientist asks questions to find answers and solve problems, the children will follow the facilitators lead and do the same.

Social Health is described as feeling good about themselves. A way to help develop their Social Health is learning how to make good decisions and choices. If they can make thoughtful decisions their Social Health will thrive. Therefore, their brain will be healthier.

The facilitator discusses the need to make choices every day and as they grow older, they will face more choices. Some decisions will be good, some will be bad, and some might even be both. But, it is important to understand how to best make a decision. The facilitator asks the children if they have ever thought to themselves, "What do I do?" before making a decision. If faced with this question, there must be several choices to choose from. Therefore, using prior knowledge helps determine the "good choice" from the "bad choice."

As different scenarios are presented (a ball rolling into the road, what to wear while swimming, a roasted marshmallow falling into the fire), the facilitator takes a step-by-step approach demonstrating how to make a decision. They first discuss what they know about the situation: What could be dangerous or out of their control? What are the rules for that place/area? What is the environment like? Secondly, the children brainstorm the effects of each choice they could potentially make. Finally, they decide together what is a good choice for the situation.

They also discuss the complexity of choices. There are several things that can make decisions easier for someone. First, the brain and body work together to help make decisions easier. The body tells the brain when it is time to use the potty. Using the bathroom is a learned skill. Therefore, learning a skill can help make a

decision easier because the right choice has been taught. Finally, trusting others to help in the decision-making process can also make a choice easier. If they do not know enough information, like where a bathroom is, asking a person they trust where to go can reassure that going to the potty is the right choice.

When faced with harder choices, it is important to think about the possible outcomes before making a decision. Fresh, hot cookies sitting on the kitchen counter can be very tempting, but if the children take one without asking first, they could get in trouble. They could also burn themselves. Therefore, waiting until a cookie is offered is the best choice in this situation.

Making decisions is about trusting oneself to make the right choice or trusting another person to help. It is about identifying what you know and what you do not know. Making good choices and helping others when they are unsure improves Social Health because both generate a happy feeling. Improving Social Health develops a healthy brain. A healthy, happy brain is SPECTacular!

Story Objectives:

- Students will discuss the decision making process and that there are good decisions and bad decisions.
- Students will identify when making a decision there are choices.
- Students will recognize decisions are based on prior knowledge.
- Students will explore different scenarios and determine the best decision based on what they know and how to stay safe and healthy.
- Students will use cause and effect processing to determine the right choice in each scenario.
- Students will recognize that some decisions are easy and some decision are hard.
- Students will ask themselves “What Do I Do?” to help guide their thinking.
- Students will define Social Health in simple terms.
- Students will discuss how good social health is trusting yourself to make right decisions.