

Making Neuroscience Fun

A Brain Awareness Program for All Ages



Brain Health: It's SPECTacular

Story General Information

The SPECTacular Way to Take Care of Your Brain (🧠 A Brain Health Story) (1st Grade- 6-7 yrs.)

This story emphasizes the importance of a healthy brain, and ways to keep one's brain healthy.

- 🧠 Your brain helps you to do lots of things. As your brain grows, so do the things that you can do.
- 🧠 Taking care of your brain to keep it healthy is SPECTacular.
- 🧠 If you take care of your brain, your brain will take care of you.

The facilitator begins by introducing themselves, neuroscience, and the program, Brain Health: It's SPECTacular. Brain Health is about maintaining a happy, healthy brain to feel good. The beginning letters of SPECTacular (SPEC) each represent a component of Brain Health the children have learned about in previous stories. The facilitator reviews each component (Social, Physical, Emotional, and Cognitive) and its importance to staying healthy and happy. This summative story focuses on ways to take care of the brain, while laying out a foundation for making positive choices and healthy behaviors.

Understanding capabilities and limitations is part of Social Health. There are behaviors and skills people can do and others they cannot. It is often determined by age and size. As people grow, so does their brain and abilities. The facilitator helps the children recognize that just because they have trouble doing something like reading right now does not mean they will always struggle. It may just take more time and growth to master. Sometimes tasks can be dangerous when someone is smaller, like crossing the street or playing with fire. Therefore, it is important to think about the outcome of the situation prior to participating. The goal is to always maintain a happy and healthy brain; therefore, making smart choices in dangerous situations is important.

Physically, the brain and body need food, movement, and rest. The facilitator discusses with the children why eating, exercising, and sleeping are all important to a happy and healthy brain.

People experience many different emotions. It is okay to feel and express emotions when they are felt. Knowing the cause of the emotion and how to handle it improves overall Emotional Health. There is also a part of the brain, the *happy place*, that is turned on by completing a necessary behavior. This makes the brain happy too.

Finally, the children and facilitator discuss learning and thinking. The brain is designed to take in information and store it. The brain likes to know and learn new things, which creates a strong cognitive brain.

Taking care of the brain is all about making smart and healthy choices and knowing what the brain and body need. When those needs are met, the brain is healthy and happy! How SPECTacular is that?!

Story Objectives:

- Students will identify the multiple components of SPEC (Social, Physical, Emotional, & Cognitive) to maintain a happy, healthy brain.
- Students will recognize that as you grow, your brain grows, and you can do more things independently making a happy, healthy brain. (Social)
- Students will name three ways to keep your brain happy & healthy: eating, exercising, and sleeping. (Physical)
- Students will discuss emotions and how turning on their happy place can contribute to a happy, healthy brain. (Emotional)
- Students will recognize the brain loves to learn new things, think, and understand the world around it to stay happy and healthy. (Cognitive)