

Making Neuroscience Fun

A Brain Awareness Program for All Ages



Brain Health: It's SPECTacular

Story General Information

Helping You Helps Me Too- (🧠 A Social Health Story)

(2nd Grade- 7-8 yrs.)

This story describes how engaging in altruistic, prosocial behaviors helps everyone's social health.

- 🧠 When you need help, think about how good you feel when someone helps you.
- 🧠 When you help others, think about how good that makes you feel.
- 🧠 Altruistic behaviors help your brain to be healthy and are good for both your social and emotional health (instills empathy for others).

The facilitator begins by introducing themselves, neuroscience, and the program: Brain Health: It's SPECTacular. The facilitator defines SPECTacular for the children as meaning "great" and discusses how having a SPECTacular brain means having a healthy and happy brain. They share that the letter **S** represents Social Health. In this story, children learn more about keeping their brain healthy through helping others and themselves.

By describing several relatable scenarios (dropping bookbag, spilling lunch try, not understanding a new math concept), the children discuss potential feelings and emotions (embarrassment, sadness, and anger) they experience if this happens to them. First, this helps them understand that although they may feel a certain way, they should not feel alone. Many people feel the same emotions in the exact same situation, but often are too scared or nervous to show those emotions. The facilitator also describes how people help in each scenario. When someone helps, it turns those more negative feelings into something positive. There are many different people who are able to help. The children discuss individuals or groups of people who are able to them depending on the situation. Being helped by someone creates happy and loving feelings, which improves Social Health.

The facilitator introduces the concept of *empathy*. Children learn to identify situations in which they would want or need help. As they understand when they need help, it allows them to identify that for others as well. Understanding when someone else needs help is *empathy*. The facilitator uses images to have the children describe what they see. The children describe emotions of the people in the images and how they could help. Helping others, whether they ask for it or not, is *altruism*. Exhibiting *empathy* and *altruism* improve Social Health and therefore, create a happier and healthier brain.

When help is given or received, it triggers an emotional response in the brain. That response "turns on" the brain's "happy place." The children are encouraged to seek help when needed, practice empathy, and exhibit altruism to turn on their happy place. This improves their overall Social Health, and allows for a happy, SPECTacular brain!

Story Objectives:

- Students will describe how helping others and being helped improves Social Health.
- Students will discuss how accepting help is positive.
- Students will identify different people (or groups of people) to seek help from.
- Students will define *empathy* and share examples.
- Students will define *altruism* and share examples