



A SPECTacular Way to Think Outside the Box (🌈 A Brain Health Story) (3rd Grade – 8-9 yrs)

This story looks at how “thinking outside of the box” can help children incorporate what they are learning about SPEC health to help them come up with new ways to keep their brain healthy.

- 🌈 Prior to this age, children were learning to read. Now, children are reading to learn about new subjects that may help them to identify their talents and learn how to think.
- 🌈 By “thinking outside of the box”, we discuss how prioritizing sleep helps children with many aspects of their SPEC health.
- 🌈 Throughout the story, we discuss how “thinking outside of the box” does not need to be done alone; people in a child’s support system can help.

🌈 SLIDE #1 - INTRODUCTION:

Good Morning (Afternoon)!

My name is _____ and I (describe who you are and give your relation to neuroscience – ex. you are a Neuroscientist, you study neuroscience, you have a friend that is a neuroscientist or you have recently been learning a lot about neuroscience).

A neuroscientist studies the brain. So, I am here today to talk to you about how you can help make your brain healthy. It is REALLY easy and anyone can do it.

This program is called Brain Health: It's SPECTacular. You feel SPECTacular when your brain is healthy. You can be a happy and healthy person by knowing more about your brain and how it works!!

Plus, to spell SPECTacular you need...S – P – E – and C.

To keep your brain healthy, you also need S – P – E – and C.

The 1st thing that helps your brain stay healthy is loving yourself and loving others – being **Social**. That is the **S**.

“Being social” means you love yourself and you are nice to yourself. It also means that you are building relationships with friends and other people who make up your support system.

The 2nd thing that helps your brain stay healthy is taking care of your body – that is being **Physical**. That is the **P**.

Being physical means you move your body, you eat for fuel, and you sleep to rest and restore your body and your brain to get ready for the next day.

The 3rd thing that helps your brain stay healthy is understanding about how you “feel” – **Emotions**. That is the **E**.

Good emotional health means you can identify your emotions and not let them control your behaviors. It means you can balance how you feel and how you act.

The last thing that you can do to make your brain healthy is to think...and not just when you are in school. **Cognition** - that is the **C** – is a big word that means being able to think.

Your brain is thinking all the time!

So, let's see how you can keep your brain healthy.

SLIDE #2 – A SPECTACULAR WAY TO THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

This is a time when you are learning a LOT about things that you can do to help your brain stay healthy.

You are learning that everyone needs people around who will support them.

You are learning how to control your emotions.

You know that taking care of your body and your brain means getting a good night's rest.

And, you know that it is more important to understand things that you are learning than to just memorize them.

Learning how this information can help you with your SPEC health will allow you to develop good behavioral habits that will keep your brain healthy throughout your life.

It all starts with being able to “think outside of the box” in a SPECtacular way.

SLIDE #3 – WHY DO I WANT TO LEARN?

You spent the first few years in school learning how to read. Now, you can use your ability to read in order to learn all kinds of new and exciting things.

Now, while some of you might be thinking... “Why do I want to learn?”

The answer is simple. You should want to learn so that you can figure out what you want to do with your life.

You need to keep trying new things to see what kinds of things that you like to learn about and how you can use that information to be able to do things in your life that you enjoy.

SLIDE #4– TALENTS

We all know that everyone is different. We look different, we think differently, and we feel differently about things.

We also know that we are all the same, too. We all have talents. Our talents may be different – but, everyone has talents. Now is the time for you to start figuring out what your talents are and how you can use those talents.

The best way to figure out what your talents are is by reading and learning new things.

You need to “think outside of the box”.

SLIDE #5 – THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

“Thinking outside of the box” means that you are willing to come up with new ways to think about things.

So, when your teacher tells you that you are going to be learning something new today, instead of dreading having to learn that information – give “thinking outside of the box” a try.

Who knows...it may be a lot of fun.

SLIDE #6 – HOW IS THE INFO USED?

One of the ways that might help you to have more fun with new information is to find out how this information can be used.

Figuring out how the information is used in the real world makes it easier for you to understand and that might make it more fun for you to try to learn.

Plus, if you know why you need to know something and how new information relates to you, then it will make the information more relevant.

SLIDE #7 – ASK FOR HELP

So, how do you figure out how information is used in the real world?

Ok...let’s say you are learning about weather and storms, like hurricanes, in science class, but you do not live near the ocean. You may be confused or disinterested in this topic. So, why should you listen or learn about them?

If you are not sure *why* you are learning about something, you should ask and find out. Remember, you are not alone. You have people around you, whom you trust and can confide in, that support you.

Your teachers, friends, parent or caregivers and experts – whose job it is to understand weather and storms...these are all people that can help you to understand why it’s important for you to learn and understand about hurricanes.

Hurricanes start over the water, so people who live on the coast are affected, but they can also travel over land. The winds and rain they produce cause flooding. All of this can damage homes, schools, stores, farms – so much damage, so it can disrupt many lives – even if you live far away from where the hurricane hits.

Let’s say you LOVE oranges. Hurricanes can damage crops, which means the oranges you love are going to be hard to find in the grocery store. You thought hurricanes didn’t affect you because you didn’t live on the coast.

As someone who lives on this planet, learning about things like hurricanes and how they affect lots of different people can help you to not only help yourself, but it helps you help others too. Both of these things will make your brain happy and healthy.

SLIDE #8 – DO YOUR BEST

When you come up with different reasons and different ways to learn information – you are “thinking outside of the box”.

Your brain is built to think – so thinking outside of the box is good for your brain health.

But, there may be times that YOU cannot find a good way to use the information in the real world – no matter how hard you try or how many people you ask for help.

Don't worry, as long as you try your best, just trying to learn new things will help your brain.

SLIDE #9 – SLEEP

We all know how important sleep is for your brain health. But you also know that you have a lot more things to do every day.

You may have to help around the house by cleaning up after yourself and doing chores.

You go to school and you have homework.

You may have other things to do outside of school – like playing sports, or music, or dance, or scouts, or other things to do at a community center.

You also may have other things you like to do – like playing with your friends, playing outside, playing on a computer or tablet, reading books, watching movies, etc.

Just thinking about all that you have to do makes you anxious and that sometimes makes it hard to sleep at night.

So, yes you know that sleep is important – but, there is so much to do!!! How are you supposed to fit everything in? Here is another opportunity for you to “think outside the box”.

SLIDE #10 – PRIORITIZE

Now is a good time in your life when you start learning to **prioritize** all the things that you have to do during a day.

Prioritizing the things that you need to do means that you need to decide what is important and make sure those things get done.

Managing your time is something that you are going to have to do throughout your life, so learning how to do this now is a good thing to do.

Thinking outside of the box and learning how to prioritize will help you relax and get the sleep that your brain needs to stay healthy.

SLIDE #11 – SLEEP GIVES YOU ENERGY

What has to come first when you prioritize is taking care of your body and your brain. If your body and your brain are not healthy, then you will not be able to do lots of things.

So, you may think that “having to go to bed” is not fun - you need to change the **way** you are thinking about having to go to bed - “think outside of the box”.

Think about sleeping as a way as a way to help your Physical Health. If your body and your brain are healthy, that will make all the things that you have to do more fun.

If you are getting a good night’s sleep, then you are helping your body and your brain get ready for all the things that you need to do the next day.

When you are well rested, you have the energy to do all the things that you need to do.

SLIDE #12 – SLEEP AFFECTS YOUR EMOTIONS

Plus, when you get enough sleep you have better control of your emotions.

When you are tired and you have too much to do, everything seems like a chore – a nasty chore – and you either get angry or sad that you have to do things, like doing your homework, when you would rather watch tv.

When you are tired, you actually get stressed out more easily. When you are stressed out, you also tend to have less control of your emotions.

You need to “think outside of the box” about how not getting enough sleep can affect your emotional health.

SLIDE #13 – PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Not being able to control your emotions and letting yourself get too stressed out may cause you to behave badly.

You may not intend to be mean to your friend and yell at them – but, because you are tired you cannot control yourself.

You may not mean to be disrespectful to your teacher – but, because you are tired you are not making good decisions.

Learn now, that prioritizing sleep is something that is important to do and will help you to avoid a lot of bad situations.

SLIDE #14 – SLEEP AFFECTS WHAT YOU EAT AND HOW MUCH YOU MOVE

Plus, when you don’t get enough sleep and you are tired, you don’t have a lot of energy. Let’s “think outside of the box” and see how sleep may affect your energy levels.

When you are tired you tend to want eat foods that are yummy, rather than foods that are good for your body and your brain. Why?

It turns out that foods that are “yummy” usually contain lots of sugar and fats, which are high in energy that does not last long. Plus, these foods do not contain nutrients that our body and our brain need to work.

Foods like vegetables and fruit, gives you energy that lasts and gives you nutrients that your body and brain need.

Low energy also means that when you are tired you tend to just want to lay around, rather than moving your body.

But remember, your body is made of lots of muscles and they need to move.

Eating and moving are two things that you need to be doing to make your brain physically healthy. By making sleep a priority, you are helping your brain stay healthy.

SLIDE #15 – THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

When your body and your brain are healthy, then you can “think outside of the box” to figure out how to do all the things that you need to do during the day.

When you get out of bed, then make your bed. When you get dressed, put your dirty clothes in the laundry. Wash your dishes – or put them in the sink or dishwasher – after you eat. By doing things as they come up, this will make your chores go faster and easier.

Pay attention in school, so you understand what you need to do for your homework. Focus on doing your homework when you sit down to do it. If you are trying to do your homework and you are not focused, it will take you longer to do. If you find that you are not focused – then get up and take a 5 minute break. Use this time to move your body and then go back to your homework. You will be surprised at how better your homework goes when you are focused.

Remember, you can always talk to people in your support system about how to balance all the things you need to do --- while making sure you are getting the sleep you need.

SLIDE #16 – A SPECTACULAR BRAIN

“Thinking outside of the box” can help you come up with new ideas on how to handle new subjects in school.

“Thinking outside of the box” can help you prioritize sleep – so that your body and your brain has the energy to balance all of the things that you need to do during the day.

And getting a good night’s sleep can help you to control your emotions and prevent you from getting stressed out.

Getting a good night’s sleep can also help you to eat right and make sure you are moving your body.

And “thinking outside of the box” does not have to be done alone. Talking to others can help you come up with new ways to keep your brain SPEC healthy. So, “thinking outside of the box” can help you have a SPECTacular brain.

SLIDE #17 – CONCLUSION

Thank you all for letting me talk to you about to “think outside of the box” to keep your brain SPEC healthy.

I have enjoyed spending time with you today talking about the brain. I hope that you have had some fun and learned something about your brain.

REMEMBER, when you “think outside of the box” you come up with new ways to think about things. It may help you learn a subject that you were dreading to learn. It may mean you think about having to go to bed as a way to help you instead of punish you. It may also show you how to prioritize the things that you spend your time doing during the day. Being able to think outside of the box also helps your brain health – because you are thinking and using what you are learning about SPEC health. And, helping your brain stay healthy is SPECTacular.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ALL OF YOUR HELP!!! Brain Health is not just SPECTacular...it is FUN!!!

