



**Importance of SPECTacular Brain Health in Adolescence (🧠 A Brain Health Story)  
(5<sup>th</sup> Grade – 10-11 yrs.)  
Physical Activity: TimesThey are Changing**



**STORY CONNECTION – SLIDES 3-5 (Approx time: 20-25 min)**

As a 5<sup>th</sup> grader, there are many changes that are going on in your world. You may be getting ready to go from elementary school to middle school. You have more access to electronics, and this means you have more access to the world and the world has more access to you. You may have more responsibilities at home. You may have more interests outside of home and school and this means that you must prioritize your time to make sure everything gets done. These are just some of the things that may be going on in the world around you.

There are changes in your body as it grows, and these are happening both inside and outside of your body. You find that things that you used to like, you may not like anymore. You may find that you are always hungry and always tired. You may find that your emotions are changing.

Just like your body grows as you get older, so does your brain. We have talked about how your brain is made of neurons that are always talking to each other using chemicals. One part of the brain, a tiny little area called the hypothalamus which sits at the bottom of your brain, is really starting to receive chemicals from your growing body. The chemical signals that the hypothalamus receives from the body causes it to release special chemicals into the blood called hormones. These hormones travel in the blood to various parts of your body, and they are the chemicals responsible for changing both your body and your brain.

**Materials needed:**

- Space for student(s) to move
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Markers
- Paper
- Pencils
- Environmental/World, Physical, and Emotional Changes Cards (included below)
- Changes Cards Answer Key (included below)
- Scissors

**Preparation needed:**

- Select and secure location for student(s) to move easily
- Write the titles (Environmental/World, Physical, and Emotional) on chart paper or the whiteboard.
- Label three different areas in the room as Environmental/World, Physical, and Emotional.
- Determine how Change cards will be used (digitally or physically)
  - Digitally: Prepare to project card image
  - Physically: Print out and cut cards apart.

*\*\*Note: Feel free to also just read the information to students without displaying the images on the card. Do what works best for your student(s).\*\**

- Print or have digital copy of answer key readily available

### Instructions:

1. In this activity, student(s) will focus on the various changes they are experiencing in their lives. The activity will spotlight changes in their environment/world, physical changes, and emotions.
2. Begin the activity by pointing out Environmental/World, Physical, and Emotional on the chart paper or whiteboard.
3. Remind the student(s) that these are examples from the story of some of the changes they are/will be experiencing.
4. Ensure each student has paper and a pencil.
5. Ask student(s) to jot down an example of each change on their paper. Give student(s) a couple minutes to do this.
  - Examples might include:
    - Environmental/World-going to a new school, having to babysit siblings
    - Physical-always tired and hungry
    - Emotional-upset or annoyed easily
6. Next, have several student(s) share what they wrote down.
 

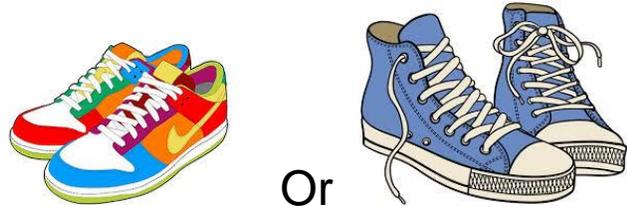
*\*\*Note: Student responses can be written on the chart paper or whiteboard simply discussed.\*\**
7. After student(s) share, remind them that...
  - the changes happening to their bodies and in their brains are due to a tiny little area called the hypothalamus
  - the hypothalamus sits at the bottom of your brain.
  - The hypothalamus starts to receive chemicals from your growing body.
  - the chemical signals that the hypothalamus receives from the body cause it to release special chemicals into the blood called hormones.
  - these hormones travel in the blood to various parts of your body.
  - hormones are the chemicals responsible for changing both your body and your brain.
8. Point out the three areas around the room labeled Environmental/World, Physical, and Emotional.
9. Explain to them that they will see or hear (depending on the facilitator's choice) an example of some type of change. They will decide what kind of change they think it is (Environmental/World, Physical, or Emotional) and move to that area of the room. They will need to be able to explain their choice too.
 

*\*\*Note: If your student(s) need or benefit from an example, use one of theirs from the brainstorm or demonstrate with a card from below.\*\**
10. Ask student(s) if they have any questions or need any clarification. Clear up any misunderstandings.
11. Have all student(s) move to a neutral area in the room.
12. Begin the activity by following these steps:
  - Show or read the example. *\*\*The image can be shown, and the descriptor can be used to better explain, if desired.*
  - Have student(s) move to the labeled area of the room.
  - Select a student(s) to explain why they moved there and give an explanation as to why this change might be difficult and what they can do to make the best of the change.
  - Correct any incorrect movement-if applicable.
  - Have student(s) move back to neutral or starting area.
  - Show or read the next example.
13. Complete as many examples as possible in the time allotted. Feel free to add any additional examples pertinent to the group of student(s).
14. In closing, remind student(s) that they are or will be experiencing many changes. Most of these changes are out of their control, but perfectly expected at their age due to chemicals called hormones. In the next four activities, they will learn more about these changes and what they can do to keep their body and brain happy by focusing on SPECtacular Brain Health.

## Change Cards Answer Key

Environmental/World	Physical	Emotional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leaving elementary school and going to middle school</li> <li>- Having access to phones, devices, and social media</li> <li>- Having more responsibilities at home</li> <li>- Getting to make more decisions</li> <li>- Doing more activities outside of home and school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noticing that kids in the class are all different heights</li> <li>- Peoples' voices are starting to sound different.</li> <li>- You are hungry ALL THE TIME.</li> <li>- You cannot seem to get enough sleep.</li> <li>- Muscles are more developed.</li> <li>- Experiencing a growth spurt or growing pains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Friends annoy you very easily sometimes.</li> <li>- You cannot stand your siblings suddenly.</li> <li>- You feel mad, sad, or anxious sometimes and you do not know why.</li> <li>- No one understands you anymore.</li> </ul>

**Getting to make more decisions**



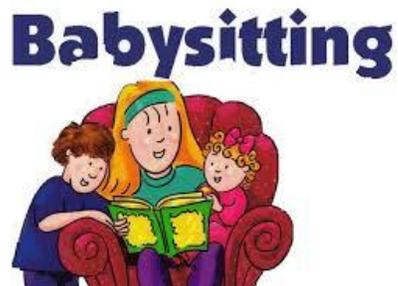
**Peoples' voices are starting to sound different.**



**Friends annoy you very easily sometimes.**



**Having more responsibilities at home**



**Leaving elementary school and going to middle school**



**You cannot seem to get enough sleep.**



**No one understands you anymore.**



**NO ONE UNDERSTANDS ME...**

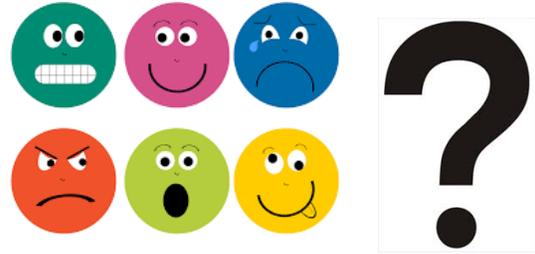
**Having access to phones, devices, and social media**



**Doing more activities  
outside of home and  
school**



**You feel mad, sad, or  
anxious sometimes and  
you do not know why.**



**Noticing that kids in the  
class are all different  
heights**



**Muscles are more  
developed.**



**You cannot stand your  
siblings suddenly.**



**Experiencing a growth  
spurt or growing pains**



**You are hungry ALL  
THE TIME.**



Elementary Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQm-HjX-EwKMCXYi1U58h4kyVCO4k29GCGDAAhAGlzi0vNw3m6R&s>

Middle School Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSGEhHPbMWouaYsx0RiShBo09HMfWnKyea8S55Adxdnol58d7M&s>

Devices Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSj1AadO3r-CUy2qk6YfVXFiggznBq8E3AmqMPvDyD9XYYGUAo&s>

Babysitting Image Credit: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSRkCEyW5FpD\\_7NCpYk-Po-rvS7-8no9iRtahNnonsswipAc4&s](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSRkCEyW5FpD_7NCpYk-Po-rvS7-8no9iRtahNnonsswipAc4&s)

Rainbow Sneaker Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSKZoXbreY2YDBPChVgptFaKENPAQjfVwdf6HntYGVm2F8mXyfr&s>

High-top Sneaker Image Credit: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcT1tV2jKi34J--AMFPtMeuWM33HeWDQ9pevm-n7S1Z\\_BjuoVVV6&s](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcT1tV2jKi34J--AMFPtMeuWM33HeWDQ9pevm-n7S1Z_BjuoVVV6&s)

Movie Night Image Credit: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSYyvqOJDYqTM1rZwSfd8H6MvK6mV\\_UsgvKEtSiZB9PGGza1xu&s](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSYyvqOJDYqTM1rZwSfd8H6MvK6mV_UsgvKEtSiZB9PGGza1xu&s)

Height Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTimpu2kL7asVtcAV-VTfar6DiulVXgXeLyORG5w344BP98O9Nv&s>

Changing Voice Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSPEqDIM-FdqaDhqRnes3FnkqpKC8s9bWZP3QWbhV6r-1ywMoUN&s>

Food Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRPGPuP5qupeaHDHye0-P-CogpuP6em4yvxSqtV9b09CbAWRVir&s>

Sleeping Cat Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQwSA1VCAMU5AQOofV5J4Y9bYgj8gO95pVYMy7WTGKwnSLfWYY&s>

Flexing Girl Image Credit: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcThBMq2G36M3Wb997BfgXsN2KuZe3UaQ6rk\\_GNPch5d9OKvjAoM&S](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcThBMq2G36M3Wb997BfgXsN2KuZe3UaQ6rk_GNPch5d9OKvjAoM&S)

Growing Girl Image Credit: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTN4jIK7f1nt4LIB6DKlIY9HrfEWFbFDZHd\\_zltiZHID--i20vS&s](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTN4jIK7f1nt4LIB6DKlIY9HrfEWFbFDZHd_zltiZHID--i20vS&s)

Annoyed Girl Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcR0Qcoov838m-R3ogGNQ1u9s1Y3ubsk4k0CiicXVkpD042zwQ58&s>

Fighting Siblings: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcThQsnS4HbhE3kkt1qDgv3o2pTEoe22eGpru\\_xMW\\_Y4tHXaAts&s](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcThQsnS4HbhE3kkt1qDgv3o2pTEoe22eGpru_xMW_Y4tHXaAts&s)

Emotions Image Credit: [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRurVd7e-LD50RLh1mUQ76R6o\\_4m-FyHx9ohZ7n7SI2Bci2yPlr&s](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRurVd7e-LD50RLh1mUQ76R6o_4m-FyHx9ohZ7n7SI2Bci2yPlr&s)

Question Mark Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcR9yt6rlf0JRxQIMnWxLY3Wwvg3o1qJ7TqEPRT5yOqj9mBRKnl4&s>

Apostrophe Image Credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcS-0oiLn8VU7-WRDi6GbnDWuy5YHNepxqtFSVaFpuOLfTwdjF4&s>