

Making Neuroscience Fun

A Brain Awareness Program for All Ages



Brain Health: It's SPECTacular

What to do TODAY Grade 4 (🧠 A Brain Health Story)

The world of a 4th grader is complex and has the potential to be frustrating and stressful. This is a time when children need to focus on taking care of their SPEC health, so that their brains can help them navigate through the challenges they are facing.

- 🧠 Understanding that we have a reciprocal relationship between our brain and our behaviors will help us to face these challenges to our SPEC health. We need to take care of our brain, so that our brain can take care of us.
- 🧠 As a 4th grader you are facing lots of challenges to your SPEC health, it can be a virtual jungle out there.
- 🧠 Just like the animals in the jungle, we need to learn how to live in a world that is always changing. Focusing on SPEC health will allow how to survive and thrive our world.
- 🧠 For this presentation, you need to have the "It's a SPECTacular Jungle Out There" Story Video. You will also need to load the following Mirror (mark) test video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_gie0HRTdQ. Be sure to have a copy of the Self-Reflection Guide for each student.
- 🧠 Start the story video and stop after the title slide.



So far, we have been learning a LOT about our brain and how to take care of our brains.

This is important, because the world we live in can be like a JUNGLE with LOTS of challenges for us to face.

Ask...What do you think are some challenges that animals in the jungle face? (finding food, avoiding being food, finding shelter, etc.)

There are LOTS of challenges that YOU also are facing that can affect your Brain Health...

Social Health – relationships with your peers are getting more complex

Physical Health – gym class and sports teams are getting more competitive

Emotional Health – all of the challenges are causing you to be stressed out - and

Cognitive Health - school is getting harder.

This is why we have been talking to your about your brain and how to take care of it – so let's look one more time at our SPEC health.

- Continue playing the Story Video and stop after the following slide.



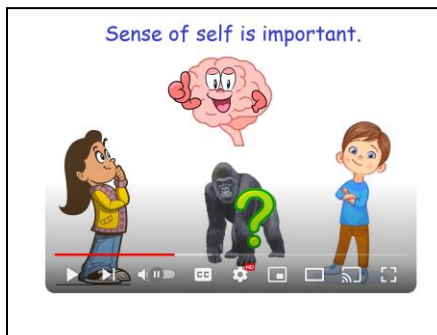
Ok...so our we have a **reciprocal relationship** with our brain. In a reciprocal relationship - you help me and I help you and we both win!!!

OR...We help our brain to stay healthy and **our brain helps us** do the behaviors that we need and like to do.

Your brain needs food for energy so it can do all the things that it does...but, can your brain get food all by itself? NO, it needs your body. So, you need to help your brain.

Ask...What are some of the things that you like to do? (get a few responses – and after each describe how they could NOT do any of these things without their brains. Brain controls, movements, thoughts, emotions, etc.) So, your brain needs to help you.

- Continue playing the Story Video and stop at this point in the slide.



Our Social Health depends on us being **aware** of who we are and being able to **recognize** ourselves.

Did you know that animals – like gorillas and a few other species of animals...like ELEPHANTS – that have to live in groups and have social structures ALSO have to have some awareness of themselves?

Let's see how we know this...

- Play the video explaining the mirror (or mark) test - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_qie0HRTdQ . (About 3:22 minutes)

So in order to exist is a complex social group – like on the playground or classroom – you have to have a sense of self – you have to recognize yourself and be aware that you are you and you are different from others.

Only humans, gorillas, chimpanzees, orangutans, bonobos, dolphins, magpies and elephants seem to possess this sense of self.

- Continue playing the Story Video and stop after this slide.



We are going to give you a Self-Reflection Guide that you can do if you want to – you don't have to – but, this will help you to think about who you are. Because knowing who you are is important to your Social Health and to you brain health.

Assure the students that this is for them, and they are not going to be graded or judged by their responses. This activity is to help them better understand themselves.

- Continue playing the Story Video and stop after this slide of the Physical Health section.



So, remember you don't have to win all the time or at all to keep your brain healthy. All you have to do is move your body and **try your best**.

It is also good to **TRY** different kinds of physical activities – because you never know what you will like and what you will be good at.

- The story for the day is finished – if you still have time, you can ask the students what kinds of **physical activities** they like.
- End the presentation.

Tell the students that you had fun reminding them about how taking care of their Social Health – the “S” in SPEctacular and their Physical Health – the “P” in SPEctacular is important for their Brain Health.

Remind the students that...

- While friends are important, it is even MORE important for us to know ourselves and love ourselves. This will make finding friends so much easier.
- Moving our bodies is also important – but, even though you may be feeling the pressure to try to win all the time – it is more important for you to be trying your best and prepare for the physical activities that you may have to do. It is also important to try different physical activities to find some that you actually **want** to do.

The world around us is **always** changing and there are LOTS of challenges. Knowing how to keep our Social and Physical parts of our brain healthy is important to help us deal with those challenges.

Next time, we will review how to keep the Emotional and Cognitive parts of our brains healthy.

Be sure to thank them for listening and the Brain Health Team of JHU students will see them soon.

Self-Reflection Guide – Getting to Know You

What are some of your talents or skills? What talents or skills give you the most satisfaction or pride?

What talent or skill do you hope to develop someday?

What are five of your strengths?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are two of your weaknesses?

- 1.
- 2.

What are your best qualities? What qualities do you wish you had?

What are the three most important things to you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How are “school you” and the “home you” different?

What are your three proudest moments?

List three things that you are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three things that you are NOT:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What do you like most about yourself? What do you like least about yourself?

What do you stand for—Principles?