

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 video “Like Humans, Chimps Learn Behavior From One Another” - <https://youtu.be/BjMhSfxL1sw> .
- 🌈 Set up the story video with the introduction of Emotional Health slide.



- 🌈 Then reiterate the following...

Remind the students that the Brain Health: It's SPECTacular™ program will help them to keep their brains healthy, which will help them deal with ALL of the challenges that they will face as they grow up.

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 and it will help the SOCIAL parts of the brain to stay healthy.

- 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. This will make the PHYSICAL parts of the brain healthy.

So, that takes care of the “S” and the “P” in SPEctacular. Next, we are going to look at our Emotional Health – which is the “E” in SPEctacular.

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



So, **understanding** that it is ok to have different emotions – like getting angry or feeling sad, but you need to remember that your emotions have an effect on your behaviors.

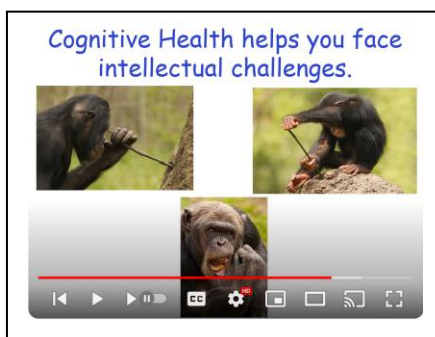
So, when you are angry, and you just want to scream or hit something, you need to channel your emotions and use your own coping mechanisms to calm yourself down.

- At this point, have a discussion about things that make the students experience very intense emotions, and then discuss their coping mechanisms.

- What are some situations that make you really **angry**? (Discuss)
- What are some things that you do when you are **angry**? (Discuss)
- What are some of “your personal escapes” that you choose to COPE with the situation that makes you **angry**? (Discuss)

Depending on how the discussions go, you can then ask the same questions for things that make them **sad**.

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



Ok...so we can use what we learn about the world we live in to help our Cognitive Health – the “C” in SPEctacular.

All animals need to **learn** and that helps the cognitive parts of the brain.

Let’s watch some chimps and see how they learn.

- Play the video “Like Humans, Chimps Learn Behavior From One Another” -<https://youtu.be/BjMhSfxL1sw> (3:27). Discuss some the key points in the video using the questions?

- How did the chimps first learn how to get the honey from the termite hill? (one of the more inquisitive chimps used a stick.)
- How did the other chimps learn? (By watching the chimp with the stick.)
- How did the chimp who had not learned this behavior finally learn it? (The man **helped** him by showing the chimp how to use a stick to get the honey.)

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



Our Cognitive Health is VERY important for keeping our brains healthy. And...like the chimps we can learn from others.

Ok...we are going to do an Activity called **Watch and Learn**.

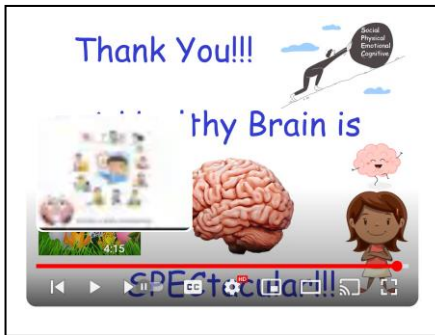
- Do the **Watch and Learn** Activity. (You still have 3 minutes of the story video left and then closing – so be mindful of your time spent on this activity.)

- Review from the story that although chimpanzees cannot read and write like humans can, they can still learn by watching others.
- Brainstorm with the students things that they already know how to do that they could easily teach to someone else. Explain that the students should be able to do this activity well enough to easily teach others on the spot.
 - Give them an example...stand up and do a pat your head and rub your tummy in a circle.
 - Tell the students to stand up and first pat their heads.
 - 2nd have the students rub a circle on their tummy.
 - Alternate between telling the students to pat their heads and then rub their tummy.
 - After a few times, then tell the student to pat their heads and rub their tummy at the same time.
- Explain the watching and then learning from others also makes learning more fun.
- Now, ask the students some things that they know how to do that they could then teach to the class. Some ideas include:
 - Song
 - Dance
 - Poem or Nursery Rhyme (This little piggy went to market)
 - Rap
 - Words in a different language (ex, count to 10 in a different language)
 - A hand-clapping rhyme (make up a rhythm)
 - A cheer or chant (Here we go “Eagles”, Here we go – clap, clap) Verify the school mascot.
- Next, ask for a volunteer to come up an **teach** what they know how to do.
- Repeat as time permits.

In closing, connect what students saw in the video to what they did with their teaching.

- Just like the chimpanzees, they were able to learn how to do something by watching.
- However, since humans can read and write unlike chimpanzees, we do not have to depend solely on watching and memorizing to learn something new.
- We can read and study and apply what we know to new situations.
- Reading, writing, thinking, and learning new things is good for our Cognitive Health and good Cognitive Health makes our brain SPECTacular!

- Continue playing the Story Video and stop after this “Thank you” slide .



- End the presentation.

Tell the students that you had fun reminding them about how taking care of their...

- Social Health – the “S” in SPECTacular
- Physical Health – the “P” in SPECTacular
- Emotional Health – the “E” in SPECTacular
- Cognitive Health – the “C” in SPECTacular is important for their Brain Health.

Remind them that the world around us is **always** changing and there are LOTS of challenges.

Knowing how to keep our Social, Physical, Emotional, and Cognitive parts of our brain healthy is important to help us deal with those challenges.

Be sure to thank them for letting you share the Brain Health: It’s SPECTacular™ program with them. Tell them that you have had fun and you hope they have had fun too!!!

Then finish with...as Dr. Gorman likes to say, learning about brain health is not just SPECTacular – it is FUN too!!!

So...say it with me... learning about brain health is not just SPECTacular – it is FUN too!!!