

# HOME CHALLENGES

## Brilliant Brains

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child spent the month learning about how physical activity, healthy eating, and mental health helps the brain develop properly. Now we are encouraging students to take the healthy learnings home.

The Brilliant Brains home challenge encourages you and your child to do activities together that maintain good brain and mental health<sup>1</sup> -- childhood is the optimal time to promote healthy habits that will remain for the rest of your child's life. A healthy brain helps children to stay alert and learn more in school. He or she should take a leadership role in this activity by leading you and anyone else in your family through the activities.

**Here is how you and your family can participate:**

1. Complete the day 1 activity called *Eat Healthy Foods* (below). In the *How did you participate?* section, your child will track what healthy foods they ate. **Please initial after each entry that an activity was completed.**
  - a. E.g., "We had dinner as a family, and I ate carrot sticks" for Day 1.
2. Continue the same practice for all 7 days.
3. Encourage your child to be aware of how they feel before, during, and after each of the daily activities.
4. At the end of the activity send your child's tracking sheet back to school to give to their teacher.

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<sup>1</sup> This activity has been adapted from an Alberta Health Services Mental Health Challenge, the "Ways to Wellness Toolkit"

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page13769.aspx>

# HOME CHALLENGES

## Brilliant Brains at Home Tracking Sheet

**Day 1: Eat healthy foods** - Eating nutritious foods like vegetables and fruit can help you to feel better physically and mentally. All the good nutrients in these foods help brains to grow and develop.

**How did you participate:**

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Initial:

**Day 2: Give someone a hug** - Ask a loved one if you can give them a hug! Giving and receiving hugs releases endorphins in your brain that make your brain feel good. This also creates new connections and brain cells which means the brain is growing and developing.

**How did you participate:**

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Initial:

**Day 3: Drink water** - More than 70% of your brain is made up of water. Drinking water regularly helps to keep your brilliant brain hydrated and happy. Try putting some fresh fruit like a lemon or lime wedge in your water at family dinner for a tasty kick!

**How did you participate:**

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Initial:

**Day 4: Get Active** - Be physically active for at least 60 minutes today. Physical activity helps to create new connections in your brain and keeps your brain growing and healthy. A great way to be active as a family is to go for a long walk together.

**How did you participate:**

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Initial:

**Day 5: Appreciate yourself** - Appreciating yourself can improve mental health. Write a journal entry about what you like about yourself and those around you. The whole family can take part and you can share your journal entries with each other.

**How did you participate:**

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Initial:

**Day 6: Get your groove on** - Listening to music can increase positive emotions and give your brain a break from working all day long. Take a few minutes as a family to listen to music and take care of your brain by de-stressing. Try dancing to sneak in a physical activity break!

**How did you participate:**

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Initial:

**Day 7: Laugh** - Laughing is a great way to promote positive emotions! Try reading a funny book, or someone in the family can tell a funny story and you can laugh the day away!

**How did you participate:**

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