

All About Me!

A Book About:

(Put ME
Here!)



Dear Supporter of Me,

This book is a way to help you get to know me a little bit better.

We all have brains that work differently – no two brains are the same. The differences in my brain sometimes make it hard for me to get through the day like everyone else. This can show up as a **BEHAVIOR issue** instead of a **BRAIN issue**.

I want to do my best. I want to wake up in the morning feeling excited about my day, and I want to go to bed at night feeling good about myself.

Thank you so much for reading this booklet, and for learning as much as you can about the ways that my brain works best. I am so happy and grateful to have you in my life right now.

Sincerely, Me



★ Getting to Know Me...

I have people in my life who love me very much. Here are some of the things that the people closest to me like BEST about me:

When I am feeling down about myself, it helps me to be reminded of these things. You will find things that YOU like best about me, too.

My birthday is:

I have _____ brothers and _____ sisters.

My favorite ways to spend my time are:



These interests can help motivate me to learn and explore.

I respond best to people who are:

- Patient
- Fast-paced

- Structured
- Unstructured

- Calm
- Energetic

- Positive
- Critical

- Consistent
- Inconsistent

- Organized
- Cluttered

- _____
- _____
- _____



My Brain works Differently...



Sometimes I have problems expressing emotions. This gets in the way of my learning, my friendships, and my daily life. You can help me by recognizing my true emotions and supporting me to manage my emotions in healthy ways. I might not always be able to do this on my own.

All kids get upset. However, I can't always depend on the part of my brain that regulates emotions. My response to situations may be exaggerated or I may not be able to regain control on my own. Please recognize how hard I try, even though my behavior may be challenging.

I get upset when:

- I don't understand
- Things move too fast for me
- I feel like I don't fit in
- I can't remember something
- Someone touches me
- I'm overwhelmed
- I don't know what questions to ask.
- _____

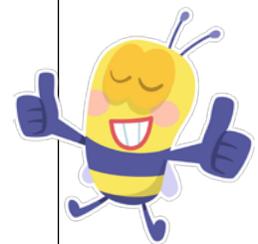


I show my emotions by:

- Acting silly or defiant
- Raising my voice
- Pestering
- Physical movement
- Physical aggression
- Giving up
- Withdrawing
- Talking too much
- _____

You can help me by:

- Noticing my cues of frustration
- Speaking slowly and calmly to me
- Gently reminding me that I can take a break
- Guiding me to a quiet place where I can regain control with dignity
- Listening to the feeling behind my behavior
- _____



Sometimes my emotions bring me past the point of being rational. This is called a meltdown. **If I reach this point, I NEED you to calmly remove me to a quiet space so I can regain control. Trying to talk to me or reason with me when I'm in the middle of a meltdown will only frustrate both of us.** Wait until I've calmed down before talking with me about what happened.

(For more, see All About My Brain worksheet www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/fasd_resources)

My Medical History...



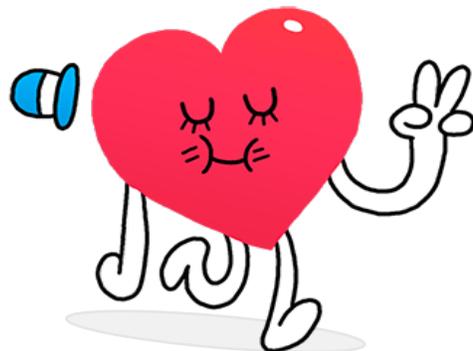
I have been assessed and diagnosed with the following conditions

- Brain Injury
- ADHD
- Prenatal Substance Exposure/Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Visual Impairment
- Heart Condition
- Hearing Impairment/Deafness
- Epilepsy/Seizures
- Diabetes
- Bipolar Disorder
- Reactive Attachment Disorder
- _____
- _____
- _____

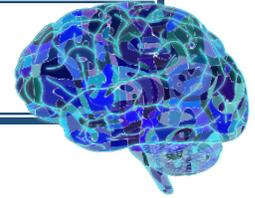
I currently take the following medications:

Medication: This is how much I take: This is when I take it:

Sometimes I have side effects from my medications that you should be aware of, like:



My Brain and I...



It's so important that you remember this question: *WHAT IF the behavior is showing something about my brain? WHAT IF I really am doing the best I can? Sometimes my best doesn't look like everyone else's.*

Here are some things that my brain and I deal with every day:



Brain pace.

I am a 30-Second Kid in a 5-Second World. This means that I think at a slower pace. It may take me longer to respond to you because my brain needs more time to process what



Think abstractly.

I am a very literal, concrete thinker. This means that I may not understand phrases that say one thing and mean another ("Watch your mouth." "Pick up your room." "Do the right thing." etc.).



Learn from experience.

I have a hard time applying what I know to different situations. Every situation is brand new to me because I don't always have the benefit of using past experiences to guide my actions.



Understand cause and effect.

Sometimes, I am not able to look ahead and predict what might happen. This means that I am likely to make impulsive decisions, and then be surprised at the outcomes. Typical behavior plans might not work for me because of this.



What Works...

Please don't let what I CAN'T do interfere with what I CAN do!

Routines are important to me. Since my brain has trouble looking ahead, routines are what makes me feel secure. When my routine gets disrupted, I feel anxious because I don't know what's happening next. Prepare me for changes.

Use clear and consistent words. Remove the word, "Don't" from the directions you give me. If you say, "Don't run" "Walk, please" and "Slow down," my brain may not understand that you're wanting the same behavior each time. Use the words that best describe what you want me to do – "Walk, please". This helps my brain understand what's expected.

Be as specific as possible. I have a hard time figuring out all the steps that need to be done, and in what order to do them. Help me organize and break tasks down into small parts (and don't expect me to rely on memory - write it down for me!)

Provide extra supervision. It helps to have people around me who understand that my brain works differently, and can help me navigate new and unfamiliar situations. Unstructured or "free" times are especially hard for me, so I might need extra help.



Remember – maybe it's not that I WON'T do it. Maybe it's that I CAN'T do it.

The Environment...

Our brains are actively developing until we are almost 30 years old-by adjusting the environment to help develop our executive function skills, **we all benefit!** It's easy to figure out how to make the environment accessible to a person with a physical disability. Sometimes it's harder to look at my disability in the same way. In addition to building routines for me and my peers, here are simple environmental changes that can make a big difference for me.



Build ROUTINES

Build ROUTINES	<p>Help me eliminate clutter from my space. A messy desk or locker can be overwhelming to me, but I have a hard time knowing what to throw away and what to keep. I also have a hard time organizing information.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Allow me to have ways to filter out distractions. Noise and visual stimulation make it hard for me to concentrate. Let me sit up front, where I will be less distracted. I might need earplugs or sunglasses to help me filter out my environment.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	Build ROUTINES
	<p>Keep the environment organized. Clutter in the classroom or on the walls can be overwhelming to me. If my surroundings are tidy and organized, this will help my brain make sense of things.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Remember the question, "What has changed in the environment" if my behavior suddenly changes. Even changes that seem very small can be dramatic in my life. Help me adapt to changes by showing me, rather than just telling me, what is expected of me.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	

Build ROUTINES

Looking for More Information About Supporting Differences in Learning?

Colorado Department of Education:

Understanding the Brain – Online Learning Series

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/fasd_pd

The Building Blocks of Brain Development –

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi_buildingblocks

Brain Injury in Children and Youth – A Manual for Educators –

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders/Prenatal Substance Exposure –

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/fasd

BrainSTEPS CO – www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/brainsteps

Does your district have a BrainSTEPS Consulting Team? We work with school teams and families in the development and delivery of educational services for students who have experienced brain injury.

Mental Health – www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/mentalhealth

Special Education Eligibility:

Traumatic Brain Injury – www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi

Other Health Impairment – www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-other

Other Resources:

Illuminate Colorado – www.illuminatecolorado.org

We collaborate with families and partners at the community, state and national level to develop and implement powerful programs, policies and initiatives that keep kids safe in Colorado.

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado – <https://biacolorado.org>

Through guidance, resources, support, and education, we seek to engage with Coloradans in the lifelong growth of those affected by an injury to the brain.



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– Adapted with permission