

Site Co-ordinator Manual



Welcome to Parachute Brain Waves

Thank you for your commitment to Parachute Brain Waves – the most fun you can have with neuroscience! This manual contains everything you need to start a Brain Waves program in your area. It includes templates, recruitment strategies and budgeting information. Some of these sections may be useful for your volunteers.

It's okay to start small, or with a bang – it all depends on how much time and energy you can devote to the program and the number of volunteers involved. Regardless of how big or small your Brain Waves program is, we are confident your team can experience huge success in spreading injury prevention messages in your community.

Brain Waves is a fun and educational program for students in Grades 4 to 6. Students learn about the structure and function of the nervous system through experiments and interactive lessons, and about the importance of protecting the brain and spinal cord from injury. Through the efforts of people like you, we are able to reach thousands of students across Canada each year with our message of brain and spinal cord injury prevention.

Your efforts will give kids the knowledge they need to protect their brains and bodies. Have fun and thanks again for helping to keep Canada's kids safe.

The following sections provide all the information required for your site.

Section 1 – Brain Waves Timeline

Section 5 – Materials Checklist

Section 2 – School Recruitment

Section 6 – Brain Waves Evaluation Surveys

Section 3 – Volunteer Recruitment

Appendix

Section 4 – Budgeting for Brain Waves

Additional resources are available for you and your volunteers through [Parachute Brain Waves: Train for the Brain Online](#).

Contact info

Parachute Brain Waves Program Manager

E: brainwaves@parachute.ca

T: 647-776-5100

1-800-537-7777 (toll free)

Section 1 - Brain Waves Timeline

This is a sample timeline based on a site delivering the program between February and June. The timing for your site may vary.

September to December

- Parachute connects with new and former sites across the country
- Parachute provides training for new Site Co-ordinators (if needed)
- Site Co-ordinator begins recruitment and followup with schools and volunteers
- Site Co-ordinator completes the Site Profile Template and submits it to Parachute

If applicable:

- Contact school boards for approval to visit classrooms (boards may have special requirements, such as police background checks)
- Apply for recognition as a Student Club on campus
- Host information meetings for interested volunteers

January to February

- Continue volunteer recruitment if the number of interested schools exceeds your volunteer base (You may need to create a school waiting list)
- Finalize the number of classrooms and volunteers participating in Brain Waves
- Offer training for volunteers. Training options:
 - Host one or more in-person training sessions
 - Refer volunteers to [Parachute Brain Waves: Train for the Brain Online](#)
 - Use a hybrid approach combining in-person training and online resources
- Match volunteers to schools
- Distribute materials to volunteers

February to June

- Presentations!
- Ensure volunteers arrive for presentations and bring back any loaned materials (e.g., Jello brain molds)

Completion of presentations

- Bask in your success!
- Complete volunteer and Site Co-ordinator surveys
- Complete the Annual Report Template and submit it to Parachute
- Identify next year's Site Co-ordinator and goals

Section 2 – School Recruitment

Sites bring Brain Waves to public, Catholic, and independent schools, community centres, and children's groups. Below are some recruitment and promotional techniques. See the Appendix for templates you can use to recruit volunteers.

- **School Boards, Schools and Principals** – Some districts require approval before external programs can take place in their schools. Connecting with the school board can be effective for district-wide distribution and promotion. However, some Site Co-ordinators have found direct contact with schools and teachers to be more effective.
- **Children's groups and community centres** – A variety of individuals have contacted us interested in Brain Waves. Be creative and connect with other groups you think may benefit from a Brain Waves presentation. Examples could include Scouts, religious groups and recreation programs.
- **Previous schools** – Previous recipients of Brain Waves have often said they want presentations again. Remember, teachers have a new group of students every year. Principals are also great connections for helping promote through school listservs.
- **Local media** – Connect with local newspapers and news groups for Brain Waves promotion through their media.
- **Social media** – Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are a simple way to promote your Program activities. Use the #ParachuteBrainWaves hashtag and tag @parachutecanada so we can help spread the word.

Follow up with interested teachers in a timely fashion. Thank them for their interest in Brain Waves and make it clear that presentation availability will be dependent on volunteer and schedule availability. Connect with teachers to get classroom details and share this knowledge with the scheduled presenters:

- Potential presentation dates and times
- School address
- Classroom size (number of students)
- Allergies, special needs and any other special instructions

Section 3 – Volunteer Recruitment

Brain Waves is delivered by more than 1,000 trained and engaged student and public health volunteers from diverse academic fields, including neuroscience, medicine, physical education and kinesiology. The success of Brain Waves is possible because of energetic and passionate volunteers such as you and your presenters. To attract volunteers, highlight the value of the Brain Waves experience, such as building leadership skills, reaching out to the community, adding to your resume, networking, and gaining teaching experience, in return for minimal time commitment. Below are some volunteer recruitment techniques. See the Appendix for helpful templates you can use to recruit volunteers.

- Advertise for volunteers through posters, bulletin boards, social media (e.g., Facebook), Student Club listservs, e-bulletins, and local newspapers. Include a contact-by deadline, sign-up sheet and contact information.
- Participate in September orientation events at your university or college. Through your student government, determine when and how Brain Waves can be involved.
- Make an announcement in a related course. Ask the course professor if you can make an announcement to introduce Brain Waves. Provide details about the program, a sign-up sheet, and your contact information.
- Get professors on board! Brain Waves began with a university professor promoting Brain Waves to her students. Several university departments across Canada have offered bonus marks to students who volunteer. Some have even made Brain Waves a mandatory component of the curriculum.

Departments to target:

Education	Psychology
Health Education	Neuroscience
Kinesiology	Nursing
Physical Education	Any of the Sciences

We even have volunteers with History and Engineering backgrounds.

Training Volunteers for Brain Waves

Part of your role as a Site Co-ordinator is to prepare your volunteers to deliver Brain Waves presentations. All Brain Waves volunteers must participate in training to receive an overview of what their roles, expectations, and responsibilities are. Topics of discussion include Brain Waves activities, teaching methods, the Instructor Guide, and a question-and-answer session. In-person training sessions are a great opportunity to distribute materials to your volunteers. Feel free to hold as many sessions as you feel necessary for your team. If in-person training isn't feasible, refer your volunteers to [Parachute Brain Waves: Train for the Brain Online](#).

More information and printable resources are available on the Brain Waves webpage. Ensure Instructor Guides, Activity Booklets, and Jello brain recipes are available for volunteer reference during training and presentations. You will find a Volunteer To-Do List in the Appendix. Feel free to modify or delete items on the list as necessary for your team.

Matching Volunteers to Classrooms

After confirming the number of volunteers committed to your Brain Waves team, try your best to match classroom requests and volunteers based on schedule, availability, and location. Typically, two volunteers are required for every presentation. Confirm the match with the volunteers and teachers and have volunteers confirm with their schools. Share date, time, location and classroom details in a copied email to the teacher and volunteers.

Section 4 – Budgeting for Brain Waves

Activity Booklets, Instructor Guides, and Jello brain molds are provided by Parachute to Brain Waves Site Co-ordinators. Other materials for in-class activities need to be purchased by your team (please see Materials Checklist). Consider seeking local grocers or suppliers for donations and discounts on the materials you need to purchase.

Depending on your team needs, additional costs may include:

- Transportation (transit fare, mileage, parking). Please ask the Parachute Brain Waves Program Manager for the current mileage rate.
- Rental space for training sessions and/or material storage (where applicable)
- Payment to become an official club at the University/College (where applicable)
- Photocopying

Please keep all receipts and submit to Parachute for reimbursement:

By mail: Brain Waves Program Manager
Parachute
150 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M4P 1E8

By email: brainwaves@parachute.ca

Section 5 – Materials Checklist

Please ensure you have these materials for your Brain Waves presentation. Materials may vary depending on what activities you include in the presentation.

Materials provided by Parachute:

Received	Item	Quantity
	Student Activity Booklets (one per student)	
	Parachute Brain Waves Instructor Guide(s)	
	Powerpoint presentation slides	
	Jello brain mold	
	Concussion handouts	
	Online link to teacher, Site Co-ordinator and volunteer surveys	

Materials to purchase and prepare:

Received	Item	Quantity
	Ingredients for Jello brain (see recipe for ingredients list)	
	Tray for the Jello brain	
	Plastic wrap to cover the Jello brain	
	Pieces of paper and a pen or marker (Passing the Note, Blind Spot, Scrambled Brains Activities)	
	Balloon for Naming the Lobes (Balloon Head) Activity	
	Scented products for Olfactory Adaptation Activity	
	Flavours for Taste Bud Mapping Activity (e.g., sugar, salt, lemon, coffee)	
	Cotton swabs for taste and touch activities	
	Blindfold for Sound Localization Activity	
	Helmet(s) for Helmet Fitting Activity	

Section 6 – Brain Waves Evaluation Surveys

Evaluation is an important part of Parachute Brain Waves. Feedback from teachers, volunteers and Site Co-ordinators helps us determine what we are doing well and where we can improve. Parachute uses online surveys to collect this information. The links to the surveys will be sent to you by the Brain Waves Program Manager.

Teachers and Principals

Teachers should complete an online survey after the Brain Waves presentation. Teacher feedback is just as important as student feedback. Their feedback gives us insight to how we can improve the program content. Please ensure teachers receive the online survey link to complete after their Brain Waves presentation.

Volunteer Presenters

Volunteers should complete an online survey at the end of the Brain Waves year. Volunteer feedback is important for us to learn more about who is making Brain Waves possible, what we can do to improve the training process and delivery of the program, and how we can grow Brain Waves to reach more communities. Please provide your volunteers with the online survey link.

Site Co-ordinators

Your feedback is important for us to highlight the successes and challenges of delivering Brain Waves in your community. This survey should be completed at the end of the Brain Waves year. Your comments will directly impact the changes we consider making for the following year.

Appendix

Parachute Brain Waves: Site Profile Template

Site:

Year:

Shipping Address:

Town/City:

Province:

Postal Code:

Co-ordinator Name(s)	Email	Phone	Notes
			Primary contact
			Secondary contact

Presentation Statistics

Please provide estimates. You can use this sheet to record actuals at the end of the year for your own reference.

	Estimated	Actual
# of students reached		
# of Site Co-ordinators		
# of volunteer presenters		
# of classrooms reached		

Material Inventory

		English	French
Materials requested	Student Activity Booklets	a.	a.
	Jello Molds	b.	b.
	Instructor Guides	c.	c.
Material on hand	Student Activity Booklets	a.	a.
	Jello Molds	b.	b.
	Instructor Guides	c.	c.
Total materials	Student Activity Booklets	a.+a.	a.+a.
	Jello Molds	b.+b.	b.+b.
	Instructor Guides	c.+c.	c.+c.

Sample School Letter

[Teacher or Principal's Name]

[School Address]

[City, Province]

[Postal Code]

[Date]

Dear **[Teacher or Principal's Name]**,

Thank you for your interest in Parachute Brain Waves!

Parachute Brain Waves is a free neuroscience-based educational program, developed by leading neuroscientists at the University of Toronto in 2005. While the program was originally developed for students in Grades 4 to 6, the complex neuroscience topics that are covered are adaptable to an older audience.

Five learning modules and injury prevention messages are explored during the half-day presentation. Educational activities, fun experiments and interactive diagrams engage students to examine how the lobes, nerves and senses work together. Students will also apply Science, Health Education and Physical Education knowledge as they learn about the importance of injury prevention and identify strategies to protect their brain and body.

The majority of presentations occur in March, during Brain Awareness Month, but presentations can occur between September and June as well, depending on volunteer and school availability. To book your free presentation, or learn more about the program, please contact us. Our team will be happy to work with you to schedule a Parachute Brain Waves presentation for your class or school.

We hope to hear from you! Thank you for helping spread the message of injury prevention.

Sincerely,

[Coordinator's Name]

[Site e.g. Toronto] Brain Waves Coordinator

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

Volunteer Recruitment Templates

Sample Social Media Posts

- Ever want to play with brains? Then Brain Waves is for you! We're looking for volunteers to teach kids about protecting their brain and bodies. DM me for more info.
- We're looking for volunteers who like Jello, brains and kids! Check out parachute.ca/brainwaves to learn more and send me a message to get started.
- Call for Brain Waves volunteers! Help us bring injury prevention to **[City Name]**. Jello, brains, and kids never worked so well together. Send me a message for more info!
- We're looking for volunteers to spread the message of injury prevention to kids in our community. Share your knowledge of brains and helmets. Visit parachute.ca/brainwaves to learn more.

Keywords

- Brains
- Kids
- Children
- Community
- Helmets
- Jello brain
- Kids
- School
- Sports
- Teaching

Sample Course Announcement Script

Hi Everyone, my name is **[Name]**.

I am a **[Profession, Program, Year of Study]** and Site Co-ordinator for Brain Waves. Parachute Brain Waves is a program for kids in Grades 4 to 6, and we teach about injury prevention, the brain and helmets. We are looking for volunteers to help bring the program to schools in **[City]**.

Time commitment for volunteers is a training session in **[Month]**, and presentations can occur any time between **[Date Range - e.g., February and June]**. You can check out our Facebook page, provide your email address on our sign-up sheet, or email me for more information. Thank you!

Sample Volunteer Recruitment Email/Letter

Subject: Call for Brain Waves Volunteers!

Are you passionate about making a difference in your community? Do you like working with children? Looking to boost your resumé? Then Brain Waves is for you!

Parachute Brain Waves is an injury prevention program for students in Grades 4 to 6. The half-day, in-class program promotes brain safety awareness through basic neuroanatomy, interactive activities and injury prevention messages. Students learn about how their brain works and ways to protect it.

We are looking to you to help bring Parachute Brain Waves to your local school or community group. Experience with anatomy and biology is not a requirement, but volunteers should be comfortable interacting with kids and enthusiastic about reducing injuries among Canadian youth. All we need is your commitment to learn about Brain Waves and a few hours **[Date Range - e.g., February and June]** to bring the fun to a local classroom or community group. Bring a friend to the session and help us grow this fantastic program.

Please contact us by **[Date]** if you are interested in volunteering with Parachute Brain Waves!

[Co-ordinator's Name]

[Site e.g. Toronto] Brain Waves Coordinator

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

Volunteer To-Do List

Thank you for helping bring important injury prevention messages to students in your community! You are essential to the success of Parachute Brain Waves. To help you deliver an action-packed day of fun, here is a list of important items that should be reviewed and prepared before you enter the classroom:

A minimum of one week before the presentation:

- Attend a training session
- Watch the [Parachute Brain Waves: Train for the Brain Online](#) training videos (eight in total)
- Review the Parachute Brain Waves Instructor Guide
- Review the Student Activity Booklet
- Identify any materials you may need to purchase or prepare (tip: use the Brain Waves Materials Checklist)
- Co-ordinate the presentation with your partner (if applicable)
- Communicate with the school contact to:
 - Confirm the date and time of the presentation
 - Confirm the location of the school and any visitor check-in requirements
 - Find out about any classroom needs or considerations. For example:
 - Are there any food allergies? This could impact the Taste Bud Mapping and Olfactory Adaptation Activities.
 - Is the classroom a scent-free space? This could impact the Olfactory Adaptation Activity.
 - Is there a latex allergy or policy against latex? This could impact using a balloon to map the brain lobes.
 - Remind the teacher to have students bring bicycle helmets on the day of the presentation

The day before the presentation:

- Confirm attendance/ time of arrival with your partner (if applicable)
- Prepare activity materials
 - Jello brain (Find the recipe on parachute.ca/brainwaves)
 - Other materials as necessary (tip: use the Brain Waves Materials Checklist to make sure you have everything you need.)

The day of the presentation:

- Arrive 30 minutes before presentation start time
- Bring all materials (Remember to take the jello brain out of the fridge!)
- Ensure the teacher or other supervisor is present at all times to manage the class
- Thank the teacher and remind them to complete the online feedback survey
- Bring back the Jello brain mold (make sure to wash it) along with any unused activity booklets