What’s Happening to My Friend?

Understanding Epilepsy and Seizures

Family Services
• Our brains control everything we do.
• If we think of our bodies as cars, our brains are the drivers behind the wheel!
• The brain has lots of parts, and each part controls a different part of what we do: moving, reading, talking, sleeping... everything!
• The brain works by sending **electrical signals** to the rest of our bodies to tell it what to do, on paths called **nerves**.
• For example, when you kick a soccer ball, your brain sends **electrical signals** to your leg and your foot so you can kick it as hard as you can!
• But if something goes wrong with these electrical signals, sometimes a seizure can happen.

• Seizures usually happen without any warning to someone who might be feeling great.

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• The person might even be in the middle of doing something fun like riding a bike!
Lots of different things can happen to someone who is having a seizure...

- This can be because **too many signals** are firing at once so your brain becomes overloaded
- OR a **signal is blocked** so it can’t travel on its regular pathway.
A lot of times the person begins to **convulse or shake** because the electrical signals can’t control his or her muscles.
Sometimes the person might just seem very out of it, and **may not be able to respond** to you. They might even pass out, or become **unconscious**.

*Family Services*
If your friend is having a seizure, it is important to stay calm.

*Note: This information comes from kidshealth.org. Every child is different so if these strategies do not meet the needs of the individual, please alter accordingly.

**DON’T BE AFRAID!**
• A person has epilepsy if he or she has a tendency to have seizures.
• Epilepsy isn’t contagious and it doesn’t hurt.
• Friends with epilepsy are just like everyone else, they just need some extra help from medicines or doctors to make sure they don’t have seizures.
• Just like how your friends who have glasses are healthy and normal, they just need a little extra help to see better.
• Your friend might feel **scared** after he or she has a seizure.

• They might feel **different** because they have epilepsy.
• But they are just like you!
• It is important to be a good friend so that they feel comfortable, accepted, and safe!