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Dramatic Publishing

Teen Brain: The Musical



*Musical by Linda Daugherty
Music and lyrics by Nick Martin*

Teen Brain: The Musical

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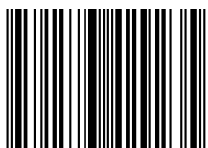
Cast: 3m., 5w. At last it's Friday night for eight teens! After careening through a stressful week of schoolwork, difficult choices and drama surrounding family and friends, they're ready for an unchaperoned party. The impulsive decisions of all eight young people result in a consequence that might have been foretold—even prevented—were it understood that teens are working with a brain revealed by the latest neuroscience to be, at best, a “work in progress.” *Teen Brain: The Musical* entertains while dramatizing how the neural gawkiness of the beautifully mysterious, rapid-speed, impulsive teen brain often results in vexing and inconsistent behavior, occasional misfires and, all too often, tragic consequences. This honest look at the rich complexities of teen behavior contains fast-paced scenes along with sharp dialogue and a hip, memorable score that includes “Like Me, Like Me,” an ode to Facebook; “Work in Progress,” a mad scientist’s vision of the teen brain; and “When I Was Small,” an emotional reflection about how simple life used to be. The dialogue, action and spirit of Daugherty’s “teen issue” plays have always rung true to teens, their families and the therapeutic community. Nothing gets in the way of the intended message. The work is engrossing and entertaining theatre. Nick Martin’s smart songs for *Teen Brain: The Musical* follow you from the theatre, providing an enhanced experience that will leave teens with a better understanding of themselves, adults with a better understanding of their teens and both with the tools to change dangerous behaviors—and perhaps save a life. Premiered at Dallas Children’s Theater. *Area staging. Accompaniment CD available. Approximate running time: 55 minutes. Code: TT9.*

Cover: Dallas Children’s Theater production featuring Carter Brown.

Photo: Robert Breen.

Cover design: John Sergel.

ISBN: 978-158342-923-5



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Dramatic Publishing

311 Washington St.
Woodstock, IL 60098
ph: 800-448-7469

www.dramaticpublishing.com



Printed on recycled paper

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Teen Brain: The Musical

Book by

LINDA DAUGHERTY

Music and lyrics by

NICK MARTIN



Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(TEEN BRAIN: THE MUSICAL)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-923-5

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Teen Brain: The Musical premiered at Dallas Children’s Theater in February 2013.

CAST

Holly Colleen Breen
Dana Annabel McGill
Austin Austin Ovcarik
Ziggy Carter Brown
J.J. Froy Gutierrez
Terri Kendyl Mull
Sonya Meghan Harshaw
Ashley Hunter Wienecke

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director / Choreographer Nancy Schaeffer
Musical Director Nick Martin
Production Manager / Assistant Director Melissa Cashion
Technical Director H. Bart McGeehon
Associate Technical Director Russ Arnett
Production Coordinator John Moss II
Production Assistants Nick Shelokov, Emmie Abels
Costume Designer Abram Rankin
Lighting Designer Melissa Cashion
Master Electrician / Associate Lighting Designer Jason Lynch
Light Board Operator / Production Assistant Emmie Abels
Sound Designer Ziggy Renner
Property Designer Anna Klawitter
Video Editor Mitzi Morrow
Stage Manager Kim Augustine
Assistant Stage Manager Laura Choate
Audio/Video Operator / Production Assistant Nick Shelokov
Follow Spot Operator Vlad Plumlee, Chet Monday
Follow Spot / Deck Crew Jacob Pitts
Deck Crew Kelli Anne Rekieta
Light Hang Crew John Moss II, Ziggy Renner

Teen Brain: The Musical

CHARACTERS

(Cast: 3m., 5w.)

GUYS:

AUSTIN

J.J.

ZIGGY

GIRLS:

HOLLY

DANA

ASHLEY

SONYA

TERRI

Note: Optional chorus may be added. See production notes.

SETTING

An open stage with flats placed on the sides and upstage for entrances, exits and possible projections. There is a bench at L and another at R with a backpack under each.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Costumes

The cast wore jeans with pockets for cellphones. The only costume change was Ashley's change into provocative top for the party, which was made during "Get Out Story Straight."

Props

- Eight cellphones
- Six backpacks for all except Terry and Sonya
- Cardboard box to hold the brain headpiece, garden hose and toilet paper (Ziggy)
- Index cards (Ziggy)
- Brain headpiece (Ziggy) *
- White lab coat (Ziggy)
- Index card in white lab coat (dialogue may be written on the card)
- Ear buds (J.J.)
- Two "FRONTAL LOBE" signs worn by Holly and Dana (dialogue may be written on back)
- Beer bottle in a koozie for Ashley (will be dropped)
- Jell-O shots in a shoebox (Terri and Sonya)
- Fancy beer bottles open in a six-pack container
- Additional fancy beer bottles
- Small rum bottle
- Small prescription bottle with pills (Sonya)
- Kitchen towel (Terri and Ashley)

* The brain headpiece was constructed on a bicycle helmet with straps that easily fasten and unfasten. GREAT STUFF™ insulating foam seal and spray was used to form brain. The brain was constructed so it could be placed onstage during part of "Work in Progress."

Set

Two black benches were placed at R and L. Several irregularly shaped flats were collaged with old tests, Scantron sheets, pages from magazines and advertisements directed at teens.

Lights

For scenes, lighting was realistic. For songs, light color and movement was used. For up-tempo songs, saturation side lighting was used for a “rock look.” Lights darkened and color was added for the party. In hospital scene, lights were bright and stark.

Sound

Three recorded sound cues were used: (1) a goofy, unintelligible sound effect of the teacher answering at end of Ziggy’s report (à la Charlie Brown), (2) hospital sounds between the party and hospital scenes and (3) a sound cue of a car accelerating, a crash and a siren softly underscoring Austin’s description of the crash in the hospital scene. The three sound cues are included in the accompaniment CD.

A microphone was used offstage for Ashley’s scream at the end of the song, “Get Our Story Straight.”

Projections

The following images may be projected:

- Words of the days of the week during “Make It Through Today”
- Images of social networking websites during “Like Me, Like Me”
- Scientific images for the scene before and during “Work in Progress”
- Images of the cast as young children illustrating the lyrics during “When I Was Small”

Music

The Dallas Children’s Theater production was played live by one musician on an electric piano with synthesized drums. Guitar and bass may also be added for selected songs. The accompaniment CD for the songs includes synthesized piano, bass, guitar and drums, along with underscoring for transitions and the party scene.

Optional Chorus

Chorus parts may be added to create a high school atmosphere. For example, chorus members may cross through halls, act as an audience for one or both of Ziggy’s “brain” scenes and attend the party at Ashley’s. The chorus may also join in all or some of the following musical numbers: “Make It Through Today,” “Like Me, Like Me,” “Work in Progress,” “Get Our Story Straight” and the reprise of “Make It Through Today.”

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1.	Make It Through Today	14
	All	
1a.	Make It Through Today (Playoff).....	16
2.	Like Me, Like Me.....	22
	All	
2a.	Like Me, Like Me (Playoff)	25
3.	Work in Progress	27
	Ziggy, All	
3a.	Work in Progress (Playoff)	30
4.	Weird Together	31
	Holly, J.J.	
4a.	Weird Together (Playoff).....	34
5.	Get Our Story Straight.....	41
	All (except Ashley)	
5a.	Get Our Story Straight (Playoff)	44
5b.	Party (Underscore #1).....	45
6.	Elronia the Elf.....	46
	Holly, Dana, Ashley, Terri, Sonya	
6a.	Party (Underscore #2).....	49
7.	What Was I Thinking?	50
	Ashley	
7a.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #1)	51
	Dana	
7b.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #2)	52
	Sonya	
7c.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #3)	52
	Austin	

7d.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #4).....	53
	Terri	
7e.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #5).....	54
	J.J.	
7f.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #6).....	55
	Ziggy, All	
7g.	Party (Underscore #3).....	55
7h.	What Was I Thinking (Reprise #7).....	57
	Holly	
7i.	Party (Underscore #4).....	58
8.	When I Was Small	62
	All	
9.	Make It Through Today (Reprise).....	66
	All	

Teen Brain: The Musical

AT RISE: *HOLLY, AUSTIN, DANA, J.J., ASHLEY, SONYA, TERRI and ZIGGY enter energetically and address the audience. In the opening sequence, they occasionally move about the stage, sometimes relating to one another, sometimes not. ALL have cellphones.*

HOLLY. Wanna know the kind of week I've had?

(The following lines are delivered one after another, overlapping rapidly.)

AUSTIN. I've had?

DANA. I've had?

J.J. I've had?

ASHLEY. I've had?

SONYA. I've had?

TERRI. I've had?

ZIGGY. I've had?

HOLLY. Believe me. You don't want to know.

ALL. But we'll tell you anyway.

ZIGGY. *Monday.*

ALL. Endless.

SONYA. Woke up too late for drive-thru Starbucks.

AUSTIN. Three bucks a cup?! Give me my Red Bull.

J.J. Cruised through the day on autopilot.

TERRI. Got to focus.

J.J. Shut it down.

ASHLEY. Get it together.

DANA. Don't obsess.

ZIGGY. No worries.

AUSTIN. Chill.

ALL. Monday.

HOLLY. Endless.

ALL. *Tuesday.*

ZIGGY. I can do this.

J.J. At least it's not Monday.

AUSTIN. My dad filed the papers. No surprise. Now I'm one of them.

J.J. One of them?

AUSTIN. Single-parent household. He was worthless anyway.

TERRI. Join the club.

DANA. Need to do that practice SAT.

SONYA. Can't concentrate.

ASHLEY. It's only Tuesday. Got all week to write that paper.

J.J. I feel like my crazy rescue cat, claws slipping inch by inch.

HOLLY. I'm feeling strangely motivated.

ZIGGY (*whining*). I feel like I'm getting a cold.

ALL. *Wednesday.*

TERRI. How can it only be Wednesday?

DANA. Aced the math test ... I think.

J.J. I'm a freakin' genius.

ZIGGY. I'm an idiot.

SONYA. I'm a loser.

AUSTIN (*holding out his arms like Leonardo DiCaprio in Titanic*). "I'm king of the world!"

ALL. *Thursday.*

HOLLY. Need a break.

AUSTIN. I'm beat. Practice every night till 9.

ZIGGY. Up till 2 playing *Modern Warfare*.

HOLLY (*dramatically*). Up till 3 lost in the *Mists of Pandaria*. (*Or latest role-playing game.*)

TERRI. Facebooking till 4—stalking my ex.

ASHLEY. Finished at 5. Paper due first period. Mr. Garcia's humor—"After 8, paper late."

HOLLY. All-nighter. Sun coming up.

ALL. Why is everything due on Friday?!

(The following lines rapidly follow one another, accelerating.)

J.J. (*moving his arm like a meter needle*). Stress-o-meter off the charts!

ZIGGY. Got to finish my report!

HOLLY. OD'd on chocolate ice cream—brain freeze!

ZIGGY. Brain fart!

TERRI. Can't turn it off!

AUSTIN. Can't sleep!

J.J. Must go faster!

DANA. Finished the paper!

SONYA. Left it at home!

DANA. Fell asleep proofreading!

AUSTIN. Blew it off!

HOLLY. My brain hurts!

DANA. I'm freaking out!

ASHLEY (*annoyed*). Who's texting me?!

ZIGGY. Best paper I ever wrote!

DANA. Worst piece of crap I ever turned in!

SONYA. Why didn't I start on Monday?!

TERRI. Woke up late!

ALL. Again!

HOLLY. I'm a zombie!

ZIGGY. But, hey!

ALL. *It's Friday!!!*

(Lights cross fade to dramatic lighting. Images of words of the days of the week [Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc.] may be projected.)

(#1: "Make It Through Today")

ALL (*cont'd*).

LAST NIGHT I HAD THAT DREAM AGAIN.
ALONE ONSTAGE, JUST MY GUITAR AND ME.
LAST NIGHT I DREAMED
THAT J.J. ABRAMS CAME AND PUT ME ON TV.

GIRLS.

LAST NIGHT I WORE THE CAP AND GOWN.
LAST NIGHT YOU COULDN'T SLOW ME DOWN.

ALL.

LAST NIGHT I TOTALLY ACED THE SAT.

ASHLEY, ZIGGY, J.J. & AUSTIN.

LAST NIGHT THE FUTURE DIDN'T SEEM SO FAR AWAY.

ALL.

BUT FIRST I GOTTA MAKE IT,
DON'T KNOW IF I CAN TAKE IT,
HOW AM I GONNA MAKE IT THROUGH TODAY?

AUSTIN & SONYA.

EIGHT A.M. FORGOT TO TAKE MY PILLS.
MY HEAD IS FILLED WITH BROKEN GLASS.

HOLLY & TERRI.

ANOTHER CRAPPY DAY,

HOLLY.

I WISH THERE WAS A VAMPIRE IN MY CLASS.

J.J. & DANA.

TODAY I'LL PROVE THAT I'M THE BEST.
ANOTHER DAY OF CONSTANT STRESS.

ALL.

DOES EVERYTHING HAVE TO BE A TEST?

GIRLS.

AND IF I COULD JUST GET OUT OF HERE,
I'D GO DANCING WITH THE STARS.

GUYS (*holding up their cellphones*).

DESIGN AN APP FOR APPLE.

TERRI.

SEND MY STEPFATHER TO MARS.

HOLLY.

AND I WANT TO BE REMEMBERED.

SONYA, J.J. & AUSTIN.

AND I'M TIRED OF ALL THE HURT.

TERRI, ZIGGY & ASHLEY.

I JUST WANT TO FEEL LIKE I BELONG.

J.J., AUSTIN & SONYA.

I JUST WANT MY MEDS TO WORK.

ALL.

AND I WANT TO KNOW IT'S GONNA BE OK.
BUT FIRST I GOTTA MAKE IT,
DON'T KNOW IF I CAN TAKE IT,
FIND SOME WAY TO MAKE IT THROUGH TODAY!

TODAY, TODAY, TODAY, TODAY,
INSIDE MY HEAD THE POUNDING OF A DRUM.

ZIGGY, SONYA, HOLLY & TERRI.
AM I NORMAL?

DANA, ZIGGY, ASHLEY & J.J.
AM I SPECIAL?
AM I BROKEN?

ZIGGY, SONYA, HOLLY & TERRI.
AM I DUMB?

GUYS.
MY BRAIN IS RUNNING WILD.
MY HEART IS BEATING FAST.

GIRLS.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND THESE FEELINGS.
WILL THIS ROLLERCOASTER LAST?

ALL.
AND SOMEDAY I'LL BE ON MY OWN
WITH NOTHING IN MY WAY.
BUT FIRST I GOTTA MAKE IT,
DON'T KNOW IF I CAN TAKE IT,
IF ONLY I CAN MAKE IT THROUGH ...

(Whispering.)
TODAY!

(Bell rings.)

ALL *(cont'd)*. Friday. Yes!!!

(#1a: “Make It Through Today” [Playoff])

(Lights cross fade and music underscores as ALL scatter in different directions, exiting, except DANA and HOLLY, who

each collect their backpacks under the benches at R and L. DANA, at C, checks her cellphone. HOLLY crosses to her.)

HOLLY. So, what's up for tonight?

(No answer from DANA.)

HOLLY *(cont'd)*. Well, did you see him?

DANA. Nope.

HOLLY. Why don't you just ask him?

DANA. I would never do that.

HOLLY. Uh, what century is this?

DANA. He just doesn't seem that interested. He's hot and cold.

HOLLY *(dropping her backpack on the floor)*. Dana, hello, do we have a pattern here? Last weekend you blew off how many guys? It's Friday, so you must be lurking right here in the hall—Oh, hey, you are at ... *(Checks her cellphone.)* at 8:17.

DANA. Come on, Holly.

HOLLY. Yep, every Friday for the last month you just happen to be right here only seconds before he makes his way down the hall to history.

(“Singing” spy theme song, such as “The Pink Panther,” HOLLY dramatically sneaks to R and looks off.)

HOLLY *(cont'd)*. And ... and ...

DANA *(amused and annoyed)*. Holly, will you stop it?!

HOLLY *(à la secret agent)*. Yes, the target should be approaching ... oops! NOW!

(HOLLY rushes back by DANA, sinks to her knees and occupies herself by rummaging through her backpack as AUSTIN enters R. DANA stares at her cellphone.)

DANA (*glancing up nonchalantly*). Oh, hey, Austin.

AUSTIN. Hey, Dana. What's going on?

DANA. Oh, not much.

AUSTIN (*noticing HOLLY*). Oh, hey, uh ... ?

HOLLY (*on her knees, annoyed*). Holly ... Went to middle school together ... and elementary, kindergarten ...

AUSTIN. Yeah, right, we played some video games.

HOLLY. Aww, you remembered.

AUSTIN. Hey, uh, check you later, Dana.

(*AUSTIN exits.*)

HOLLY (*talking off*). Yeah, and I beat the crap out of you! (*Standing.*) Well, that was meaningful.

DANA. As usual.

HOLLY. Ah, the one that got away ... again. When at first you don't succeed, blah, blah. Next encounter—"target's" basketball practice, 2:38. Go for it! (*Putting her cellphone next to DANA's.*) Synchronize all phones. Oh, look, they already are!

DANA. Holly, you are amusing and—

HOLLY. Unique, unusual, my own person, original, creative—?

DANA. I was basically gonna say ... indescribable.

HOLLY. Dana, you've been nuts for Austin since like forever.

DANA (*pointedly*). Isn't everyone?

HOLLY. Middle-school crush. Way over it. And we're talking about you here. Dana, come on, you always do the safe thing. You never go out on a limb. Admit it—somewhere there's a fire burning in you.

DANA. Yeah, right.

HOLLY. Seriously, I mean it.

(ZIGGY enters carrying a large cardboard box.)

HOLLY *(cont'd)*. Maybe it's time to channel your "inner volcano."

ZIGGY *(crossing between them)*. "Inner volcano?!" Yeah, ladies, you should definitely channel your "inner volcanoes."

HOLLY & DANA. Shut up, Ziggy.

ZIGGY. Hey, did you know the average healthy 16-year-old guy thinks about sex every 17 seconds?

HOLLY. No. That's just *you*, Ziggy.

ZIGGY. There's no denying the truth, ladies. Think that was in *Newsweek*.

HOLLY. So, will this undisputable fact be in your report today?

ZIGGY. No ... *(Indicating the box.)* but this will be.

(At ZIGGY's invitation, HOLLY and DANA peer inside the box.)

ZIGGY *(cont'd, admiring his creation)*. Pretty cool, huh?

DANA. It's a, uh—

ZIGGY *(interrupting)*. A brain! Right! *(Dramatically.)* *The human brain.* I made it.

DANA. Yeah ... ?

ZIGGY. See? Frontal lobe, medulla oblongata, cortex. It's my visual aid. Mrs. Melton loves creative stuff like this.

HOLLY *(flatly)*. We can hardly wait.

ZIGGY. When I'm done with my spiel, ladies, you will know so much more about yourselves.

HOLLY. Frightening.

ZIGGY. Hey, will you two help me with my report?

HOLLY. Listen, Ziggy—

ZIGGY. All you have to do is basically stand there and hold some stuff.

HOLLY. Look, I really don't think—

ZIGGY. Come on, guys, everybody else I asked this morning turned me down. I bet Mrs. Melton will give you extra credit. (*On his knees, crawling toward them.*) Come on. Pleazzz, pleazzz, pleazzz—

DANA. Sure, OK, OK. Right, Holly?

HOLLY. Yeah, great.

ZIGGY. Thanks, guys! Listen, my report's gonna be amazing! I got obsessed with this brain stuff—the latest, cutting-edge research. (*Reaches in his pocket and takes out a thick stack of index cards.*) My notes.

HOLLY. Impressive, Zig.

ZIGGY. And it's not just about any old brain. (*Pointing to DANA.*) It's about *your* brain.

DANA. My brain?

HOLLY (*overlapping*). Her brain?

ZIGGY (*to HOLLY*). And yours, too. And mine.

(Suddenly, TERRI and SONYA run on from opposite directions and meet, apart and unaware of the others, talking together and reacting excitedly to messages on their cell-phones.)

TERRI. There you are! Oh, my god, did you see this?!

SONYA. I know, I know, I'm so glad I found you first! Ashley is gonna freak!

ZIGGY (*indicating TERRI and SONYA*). And about *their* brains.

TERRI. I never thought this could happen!

SONYA. You think it's true?!

DANA. Do those two *have* a brain?

HOLLY. I think they share one.

ZIGGY (*picking up the box*). Hey, thanks, really, for saying you'd help. OK, ladies—till showtime!

(HOLLY and DANA exchange a look as ZIGGY exits with the box.)

DANA (*checking her cellphone*). Come on, Holly, we gotta get to first period. It's 8:19!

HOLLY. We're gonna be late! Why didn't you say something, Dana?!

DANA (*as HOLLY drags her off*). I thought you said our phones were synchronized.

(DANA and HOLLY rush off, laughing.)

SONYA. I mean, seriously, just yesterday Spivey was all over Ashley.

TERRI (*looking at her cellphone*). Yeah, and then he posts this picture. I mean, is he not clearly hot for this girl? What was he thinking?

SONYA. The cheat.

TERRI. The slut.

(J.J. enters with his backpack.)

SONYA. How long you think Spivey's been cheating on Ashley?

J.J. Like a week.

(SONYA and TERRI look at him, annoyed.)

TERRI. How do you know that?

J.J. I'm friends with the girl he's cheating with. And she's been posting pictures of him on her wall since Monday.

TERRI. Who is she?!