

Prevention Programs

Prevention is the only known cure.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey provides public information and prevention education throughout the entire state. We offer programs and materials for all ages and levels of expertise, which address the causes and consequences of brain injury, and promote safe behavior. The Association provides speakers and materials on all of its programs and a wide variety of prevention topics.

Heads Up! Seniors promotes fall prevention and pedestrian safety for senior citizens, addressing the leading cause of brain injury among the most susceptible population. Resources for healthcare personnel, families and caregivers are available, including presentations for senior centers and other community groups that feature an educational game show for seniors.

The **Concussion in Sports Campaign** (www.sportsconcussion.com) aims to increase public awareness that concussion is a brain injury and should be taken seriously. Initiatives such as a statewide Concussion Consensus Statement, a Baseline Testing Grant, and the quarterly newsletter Game Plan, among others, bring attention to the importance of properly identifying, measuring, monitoring and managing concussions. Resources are available for student athletes, coaches, parents, athletic trainers, educators, medical professionals and organizations committed to sports safety.

Think Positive: A Helmet Safety Reward Program is a community-based incentive program through which law enforcement officers encourage children and adolescents under age 17 to wear helmets when riding on bicycles, skateboards, scooters and skates. The Association's Think Positive Tool Kit is a step-by-step manual that assists police officers in developing, implementing, promoting, evaluating, and maintaining positive ticket programs that reinforce safe behavior.

The **Brainy Bunch** helmet safety campaign (www.brainybunch.info) provides information and resources to communities on the benefits of helmet use for all ages. Educational materials in English and Spanish are available.

Kids on the Block live puppet shows promote brain injury awareness and transportation safety. The shows are appropriate for grade school-age children, and scripts can be performed in English and Spanish. These free performances are available in southern New Jersey.

Traumatic Brain Injury Rate by County

Source: New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Center for Health Statistics, 2000

Age-adjusted rates per 100,000

- 49.5 - 74.9
- 87.1 - 99.2
- 107.5 - 161.8



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Possible Consequences of Brain Injury

Cognitive

- ▶ Short-term memory loss; long-term memory loss
- ▶ Slowed ability to process information
- ▶ Trouble concentrating or paying attention
- ▶ Communication difficulties
- ▶ Spatial disorientation
- ▶ Organizational problems and impaired judgment
- ▶ Unable to do more than one thing at a time
- ▶ A lack of initiating activities, or once started, difficulty completing activities

Physical

- ▶ Seizures
- ▶ Muscle spasticity
- ▶ Double vision or low vision, even blindness
- ▶ Loss of smell or taste
- ▶ Speech impairments such as slow or slurred speech
- ▶ Headaches or migraines
- ▶ Fatigue, increased need for sleep
- ▶ Balance problems

Emotional

- ▶ Increased anxiety
- ▶ Depression and mood swings
- ▶ Impulsive behavior
- ▶ Egocentric behaviors; difficulty seeing how behaviors can affect others

Because no brain injury is too mild or too severe to lose hope.

Programs and Services

for People with Brain Injuries and Their Families

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY



Family Helpline: 1-800-669-4323

(Toll-free from within New Jersey)

For many people, the services of Brain Injury Association of New Jersey start with a phone call to the helpline.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey understands the isolation experienced by people with brain injuries and their families. It understands that brain injury is about change, recovery and finding resources to help.

With an extensive library on brain injury and its consequences, helpline staff of the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey can provide a wealth of knowledge to the family in need, provide materials and direct you to other sources of information.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey's lists of brain injury programs, physicians, therapists, legal advisers and other specialists are a great starting point. As a source of information for families, the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey does not make direct referrals for professional services.

Helpline staff can direct families to federal and state programs to provide financial assistance, emotional support, training and other needs. They are also available to provide information and resources to professionals.

If you or someone you love has experienced a brain injury, please call.

Family Support

It's hard to deal with brain injury alone.

People who have sustained a brain injury often will have many changes in their life, and, while there are services available to help them, they may need assistance in accessing these services.

Family members of a person with a brain injury can grow frustrated and confused, and they may not know where to turn for help in addressing the many new problems they face.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey offers a free care coordination program - a program to help access needed services and supports - for people who sustained a brain injury before the age of 22 and for their families. It is called Family Support.

Professional caseworkers throughout New Jersey work one-on-one with individuals and their families. They serve as sources of information, care coordinators, guides through government red tape and advocates when the going really gets tough.

If you or a family member sustained a brain injury before age 22, you may be eligible for service through the Family Support program.

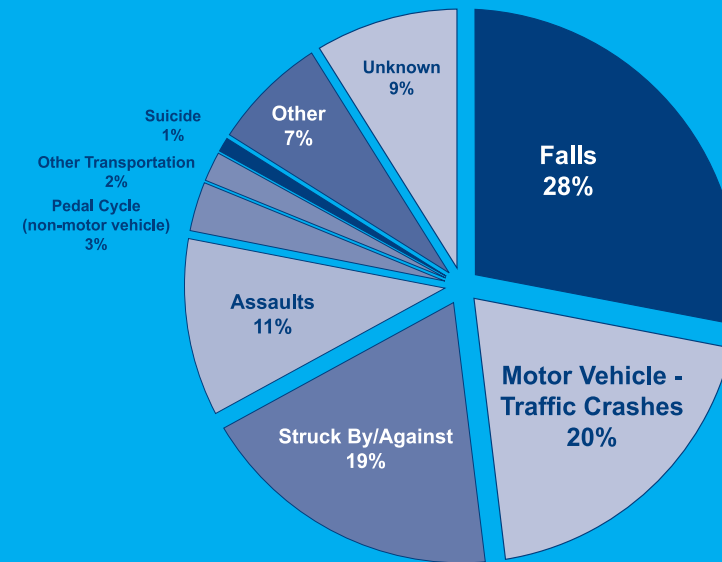
Brain Injury

Acquired brain injury (ABI) is an injury to the brain that is not hereditary, congenital or degenerative. Acquired brain injuries are caused by some medical conditions, including strokes, encephalitis, aneurysms, anoxia (lack of oxygen during surgery, drug overdose, or near drowning), metabolic disorders, meningitis, or brain tumors.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is an insult to the brain that is not degenerative or congenital in nature. It is caused by an external physical force that may produce a diminished or altered state of consciousness, which results in an impairment of cognitive abilities or physical functioning. It can also result in the disturbance of behavioral or emotional functioning. Traumatic brain injuries occur during everyday activities, including falls, motor vehicle crashes, assaults, and sports injuries, including concussions.

Traumatic Brain Injury by Cause ¹

1.4 million Americans sustain traumatic brain injuries each year



TBI in New Jersey ²

Each year in New Jersey there are nearly 9,000 TBIs resulting in hospitalization or death. Approximately 10% of these are fatal. This does not include all of the brain injuries that are treated in emergency departments, outpatient settings, or not at all.

The leading cause of TBI in New Jersey historically has been vehicle crashes (including automobiles, bicycles and recreational vehicles), followed by falls and assaults. However, in 2003, falls became the leading cause of TBI in New Jersey, responsible for over 20% more brain injuries than vehicle crashes.

¹ Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2004 Report: Traumatic Brain Injury in the United States: Emergency Department Visits, Hospitalizations, and Deaths. ² Source: New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Center for Health Statistics.

Support Groups

Everyone affected by brain injury needs a little support.

People with brain injuries and their families need to know that they are not alone, and that others have experienced similar situations and found ways of addressing the many problems they face.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey has 14 affiliated support groups around the state. Each group is independently led and sets its own agenda. A trained social service or health professional acts as the facilitator, but the people who attend the meetings are free to discuss any concerns and interests.

The groups meet monthly, allowing people with brain injuries and their family members to get to know other people in similar situations, gain emotional support and develop friendships, and obtain information and resources on a variety of brain injury-related topics.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey can help put you in touch with a local support group.

Mentoring: TBI Family CARE

CARE - Connections, Assistance, Resources and Education

Dealing with brain injury can be a very lonely experience.

It may be hard to accept changes in the way you think, feel or act. Family members of a person with a brain injury may not know where to turn for resources and services. Many people affected by brain injury feel they have no one to talk to.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey's Family CARE program can help.

We can match you with a mentor - someone you can turn to in confidence for support. Someone who has been there.

Mentors are trained volunteers, guided by a professional experienced with brain injury, who understand the difficulties faced by people with brain injuries and their families. They can help find resources for people with brain injury and assist you in what to ask medical and legal professionals.

But most important, they have a sincere desire to help. The program is free and the support invaluable.

TREK

(Together in Recreation, Exploration & Knowledge)

TREK, is a program of the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey that provides a week of independence and socialization for adults with brain injury, while their caregivers enjoy a week of respite. Activities include art, swimming, boating, dance, outdoor sports and nature study.

TREK is designed to serve adults, age 16 and older, with a primary diagnosis of brain injury. Participants must be residents of New Jersey or currently residing in New Jersey for rehabilitation purposes and meet other eligibility requirements. Space is limited.