

Brain Injury & Disability Resources

ABIN-PA InfoLine 800.516.8052
Abuse Reports—Age 0-18 800-932-0313
Abuse Reports—Age 18+ 800.490.8505
Aging/Disability Referrals 866.286.3636
Area Agency on Aging (blue pages)
BIAPA Resource Line 800.444.6443
BrainSTEPS (Local Intermediate Unit)
CareerLink (blue pages)
ChildrensHealthInsurance 800.986.5437
Consumer Protection 800.441.2555
Crime Victim's Benefits 800.233.2339
Defense & Veterans BIC 866.966.1020
Disability Rights Network 800.692.7443
DomesticViolence Hotline 800.799.7233
Elks Nurses (care plans) 814.781.7860
Epilepsy Foundation 800.887.7165
Head Injury Program 717.772.2762
(1 year of rehab, \$100,000 max)
Health Insurance www.healthcare.gov
or 800.318.2596
Health Law Project 800.274.3258
Independent Living Ctrs 717.364.1732
Legal Aid (PA) 800.322.7572
Legal Clinic for Disabled 215.587.3350
Meals on Wheels www.mealcall.org
Medical Assistance 800.537.8862
Medicare Coverage 800.633.4227
(Part A & B have in-home services)
Medicare Complaints 800.783.7067
Office of Vocational Rehab (blue pages)
OVR Complaints 888.745.2357
Social Security 800.772.1213
Special Ed Consult Line 800.879.2301
Special Kids Network 800.986.4550
Waiver Enrollment 877.550.4227
Waiver HelpLine 800.757.5042
Women's Law Project 215.928.9801

ABIN-PA Services

"Empowering Survivors & Families to Rebuild Their Lives."

InfoLine

Resources. Problem-solving. Support.

Advocacy

Individual. Government Affairs.
Nonprofit Coalitions & Collaboratives.

Education

Conferences. Presentations.
Staff Training.

Literature

Free Monthly Newsletter.
Brochures.
Booklets.
PowerPoints.

Website

Newsletter Archives & Sign-Up.
Print Literature.
"Our Stories."
Print Resource List by Birthdate.
Rehab Facility Search by Type.
Videos.

Brochure Categories

General
Children <21
Adults 18+
Families & Caregivers
Rehabilitation
Dual Diagnosis
Justice System

Brain Injury Advisory:
Families & Caregivers

CHANGES IN FAMILY ROLES



ABIN-PA is dedicated to increasing public awareness about acquired brain injury and to providing support, education, information, advocacy and other services for individuals with acquired brain injury and their families.

ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY
NETWORK OF PENNSYLVANIA

InfoLine: 215.699.2139
Toll-Free: 1.800.516.8052
info@abin-pa.org
www.abin-pa.org

What is a Brain Injury?

A brain injury means an event injured someone's brain and now that brain functions differently. As a result, there is a change in the person's thinking, emotions, behavior and/or physical functioning.

Some of the events that might cause a brain injury are whiplash, blast, impact, fever, stroke, brain tumor, cardiac arrest, surgery, poisoning, blood loss, medication, drugs, anesthesia, infection, smoke, carbon monoxide and near drowning, electrocution and suffocation. Injury involving an outside physical force is called a traumatic brain injury or TBI.

Rehabilitation helps...

THINKING: memory, speed, word finding, concentration, judgment, spatial awareness, organization, planning and multi-tasking.

EMOTIONS: tears, laughter, failure to react, anger, irritability and fear.

BEHAVIOR: anxiety, depression, mood swings, impulsivity, agitation, egocentricity and being unaware.

PHYSICAL: seizures, balance, spasticity, weakness, paralysis, vision, hearing, speech, headache, fatigue, sense of smell and taste.

Impact on Families

Changes due to brain injury often mean that the child or adult acts differently. Even with help they may no longer be able to fulfill their responsibilities.

Recovery takes a lot of effort over many years and may appear to plateau. Fatigue can be sudden and alarming. When starting new activities, old ones may slide. Everyone will be experiencing a wide range of emotions while they are trying to work together.

Family roles and responsibilities must be focused on rehabilitation.

- Spouse/Partner—May seem like a total stranger. Patience is essential. Personality usually returns. Use coaching, cuing, reminders and supervision.
- Parent—Children need time with loving relatives plus the injured parent. Supervise all childcare by the injured parent to assure safety until parenting skills return.
- Child—Protect from another brain injury (concussion). Arrange long-term rehabilitation to age 21. Use the BrainSTEPS program at school.
- Seniors—Avoid misdiagnosis of dementia, Alzheimer's or mental illness. Arrange rehabilitation.

Will my child recover?

Parents need to maximize children's recovery. Special Education and §504 plans offer school accommodations. Medical Assistance (to age 21) and private insurance provide Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy to restore brain function (CPT97532). Use the child's best strategies for success every day, in every setting. Delay graduation to age 21 if needed.

Caregiving 24/7

Learn about brain injury and how recovery unfolds in order to reduce frustration. Mobilize family, friends, funding and in-home services. Be sure to protect your own health by arranging respite and time alone. Keep up with friends, interests, and spiritual connections. This is not a short sprint, but a daily marathon.

Celebrate the Journey

Most survivors far exceed the initial predictions made about their lives because the brain keeps repairing itself with stimulation. ("The Brain That Changes Itself", Norman Doidge, MD.) Keep the big picture in mind. Keep hope and laughter at your fingertips. Use humor and find something to enjoy every day.