

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:
Rehabilitation

MILESTONES IN RECOVERY



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

How the brain heals

The brain is in charge of its own repair, just like a cut or broken bone must heal itself so that the stitches or the cast can be removed.

Unfortunately, we can not put the brain to rest for healing, because our very lives depend on our brains working silently in the background.

With injury to the brain, we cannot see the healing taking place, but we can notice slow, gradual changes for the better in cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physical function.

These improvements result from the self-repair of neurons (brain cells) and neural networks.

We have the ability to promote repair through rest, water, food, interesting activities, and formal therapies such as occupational, physical, cognitive, and speech therapy. Each step is built on prior milestones. As we pass through these milestones, we will find life returning to the way it used to be—very gradually.

For background on brain injury, go to www.abin-pa.org, the "Beginners' Box" on the home page. Also check the "Brochures" link in the menu column and read or print a few.

What are "Milestones?"

Beginning at birth, the brain slowly links its neurons or brain cells into the neural networks that allow us to grow up and reach maturity.

We mark our barely noticeable progress by sporadic milestones such as the first smile, first step, first word, first day of school, driver's license, graduation, registering to vote, first job, marriage, etc.

As yet, there is no pill or treatment that will let us jump from a two-year old brain to a 12-year old brain.

Neural networks

When neurons or brain cells are injured, neural networks are affected, because signals are not sent.

When neurons cannot signal each other, we are prevented from living the life we were enjoying.

As the neurons repair, these networks become functional again, and we can resume the activities these networks control such as speaking, swallowing, walking, dancing, driving, having sex, parenting, gardening, swimming, working, planning a vacation, etc. Certain milestones measure and reveal hidden progress in brain repair.

Brain injury milestones

After brain injury, we re-trace stages in development, repairing the missing links in our neural networks with the help of professionals and family members. Certain milestones tell us that we are ready to tackle the next stage of new challenges.

- 1) Survival—Awake, breathing, swallowing, sitting, walking, etc.
- 2) Activities of Daily Living—Handles hygiene, meals, laundry. Dressed and ready to leave house by 9am.
- 3) Cognition—Can concentrate for 30 minutes despite distractions. Able to learn and remember.
- 4) Behavior—Behavioral agreements are sufficient to control verbal aggression, perseveration, poor social skills, etc. when at home.
- 5) Social/Recreation—Behavioral agreements are sufficient in disability and community settings.
- 6) Academic—Cognitive/social skills are adequate for online, then televised and campus classes.
- 7) Vocational—Uses job coaching to move from sheltered to volunteer and then part-time or full-time work with employer incentives while protecting benefits.

With continued effort, progress continues, despite "plateaus" or discharge from rehabilitation.