

THE NEED

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recently estimated that there are 5.1 million persons living with long-term, severe disability because of brain injury, and as many as 6.5 million persons living with some form of brain injury including mild and moderate injury.

Every 15 seconds someone sustains a brain injury in the U.S.; every five minutes, one of those people will die and another will become permanently disabled. Brain Injury is a leading cause of death and disability in children and young adults.

Peer support groups give parents, caregivers and those who experience brain injury a forum for discussing their needs and successes related to brain injury and a source of quality, up-to-date information.

An estimated 2,000 fatalities occur due to traumatic brain injury each year in Pennsylvania. More than 41,000 people are treated in Pennsylvania hospital emergency rooms for concussion and mild brain injury. Almost 8,000 people are hospitalized in PA each year due to traumatic brain injuries sustained in car accidents, work place accidents, falls, assaults, sports accidents and other injuries.

We believe the number of people living with the consequences of Brain Injury is greater than estimated because of the unreported and untreated cases that have come to our attention. B r a i n injuries happen everywhere, every day.

The BRAIN TRUST Foundation has formed to assist parents, caregivers and others to create peer-to-peer support groups.

“One of the secrets of life is to make stepping stones out of stumbling blocks.” ~Jack Penn

For more information, or to volunteer, contact John Pistorius at 412.481.0443 or email jp@pabia.org.

QUESTIONS

What is Head Injury?

Any injury to the head can be classified as a head injury. Whether the head hits something or if something hits the head or something penetrates the head, a person can acquire a "head injury." Some injuries to the head can be more severe than others. In some cases of head injury, the force is sufficient to cause trauma to the various cells that make up the tissue of the brain.

What is Brain Injury?

Each human brain contains 100 billion (more or less) neurons and many times that number of supporting cells. Each individual neuron can be connected to more than 500,000 other neurons. Within each separate, tiny piece of the brain there are billions of synapses

Any twisting, compression or stretching of the brain can potentially alter the physical status for any or every one of these cells, each connection to other cells and the blood vessels that feed them.

The above described acquired cellular alteration is what we call traumatic brain injury. It can be caused by a host of means. Most often brain injury occurs when the head comes to a sudden stop while traveling. Sometimes brain trauma occurs when an object strikes the head. Other times, brain injury can occur when an object penetrates the skull and enters the brain.

Brain damage can be diffuse, involving more than one area of the brain. It can also be specific, or focal, confined to one area of the brain. The alteration of brain cells can leave the individual with varying degrees of change and oftentimes impairment.

The human brain is a complex organ. Any injury, whether mild (as in concussion) or severe can leave the person with impairment that lasts long after the initial injury. A person who experiences Brain Injury often deals with altered personality, anxiety, depression and loss of self-confidence. Sometimes, the person who survives may lack self-awareness of any existing deficits which can make treatment difficult.

SUPPORT FOR YOU

The BRAIN TRUST Foundation began in 2002 as a support group development committee of the Pittsburgh Area Brain Injury Alliance. The Pittsburgh Area Brain Injury Alliance is a peer support group organization devoted to providing a support forum for people who experience Brain injury, parents and caregivers. The committee evolved into the Brain Injury Support Group Alliance.

In August, 2003, the committee assisted in the start-up of two peer support groups for parents, caregivers and people who experienced brain injury. In January 2004, we helped start another peer support group to address employment and education issues after brain injury.

Now, we are working with others to create two new groups in the Greater Pittsburgh Area. The BRAIN TRUST Foundation is dedicated to helping people to start and operate peer-to-peer support groups.

We provide free assistance with the following:

- creating press releases,
- meeting notice posters
- meeting notice post cards,
- welcome signs
- creating directional signs
- customized brochure templates
- meeting evaluation forms
- email meeting notification
- website space
- moral support

We will meet with you to discuss your needs and assist you in creating a peer support group in your area. For more information about how we can help you call (412) 481-0443.

“Each problem has hidden in it an opportunity so powerful that it literally dwarfs the problem. The greatest success stories were created by people who recognized a problem and turned it into an opportunity.”-JOSEPH SUGARMAN, BUSINESSMAN

SOME REASONS To BECOME INVOLVED

- C To learn more about the consequences of Head Trauma and Brain Injury.
- C To share strategies for overcoming or compensating for the effects of Brain Injury.
- C To help other parents, caregivers and people who have experienced Brain Injury in their recovery process.
- C To assist others in finding services.
- C To find services and funding for you or your loved one.
- C To meet new people who share an understanding of the consequences of Brain Injury.
- C To learn about various cutting edge techniques and therapies as they are being developed.
- C To stay informed on issues related to Brain Injury.
- C To develop social skills and increase social activities.
- C To become a voice for those who experience Brain Injury.

“Every person alive has a stake in the Brain Injury issue. Brain trauma can happen to anyone, anywhere at anytime. While some people are at a greater risk than others, no one is immune. Get involved. The Brain Injury you help to prevent may be your own. The only cure is prevention.”
~John Pistorius

Contact John Pistorius at 412.481.5482 or email jp@pabia.org for more information.

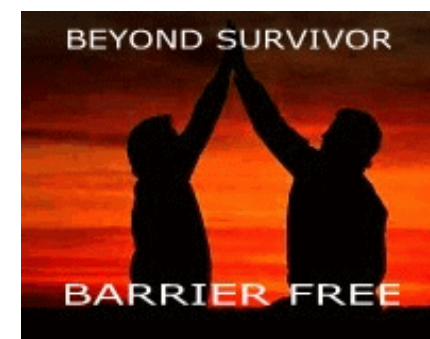
BRAIN TRUST Foundation
Support Group Development
1913 Arlington Avenue
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<http://www.btf.org>

FACTS

About

Head Trauma & Brain Injury



Free Peer Support Group Development assistance is available for parents, caregivers and people who experience Head Trauma and Brain Injury.

Please visit us on the web at:
<http://www.btf.org>

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