

November 2014
Volume 2 Issue 1

Upcoming Community Events

Prince Albert Coffee Talk

- Mondays (except for stat holidays)
- 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- Community Room @ the South Hill Mall
- Free of charge
- Refreshments served

Melfort Coffee Talk

- 3rd Monday of the month (except for stat holidays)
- 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
- Classroom @ Parkland Place – 402 Bemister Ave
- Free of charge
- Refreshments served

Creative Writing Classes

- Every 2nd Tuesday (starts November 4th)
- Free of charge
- Refreshments served
- Contact Nicole @ 306-765-6480 if interested

ABI Services...

serving individuals with acquired brain injury, their families and their communities.

Sask North ABI Services

1521 – 6th Ave West
Prince Albert, SK S6V 5K1
Phone: 306-765-6630
Toll Free: 1-866-899-9951
Fax #: 306-765-6657

Caregiver's Corner

-- prepared by Sask. North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

What Causes Challenging Behaviour?

There are many reasons why people behave the way that they do after a brain injury. Factors that might influence behaviour can be divided into three main areas:

1. Pre-Injury Factors

Education, employment, family background, previous personality, interests, likes, habits all contribute to how we behave and who we are. Each person will have different levels of skills in communication, ability to solve problems, ability to manage anger or frustration. A person with brain injury may have limited experience with coping with trauma and losses, especially if injuries are at a young age.

2. Injury Factors

The age when a person has an injury (level of life maturity), the severity of injury, the kind of injury (traumatic, stroke, or tumour), the areas of the brain involved, other injuries (Orthopaedic), and other medical factors, like pain, fatigue, difficulty sleeping can all affect behaviour and mood after an injury.

3. Post-Injury Factors

After an injury people sustain many life changes and these can affect a person's behaviour. Losses such as loss of work, ability to drive, changes in relationships and capacity to be independent can lead to frustration, irritability, anger, depression and other strong emotional reactions.

Stress and frustration can arise from difficulties with physical mobility, lack of independence, communication impairments, cognitive and memory changes, and changes in ability to control strong emotions and behaviour. Other medical complications such as pain, epilepsy, medication, headaches, and fatigue all affect a person's behaviour.

How does Behaviour Change after a Brain Injury?

Behaviour problems are those behaviours that interfere with a person's ability to live independently in the community, to work or study, or to have good relationships with other people.

Any brain injury can cause permanent changes in personality and behaviour. Damage to some areas of the brain, for example the frontal lobes, temporal lobes and the limbic system, are much more likely to result in changes in behaviour.

It is important to remember that:

- Not everyone will experience behaviour changes after a brain injury.
- Each brain injury is unique and will result in different strengths and impairments.
- Some individuals will have only one behaviour problem some will have all of them.
- Some behaviour problems will resolve and get better quickly, but some will be long-lasting and permanent.
- Each person has different coping strategies.

Reference:

ABIOS – *Understanding Behaviour Changes. Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service, The State of Queensland 2011.*
www.health.qld.gov.au/abio



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Cognitive & Behavioural Strategies

These are some simple and practical strategies to compensate for some of these changes in everyday life.

Memory

- Use memory aids where possible, such as a diary, calendars, notepads, reminders, timers or alarms.
- Keep information and important items (keys, wallet, address book, etc.) in the same place.

Attention

- Keep tasks simple and short.
- Remove distractions (people, television) wherever possible.

Organization

- Structure and routine will assist in organizing daily activities & tasks.
- Make sure instructions are simple; break down big tasks into small steps.

Information Processing

- Allow extra time to process and understand new information or to finish a task.

Initiation

- Use prompts to start & continue activities (alarm clocks, cell phones).

Reasoning

- Start with very small changes or compromises.

Emotional Changes

- Try to use strategies such as distraction or relaxation techniques.

Anger

- Look at triggers or causes.
- Avoid drugs & alcohol.
- Remove yourself from anger provoking situations until you can calm down, or avoid them where possible.

Independence

- Maintain links with as wide a range of people and activities as you can.

Reference:

ABIOS – Cognitive and Behavioural Changes and Strategies.
Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service, The State of
Queensland 2011. www.health.qld.gov.au/abios

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services is a group of programs managed by the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region that are part of the ABI Partnership Project. A variety of services are offered including...

Case Management : evaluation of client needs & development of client-driven goals, assistance with coordinating health services, referrals to other health care professionals or community agencies based on current needs, return-to-work or return-to-school planning, assistance accessing adaptive equipment, and general counseling.

Consultation: provide information to other service providers, agencies or persons in regards to specific client needs and ABI in general.

Education: client-specific and general ABI education for individuals, families, and service providers; prevention activities for schools and community groups.

Independent Living Services: assistance with finding appropriate housing (private residence, personal care homes, etc.), facilitate recreation and leisure opportunities, assistance with therapeutic home programming and independent living skills.

Program Admission Criteria

- Must have a diagnosis of a moderate to severe brain injury (supported by medical records) & be medically stable.
- Be free of active substance abuse &/or be currently involved in a treatment program.
- Applicants with a primary psychiatric diagnosis must have symptoms well managed.
- Priority will be given to applicants whose brain injury occurred within the past three (3) years.

How to Access Services

- We accept self-referrals as well as those from health facilities, physicians, any rehabilitation program or professional support services, schools or community agencies.
- Participation in our program is voluntary.

To find out more information on our referral process &/or to receive a referral form, please contact us:

Phone: 306-765-6630 Toll Free: 1-866-899-9951

