



DCDSB Understanding & Supporting All Learners

What is a Brain Injury?

There are two main types of brain injury: Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

TBI is damage to the brain caused by the head being hit or shaken violently (e.g., an accident). An ABI is damage to the brain that occurs after birth that is not due to congenital or degenerative conditions. ABI includes TBI, stroke, aneurysms, toxic exposures, anoxia, etc.

How Brain Injuries can impact one's learning and school functioning

Brain injuries can affect learning in a variety of ways by causing damage in one or more areas of the brain. This damage can impact thinking and reasoning, memory, attention, language, the speed of processing information, motor skills, behaviour, and social-emotional functioning. In short, your child may show difficulties with:

- Processing information accurately and rapidly
- Fatigue when working
- Attention/concentration
- Problem-solving or reasoning
- Organization and planning
- Learning and remembering
- Managing emotions
- Language comprehension or expression
- Social skills
- Depression and/or Anxiety
- Lack of insight or impaired judgment
- Impulsivity

Helpful Resources

For more information, you may wish explore the following resources:

LearNet: <http://www.projectlearnnet.org/index.html>

Ontario Brain Injury Association: <http://obia.ca/>

Strategies to support those with Brain Injury

- **Fatigue** – provide frequent rest breaks, a reduced work load
- **Fine motor** – provide access to a computer, lots of time, and scribing (writing what your child says)
- **Attention** – modify environment to reduce distractions, provide frequent breaks
- **Memory and learning** – link new information to previous experiences, provide visual reminders, teach memory strategies
- **Organization** – provide checklists, outlines, and directly teach organization strategies
- **Information processing** – allow extra time, present information in small chunks
- **Emotional regulation** – identify things that trigger upset and develop a behaviour plan to deal with this, provide feedback and positive reinforcement to encourage the student
- **Disinhibition** – teach self-monitoring skills
- Maintain ongoing communication between home and school

This resource is not intended for diagnostic purposes. It is to be used as a reference for your own understanding and to provide information about the different kinds of difficulties you may encounter in your classroom.

