

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Fact Sheet



Signs of TBI

- *Physical disabilities:* such as trouble speaking, seeing, hearing, and using other senses.
- *Difficulties with thinking:* may have trouble with short or long term memory
- *Social, behavioral, or emotional problems:* such as sudden changes in mood, anxiety or depression.

Brain injuries can range from mild to severe. Early and ongoing help can make a big difference in how a child recovers. This help can include physical or occupational therapy, and/or counseling.

Adapted from NICHY (2011)

What is TBI?

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is an injury to the brain caused by the head being hit by something or shaken violently. This injury can change how the person acts, moves, and thinks. A TBI can also change how a student learns and acts in school. The term TBI is not used for a person who is born with a brain injury. It is also not used for brain injuries that happen during birth.

Definition of TBI under IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), defines traumatic brain injury as...

Traumatic brain injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury applies to open or closed head injuries resulting **in impairments in one or more areas**, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

[34 Code of Federal Regulations §300.8(c)(12)].

TBI and School

When children with TBI return to school, their educational and emotional needs are often very different than before the injury. Sometimes, students can remember how they were before the brain injury. This can bring on many emotional and social changes.

It is extremely important to plan carefully for the child's return to school following a TBI. It is important to remember that the IEP is a flexible plan. The IEP can be changed as the parents, school, and student learn more about what the student needs at school following a TBI.