

# Traumatic Brain Injury

PATH Project  
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## General Description of Population

Students who have received a traumatic brain injury have difficulties with their ability to function cognitively, socially, and physically. Some of the key areas affected are:

- Communication and language
- Memory
- Perception
- Attention and concentration
- Judgment, planning, and decision making
- Thinking and reasoning
- Ability to adjust to change

## Common Characteristics

- High frustration levels
  - Fatigue
  - Possible irritability
  - Difficulties in the following areas:
    - Registering new information
    - Seeing relationships (similarities/differences)
    - Understanding abstract levels of meaning (e.g., figures of speech, metaphors)
    - Considering a variety of possible solutions
    - Holding several words or thoughts or intentions in mind at one time
    - Recalling pre-injury information
    - Recalling events from earlier in the day or previous
    - Setting goals
    - Perceiving strengths and weaknesses in an objective manner
    - Focusing attention and filtering out distractions
    - Maintaining attention
    - Organizing objects into appropriate groups
    - Perceiving the spatial orientation of objects
    - Recognizing objects if too much is presented once or too rapidly
- Social/behavioral disorders involve
- Self-esteem
  - Self-control
  - Awareness of self and others
  - Awareness of social rules and roles
  - Interest in social involvement
  - Sexuality
  - Appearance and grooming
  - Family relationships
  - Age appropriate behavior
  - Inappropriate social behaviors
- Sensory (physical) disorders involve
- Vision and hearing
  - Speed and coordination of movement
  - Balance, strength, and equilibrium
  - Motor function
  - Speech
  - Eye/hand coordination
  - Spatial orientation

## Instructional Strategies

- Require demonstrated vs. verbal directions
- Use of multi sensory approaches (tactile, verbal, and auditory materials)
- Facilitates work in small groups for specific objectives
- Use manipulative materials
- Base curriculum on functional life skills
- Break down objectives into small parts
- Use repetition and drill often for maximum retention
- Partial participation in large group activities
- Skills are learned best when practiced in concrete situations frequently

## Behavioral Strategies

- Be consistent
- Use consequences for both appropriate and inappropriate behavior
- Utilize various approaches to build self esteem
- Use of reinforcers (behavior modification)
- Students should be expected to follow the rules and behavioral expectations of their general education peer group
- Work with parents on home/school behavioral expectations and standards
- Recognize the importance of peer modeling
- Utilize a circle of friends to reinforce and support positive behaviors
- Use common sense and general principles when working with these students

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