



BRAINSTORMING

News you can use from the Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa

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BIA-IA

The mission of the Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa is to create a better future through brain injury prevention, advocacy, education, research and support

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Brain Injury and the Holidays

With an injured brain, the holiday season can burden us with more fatigue, more stress and perhaps some sad emotions. We may remember how our lives used to be before our injuries, but we have to move on and appreciate our lives today. We can look back with fond memories, but we can also build new ones that don't require us to overdo during the holidays.

Preparation is essential to enjoying the holidays after a brain injury and being aware of your own limitations. Here are some tips for getting the most out of the holidays.

1. **Pace Yourself** – don't commit to more than you can successfully handle. Give yourselves a quiet day before going to that party or dinner. Take a nap or just lay down and rest. Do everything in moderation.
2. **Say "No"** – sometimes it's better to turn down large family get-togethers because of all the challenges of interacting, a lot of noise and making your way around all the people. And then, of course, we have to remember that when we overdo it one day, we have to pay for it the next.
3. **Get organized in advance** – write things down to help you remember what you need to do. Why burden your brain by trying to keep it all in your head?
4. **Prioritize** – only do what is important. There are probably things to do that you can put aside until after the holidays.
5. **Ask for help** – with the shopping, the cooking, the cleaning or whatever else it is.
6. **Keep things simple** – simplify the decorations, the gift giving, the meals and everything else that is part of the holiday season. Find ways to enjoy the holidays with quieter moments. The added decorations and lights can add to our fatigue because they are visually stimulating which the brain has to process and sometimes, not very well.
7. **Eat** – properly throughout the day to nourish your brain so it can do a better job for you **drink** recommended amounts of water, our brains need it.



Take time to observe the signs and symptoms your body experiences before you get to a point of being overwhelmed, that way you can recognize when you need a break. The way you celebrate the holidays might look different than others, however, it is important that you take care of yourself during these times in order for them to be enjoyable.

Survivor Story

Jerry S.

Valentine's Day! It was a Winter Day! I was going to go on "standby" for work! The weather was bad, a white out blizzard, so everything was standing still. I was a line sub foreman for a large utility company. I was talking to a crew by radio from a pickup truck on my way home, and I was headed north on a gravel road. One of the bucket trucks was coming from the north, and heading south on the same road. He was trying to contact me on the radio, but since I was already talking on the radio, he could not contact me. We could not see each other because of the blizzard, and we ended up having a head on collision. The pickup I was in went under the bucket truck and ripped the hood off, launching it into the windshield of the pickup I was in.

Immediately, I was then taken to the emergency room. There, the medical staff said they wanted to life-flight me to a larger hospital in Sioux City. However, they could not fly because of the weather. I was then taken to Sioux City by ambulance while following a snow blower from county to county. Once at the hospital in Sioux City, they put me in a medical induced coma. I woke up two weeks later in a room on the Rehab floor. I woke up and looked around and said, "Where am I, and what happened to me?" I had a TBI, a crushed hip, a fracture in my right femur, and a

crushed right knee. The worst thing I have experienced from that tragic day was and is the traumatic brain injury.

After his injury, Jerry contacted one of the Neuro-Resource Facilitator's with BIA-IA who was able to help him. He says the staff at BIA-IA inspired him to do more to help others who are living with a brain injury. Jerry now sits on Iowa's Advisory Council of Brain Injury's board, and attends BIA-IA's yearly conference each spring.

Jerry participated in the Unmasking Brain Injury project. When asked to describe his mask, Jerry said the black represents the trauma he went through, and the red stands for the journey, and the power and determination he has.



Interested in sharing your story of survival or caregiving after a brain injury? Want to help spread stories of hope and inspiration?

Contact BIA-IA at (855) 444-6443 or info@biaia.org to find out more!

Iowa Concussion Management Protocol

Every family, school, and medical professional can create a Community-Based Concussion Management Program



Click [HERE](#) to download the REAP protocol manual

It is estimated that 3.8 million **CONCUSSIONS** occur annually. This concussion management protocol can lead **YOU** to support students in managing **symptoms** as they return to the **classroom** and return to **activity**.

The REAP Project, which stands for Reduce • Educate • Accommodate • Pace, is a community-based model for concussion management that was developed in Colorado. The early origins of REAP stem from the dedication of one typical high school and its surrounding community. After the devastating loss of a student to “Second Impact Syndrome,” the Administrators, Teachers, Certified Athletic Trainer, School Nurse, School Psychologist and Counselors all banded together to create a wider safety net for all students in that school. The net became stronger when parents and community medical professionals also worked together to coordinate care and recovery from concussion. The lessons learned from this tragic event are that a “Multi-Disciplinary Team” approach is the foundation of good Concussion Management.

BIA-Iowa Events

Family Workshop and Resource Fair

As part of our mission, BIAIA will be hosting a one-day family workshop and resource fair to provide Iowans affected by brain injury the opportunity to get connected, find support, relax and recharge.

November 18, 2016

9a-4p

Coralville Public Library
Coralville, IA

[Register HERE](#)



Webinar

A Parent's Perspective: Advocating for
Your Child's Success

January 16, 2017

11:30a-12:30p

[Register HERE](#)



Telephone Based Brain Injury Support Group

December 6, 2016

6-7:30p

[More Info
HERE](#)

Iowa Resource Highlight

A nationally recognized organization, the Epilepsy Foundation of North/Central Illinois Iowa & Nebraska, strives to stop seizures and Sudden Unexplained Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP), find a cure and overcome the challenges created by epilepsy through efforts including education, advocacy and research to accelerate ideas into therapies. The foundation offers numerous services and programs; the annual Iowa Seizure Smart Conference, free seizure recognition and first aid training, provides guidance to resources in Iowa, and provides Iowans with free medical epilepsy ID bracelets/necklaces.

Epilepsy



**EPILEPSY
FOUNDATION**

North/Central Illinois Iowa & Nebraska

[Click Here
for More
Information](#)

Technology Corner

Living Safely App



[Click Here for
More
Information](#)

Living safely was designed to help individuals who have autism, learning disability, or a developmental disability learn basic personal and home safety skills. The skills cover 27 important topics and details developed by the Attainment Company. Available only on iTunes, and specifically developed for the iPad, allows the user to learn at their own pace with Ablelink's Instructional Media Standard System.

Some of the skills covered are bathroom safety, how to do dishes by hand, relationship safety, pool safety, what to do when lost, and much more.

November Support Groups



The holidays can be a busy and exciting time of year for everyone, but for others, we may need additional support. Connect with a local brain injury support group today!

Click here for group information

Check out BIAIA's Facebook Survivor and Family Group

Click [HERE](#)

ASK RESOURCE CENTER PRESENTS



Dr. Laura Riffel

BEHAVIOR DOCTOR SEMINARS

Creating a Climate of Success for All in Your School and Community

With more than 30 years of experience, Dr. Riffel has trained thousands of teachers, parents, counselors, psychologists, and administrators how to change a student's behavior.

Monday, December 12th • 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

RAMADA TROPICS CONFERENCE CENTER • DES MOINES

Families & Students \$65 • Professionals \$85

Click here for more information

Details, registration & CEUs available at:
ASKRESOURCE.ORG/BEHAVIORDOCTOR

Thriving After Brain Injury

Feeding Your Noggin



Brain chemicals called neurotransmitters that regulate your behavior are controlled by the food and beverages that you choose to take in. neurotransmitters are responsible for your moods. The most commonly known neurotransmitters are dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine. When you eat foods that increase serotonin, you become less tense. When the brain creates more dopamine and norepinephrine, you act and think clearer and are more alert. Click [HERE](#) for more info.

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