

Acquired Brain Injury and Education



The Child Brain Injury Trust is a national charity supporting anyone affected by childhood acquired brain injury. The following information has been developed to help the reader understand more about brain injury and some of the associated issues. Every effort has been taken to ensure the information is accurate and up to date. If you require more immediate support or assistance please contact our **Helpline 0303 3032248** or email helpline@cbituk.org where we will be able to respond to your specific enquiry and/or offer support.

The following E-Learning sessions which families and some professionals can access free of charge may also be beneficial:

[Understanding Childhood Acquired Brain Injury](#)

[Basic Brain Anatomy and Functions](#)

[Understanding and Managing Fatigue](#)

[Understanding and Managing Attention and Concentration](#)

[Understanding and Managing Behaviour](#)

[Understanding and Managing Perception](#)

[Understanding and Managing Memory](#)

[Understanding and Managing Social Skills](#)

[Understanding and Managing Organisation and Planning](#)

Acquired Brain Injury and Education

Acquired brain injury (ABI) is often called a hidden disability because you do not have to be able to see a disability for it to exist.

It is easy to label a child who does not pay attention in class, relate well with peers or is struggling with schoolwork as lazy, badly behaved and lacking in social skills but it is important to know that fatigue, poor concentration and social difficulties can all be issues for a child following an ABI.



For some teachers, there is a misunderstanding that can happen because the brain injury is not obvious or they are not aware that the brain injury happened in the first place, perhaps because it occurred during the child's early years. For others it is a case of not understanding how the brain affects



Produced by: The Child Brain Injury Trust | Tel: 01869 341075 | info@cbituk.org | www.childbraininjurytrust.org.uk

This information was written in accordance with our Information Production Process based on the principles of the Information Standard.

Registered Charity Number: 1113326 | A charity Registered in Scotland SC 039703 | Registered Company Number: 5738517 | VAT Registration 125 7951 96

learning and behaviour. Just as the body develops from childhood into early adulthood so does the brain. A brain injury in early childhood may not become obvious until the child is older and the affected areas of the brain begin to mature.ⁱ

A child with an ABI may be less able to carry out tasks than they were before their injury. Some perform inconsistently in education, varying between good and poor grades depending on the specific skills needed for that task. For example, a child may struggle to concentrate for long enough to write a story but may perform well in short-answer, interactive tasks such as quizzes.

It can be difficult for children with an ABI to return to school after an extended absence. They may struggle to fit back into their friendship group or have some of the difficulties described in our other Factsheets. Within the classroom children with an acquired brain injury can have difficulties with:

- Concentrating
- Remembering and learning new information
- Thinking of new ideas
- Maintaining conversations
- Behaving appropriately
- Getting on with friends
- Responding to teaching staff
- Following verbal instructions in a busy, noisy classroom situation
- Planning and organising their school work and own time

A child may become very frustrated by these difficulties, particularly if they remember doing well at school prior to the injury.ⁱⁱ In order to help your child to receive the best possible education and a positive experience of school, it is crucial that everyone working with your child knows about their brain injury, regardless of when it happened. Teaching staff will need to know, be reminded of the likely issues and be given practical information to help deal with any difficulties at school.

Make sure that the SENCO, Special Needs Teacher, or Guidance Teacher (as they are known in Scotland) is aware of the support that your child might need because they will be responsible for co-ordinating the specific support for your child. See details at the end of the Factsheet about how teachers can access further training and support information from the Charity, without charge, to help your child in school.

It may be helpful if the school has copies of medical/psychological reports before your son or daughter returns to school so that they can prepare. You may need to talk through these records with the school teachers or ask a medical professional to do so because they can involve a lot of medical jargon.

Increasing awareness of the impact of ABI on education

The Child Brain Injury Trust has developed a **one-day workshop aimed at teaching staff** entitled “Understanding childhood acquired brain injury.” The workshops run throughout the year across the UK (places are without charge for education professionals) and can also be delivered at in-service school

training days (INSET days, which may be chargeable). [Click here](#) to view the current dates and locations of the Open Workshops.

The charity also has a series of **Recorded E-Learning** sessions (online presentations) explaining many aspects of childhood acquired brain injury and strategies for supporting a child in school. Access for this service is also without charge. Suggested E-Learning sessions for Parents and Schools are (click on each one to see further details):

[Basic Brain Anatomy and Functions](#) – explores in plain terms what each of the lobes of the brain do, and what the impact is if they are injured.

[Understanding Childhood Acquired Brain Injury](#) – covers some of the issues children and families may face following childhood ABI

[Strategies for Support in School](#) – provides positive ideas to help support children who have an ABI in the school

For the full list of available topics please visit our Online Learning Catalogue at:
<http://childbraininjurytrust.org.uk/how-we-help/learning-events/>

There is also a booklet written by Dr Judith Middleton - ***Acquired Brain Injury, Some Consequences for Brain Injured School Students, their Families and Schools.*** Which is without charge for families we are supporting – please contact info@cbituk.org to order a copy.

The Regional Child and Family Support Coordinators from the Child Brain Injury Trust are also able to visit schools and run short staff and/or peer awareness sessions at a child's school.

Please contact our helpline 0303 303 2248 for further information and support or email helpline@cbituk.org

MAKE A DONATION TODAY

The Child Brain Injury Trust relies on grants and donations to enable us to continue our work supporting families affected by childhood acquired brain injury.

Please help us to continue our work by making a donation today – [CLICK HERE](#) to make a one-off donation or set up a monthly donation.

Thank you – your donation does make a difference.

Document Control	Document ID	22
	Issue Date	April 2009
	Last Reviewed	July 2017
	Next Review due by	July 2019
	Version Number	1.4



Produced by: The Child Brain Injury Trust | Tel: 01869 341075 | info@cbituk.org | www.childbraininjurytrust.org.uk

This information was written in accordance with our Information Production Process based on the principles of the Information Standard.

Registered Charity Number: 1113326 | A charity Registered in Scotland SC 039703 | Registered Company Number: 5738517 | VAT Registration 125 7951 96

ⁱ [Giza CC](#), [Kolb B](#), [Harris NG](#), [Asarnow RF](#), [Prins ML](#). Hitting a moving target: Basic mechanisms of recovery from acquired developmental brain injury. [Dev Neurorehabil](#). 2009;12(5):255-68.

ⁱⁱ <http://www.bist.ca/ask-expert-children-and-brain-injury>