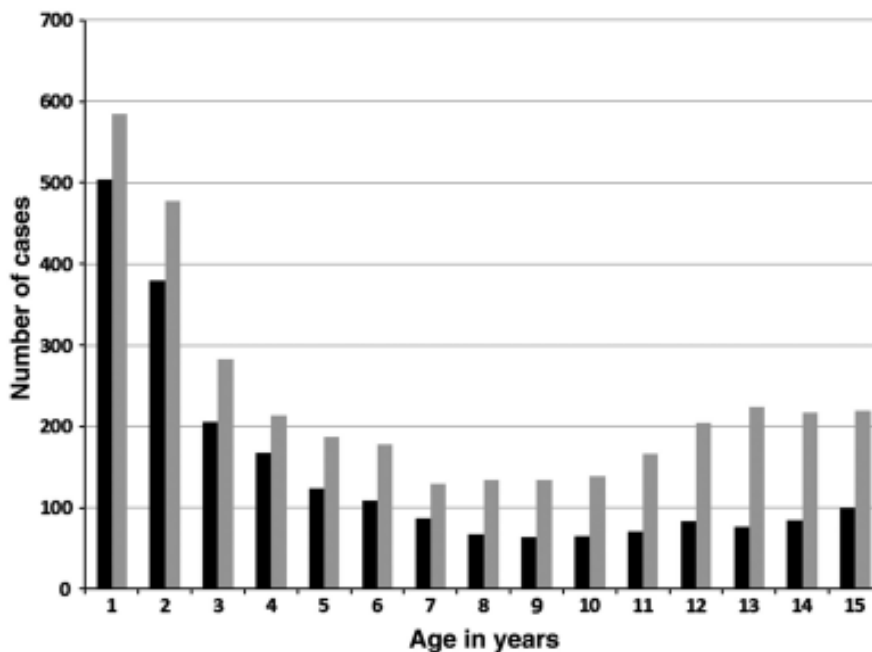


Are you and your team head injury aware?

In 2016 a research study¹ of 5,700 children with head injuries aged 0-14.9 years, showed that 54% of the study participants were under 5 years of age, and that the most common cause of head injury was falls.



L Trefan et al. Arch Dis Child 2016;101:527-532

Other key outcomes from the study were:

- Colliding with each other, running into walls, doors, radiators
 - 12.3% of children included in study
 - Average age was 3.7 years
- Fall from less than 1m
 - 32.1%
 - Average age was 2.1 years
- Fall from higher than 1m
 - 17.6%
 - Average age was also 2.1

Five causes account for 90% of unintentional injury hospital admissions for under 5s, these are

- **choking, suffocation and strangulation**
- **falls**
- **poisoning**
- *burns and scalds*
- **drowning**

All but one of those causes can result in a head/brain injury (also known as an acquired brain injury or ABI)

In one year, Public Health England reported that 39,123 children under 5yrs were admitted to hospital as a result of unintentional injuries. Almost 50% of those injuries were as a result of falls, 18,266 children. Again, highlighting the prevalence of head injury in early years.

As well as the evidence of the high prevalence of head injury in the under 5s, with the advances in both medical science and

neuroscience, more children are now surviving what in the past may have been fatal head injuries.

Therefore it is vital that those working in the early years settings are head injury aware.

Head injury is referred to as the “hidden disability”. Some babies and children may be fine in the immediate aftermath of a bump to the head and for many children, a head injury will have no long-term effects.

However, a small minority of children may go on to have difficulties in the future. This is because brain cells do not repair, once damaged they are gone. Also, the full outcome of an injury may only become apparent as key developmental markers are passed; this is because the human brain does not finish maturing until a person has reached their mid-20s.

The Child Brain Injury Trust is the UK’s leading charity supporting children and young people affected by acquired brain injury (ABI), no matter what the cause.



Because of the high numbers of head injury affecting the under 5s, the charity have launched their Early Years Awareness Project. Early years settings are invited to apply to be a Head Injury Aware Nursery; this project offers CPD approved awareness training on acquired brain injury, and once at least one senior member of the team has completed and passed the online course, the Nursery will receive a range of support resources to help manage head injury and bumps, some examples are shown here, together with a Certificate to confirm they are a Head Injury Aware setting.

Your child bumped their head today. Please be reassured that we did not feel it was serious enough to take them to hospital, but as a Head Injury Aware nursery/school we wanted you to have this information. They received an "Oops, I bumped my head" sticker after the incident, and were very brave.

Your caring
"Head Injury Aware Nursery/Day Care"



Things you shouldn't worry about

Your child may feel some other symptoms over the next few days which should disappear in the next 2 weeks:

- Mild headache
- Tiredness
- Feeling sick (without vomiting)
- Lack of appetite or problems sleeping
- Dizziness, irritability or bad temper
- Problems concentrating or problems with their memory

If you feel very concerned about any of these symptoms in the first few days after their bump, you should take your child to see their GP.

Name: _____
had a bump to the head today __/__/__
at __ am/pm.
The bump happened because _____

As well as bumps to the head, babies and toddlers can also acquire a brain injury as a result of illness (meningitis, encephalitis, hydrocephalus), tumour, stroke, poisoning or non-accidental injury.

Babies and toddlers cannot say exactly how they feel or what is hurting, so they need to ensure responsible adults take appropriate action after an injury or if the child is poorly, on the child's behalf.

The course will cover why training on acquired brain injury is needed, basic brain functions and early years neuro development, what is acquired brain injury and how can it impact development and learning, together with basic understanding of illnesses that can cause brain injury and how to recognise them.

For more information on this ground breaking project and training please go to

<https://childbraininjurytrust.org.uk/events/cbit-early-years-course/>

or email learning@cbituk.org to find out more.

Child Brain Injury Trust
Reg Charity number 1113326

Article written by Louise Wilkinson, Head of Information & Learning.

¹ Epidemiology of children with head injury: a national overview. *L Trethan et al 2016*