

September 2023

## Alabama Head Injury Task Force News



### Survivor Spotlight – Ashlie Combs, Rainbow City, AL

I was injured in 2007 while serving in Iraq in the Army; an incoming mortar round hit inside the military foreign operations base, and the blast threw me into a military vehicle. I was not wearing protective gear and injured my head. I started to experience headaches, ringing in my ears, and nausea when driving, but I didn't realize this might be caused by my injury. After I had left the military, I was in a car accident and hit my head in the exact same spot. I was working as a Veteran Mentor at the Calhoun County Veterans Treatment Court where April Turner from ADRS came to give a presentation on TBI and the new screener. I was already a consumer with VRS (for PTSD, hearing issues, and a learning disability). I was screened through the TBI Program using the Online Brain Injury Screening and Support System (OBISSS), then referred to the Adult TBI Care Coordination program and started working with Lisa Miles, TBI Care Coordinator. I am currently working on my master's degree in clinical rehabilitation counseling and Lisa has been instrumental in helping with my accommodations for school. She has also provided me with so many resources for everyday life, including cognitive remediation skills to help strengthen my brain. She takes her role as care coordinator to heart, and she even took the time to explain head injury in a way that my 13-year-old daughter - who also has a TBI - could understand.

I remember feeling embarrassed, because I stuttered or would zone out, but I also wanted answers. I thought my issues were from getting older or from having ADD. But after getting my results from the TBI screener it finally made sense, and now I could form a plan of action. I appreciate that my rehabilitation has been person-centered, tailored to my needs, and focused on my strengths instead of my injury.

Through my rehab experiences at ADRS, I learned that I am not alone, that there are so many resources available. My hope is to find a way to get TBI information and resources to everyone so anyone with a head injury can have easy access to the tools they need for their journey in recovery.

### 2023 Alabama TBI Summit – Forging Connections: Navigating Traumatic Brain Injury



**2023 ALABAMA TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SUMMIT**

**Thursday, October 26**  
**Marriott Birmingham**  
 Doors open at 7:30 a.m.

LEARN FROM EXPERTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY ON TOPICS INCLUDING:

- The Full Picture: TBI, Behavioral Health, Substance Use, and Suicide
- Connection to Resources that Count: A Statewide Look
- When Traumas Collide: Demystifying the "Miserable Minority" after Mild TBI and Unmasking the Comorbidities that Masquerade as Post-Concussion Syndrome
- The What, the Why, and the How in Resilience, Rehabilitation, and Strategies After TBI
- Alabama TBI Screening, Services, and Supports



Dr. Kim Gorgens  
 Professor, University of Denver  
 Keynote Speaker

CEs applied for:  
 CRC, SW, APA, and ST. Certificate of Attendance available to all attendees.

**REGISTER HERE**



nashia.org/summit-2023      nashia.org/al-tbi-summit-registration-2023



### A Four State Agency Event on Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> in Birmingham!

- *National and Statewide Initiatives* – ADVA, ADRS, ADMH, ADPH, and NASHIA
- *The Full Picture: TBI, Behavioral Health, Substance Use, and Suicide* – Kim Gorgens, PhD, Professor, University of Denver
- *Connection to Resources that Count: A Statewide Look* – AHIF, ViTAL at UA, Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resources Coalition, ADMH Crisis Care Project
- *When Traumas Collide: Demystifying the "Miserable Minority" after Mild TBI and Unmasking the Comorbidities that Masquerade as Post-Concussion Syndrome* – Dr. Anastacia Nichols, Dir. of Cognitive Rehabilitation, Emory University School of Medicine, Director of Neuropsychology, Emory Healthcare Veterans Program
- *The What, the Why, and the How in Resilience, Rehabilitation, and Strategies After TBI* – Dr. Madeline DiPasquale, Clinical Neuropsychologist, Drucker Brain Injury Center – Moss Rehabilitation Institute
- *Alabama TBI Screening, Services, & Supports* – April Turner, State Head Injury Coordinator, ADRS and David White, TBI Grant Coordinator, Alabama TBI Program

Learn more [here](#).

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## Next Task Force Meeting

Thursday, 10am-12pm

December 14, 2023

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## Toll-Free TBI Helpline 1-888-879-4706

The **Registry Helpline** had a total of **151** referrals and/or phone calls through the 3rd quarter of FY23.



**Harmonic Remedies** is owned and founded by Kaitlyn Miller, MT. The name "Harmonic Remedies" came to Kaitlyn after many long days of working on the perfect name to describe her business.

Harmonics are waves and frequencies that are around and inside of us. To be in Harmony is to be made whole. Music Therapy works to help clients feel "whole". Remedies are treatments to help us reach our goals in life. This is what Harmonic Remedies strives to do. Harmonic Remedies was truly formed through hard work with tons of love poured into it and strives to provide high quality services with heart and soul behind them. Learn more [here](#).

The **UAB TBI Model System** published a quick review, in collaboration with the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC) and other TBI Model Systems centers. The review is a summary of the publication entitled, *Crash Risk Following Return to Driving After Moderate-to-Severe TBI: A TBI Model Systems Study*. This study looked at the number of motor vehicle crashes and risk factors of crashes for people after moderate-to-severe TBI. A link to the article can be found [here](#).



**Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF)** Our weekend camp at Camp McDowell is coming up October 6-8 and our Lakeshore Foundation Bright Ideas TBI Camp is September 26-28. Our annual fundraiser, *Beer, Band & BBQ* is scheduled for Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup> from 12:00-5:00 p.m. at Ghost Train Brewing Company in Birmingham. Learn more about AHIF programs and events [here](#).



The **Adult TBI Program (ICBM)** pre-vocational program for adults served **371** caseload consumers and their families through the 3rd quarter of FY23. ICBM provides individual cognitive remediation, counseling, TBI education, and accommodations to transition to community and/or employment. Learn more about the Adult TBI Program [here](#).



Each of the **State of Alabama Independent Living** SAIL Waiver Personal Choices participants now has a Personal Choices counselor who are assisting in the enrollment process for the Personal Choices program as well as ongoing matters regarding budgets, employee/employer relations, vendors, and purchases. Case managers are still making monthly home visits as usual for all other SAIL Waiver services. We expect this to be tremendous service for participants. Learn more about SAIL [here](#).



The **Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS)** PASSAGES Pediatric TBI Care Coordinators have served a total of **368** consumers through the 3rd quarter of FY23 assisting children and youth with transition from hospital to home, community, school and providing information/education on TBI residuals to families and school systems. Learn more about CRS [here](#).



Visit [AlabamaTBI.org](http://AlabamaTBI.org)



The **Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Registry (AHSCIR)** requires hospital trauma TBI records be collected, reviewed, and eligible individuals contacted for needed linkage to crucial services and supports statewide. For the 3rd quarter of FY23, **6,532** new records were received from Alabama Dept. of Public Health and **3,914** individuals were eligible to be contacted to provide information and referral assistance from ADRS, AHIF, and other community agencies.