

March 2023

Alabama Head Injury Task Force News



Survivor Spotlight – Joshua Harmon, Goodwater, AL

I dreamed of becoming an R.N. when I was growing up because I wanted to help people feel better. On December 7, 2016, while I was a student enrolled at Central Alabama Community College, I decided to go meet up with some classmates on a Wednesday night, instead of going to church as I had told my mother I would be attending. That night, at the age of 19, I was hit by a car while walking. Thankfully someone called 9-1-1. I was airlifted to UAB, where I was found to have sustained several life-threatening injuries, intracranial bleeding along with a subdural hematoma, internal bleeding, and numerous fracture. During the surgical repair of the bilateral tibia/fibular fracture, several blood clots dislodged. As a result, I had two left-sided cerebral vascular accidents. I lost my peripheral vision and the ability to speak, eat, walk, and perform all activities of daily living. My biggest struggle was learning to speak without repeating the same phrases over and over.

Rehabilitation began for me when I was transferred home with Kindred Home Health having a daily regimen of PT, OT, and ST. My biggest struggle was, and which is still frustrating at times, communicating verbally while using the accurate wording effectively. Toni, my home health PT assistant, made a difference because she was so kind and patient during our sessions. After seeking further rehabilitation in an inpatient therapy setting at Lakeshore Rehabilitation, I learned to walk better with a walker along with multitasking skills. Upon attending several camps hosted by AHIF, I learned different types of physical exercise which has aided in my recovery. The best act that made the difference in my survival was accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior after I went back to church post-accident. I am more determined now to see Jesus Christ and tell everyone about Him because I was given a second chance. At the end of the day, it does not matter what mistakes you make in life. Always remember that if there is breath in your body, you can overcome every challenge by praying, working hard, and never giving up. My goal is to jog, run, and one day complete my nursing degree.

TBI Grant Updates



State Head Injury Coordinator, April Turner, Project Coordinator, David White and Project Evaluator, Dr. Despina Stavrinou, met with the Commissioner of the AL Department of Mental Health (ADMH), Kimberly Boswell and the ADMH/ADRS TBI Leadership Team this quarter to debut the Online Brain Injury Screening Services Support Tool (OBISSS) to all Leadership and to begin coordinating and implementing across all ADMH Programs. The OBISSS can be found at www.NASHIA.org/OBISSS (Password: AL23).



The TBI Federal Grant Team met with ALL 3 State Psych Hospitals- Bryce, Taylor Harden and Harper Center including Psychiatrists, Psychologists and Directors to provide education on the OBISSS, TBI Education and discuss OBISSS implementation within new admissions and electronic health records.



The TBI Federal Grant Team also presented to Hospital Behavioral Health/Psych Unit Directors at the Alabama Hospital Association's quarterly meeting. Discussion on possible implementation of the OBISSS into each hospital's electronic health records began.

2022-23 AHITF Meetings

Thursdays, 10am-12pm
June 8, 2023 and September 21, 2023

March is TBI Awareness Month!



Visit AlabamaTBI.org each day during the month of March to add new resources to your TBI toolkit.

TBI Core Comp 2023

The ADRS TBI Program held a two-day TBI Core Competency Training at ADRS Lakeshore for all ADRS TBI Pediatric and Adult Care Coordinators and Alabama Head Injury Foundation staff. Topics included Alabama Crisis Centers, TBI & Vision, Alabama Probate Courts, Neuropsychiatric Rehabilitation Network, ADRS Lakeshore Services, Lifespan Respite & Virtual Empathy Training, The Power of Emotional Intelligence, and the New Online Brain Injury Services and Support System (OBISSS).



Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services TBI Grant Staff, Adult TBI Care Coordinators, Pediatric TBI Care Coordinators, and Alabama Head Injury Foundation Staff



The Is-Able Center

The **Is-Able Center** provides services that encourage, educate, and empower. Their goal is to enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities, their loved ones, and caregivers. Services include social development, support groups, accessible computer labs, employment services and life skills/health & wellness classes. Learn more [here](#).



AHIF
Alabama Head Injury Foundation

Alabama Head Injury Foundation Recreational

Camps have been scheduled for the following dates:

Camp ASCCA Weekend TBI Camp – March 10–12

Camp ASCCA Week-Long Camp – July 30–August 4

Camp McDowell Weekend Camp – October 6–8

AHIF's Therapeutic Bright Ideas Camps have been scheduled for this summer and fall:

Auburn/Tuskegee/Alabama State Universities Bright Ideas TBI Camp – June 13–15

Samford University Bright Ideas TBI Camp – June 20–22

University of South Alabama Bright Ideas TBI Camp – June 27–29

University of Alabama Bright Ideas TBI Camp – July 25–27

UAB/Montevallo/Jeff State Bright Ideas TBI Camp – September 5–7 (Pending)

With the addition of our first Children's BIC at the University of South Alabama scheduled for the week of July 10th. Learn more [here](#).

Toll-Free TBI Helpline

1-888-879-4706

The **Registry Helpline** had a total of **50** referrals and/or phone calls through the 1st quarter of FY23.



Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program

The *Client Assistance Program (CAP)*, the state's legal service for VR consumers, has moved to join ADAP! The CAP is a federally funded program that provides information, advice, and advocacy to people with disabilities who are applying for or receiving services provided by ADRS, the state's Independent Living Centers, and other programs funded by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Learn more [here](#).



The **Adult TBI Program (ICBM)** pre-vocational program for adults served **120** caseload consumers and their families through the 1st 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](#).

Children's Rehabilitation Services

The PASSAGES Pediatric TBI Care Coordinators has served a total of **246** consumers through the 1st 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

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 1st quarter of FY23, **1,297** new records were received from Alabama Dept. of Public Health and **701** individuals were eligible to be contacted to provide information and referral assistance from ADRS, AHIF, and other community agencies.