

What Coworkers Need to Know About Traumatic Brain Injury

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) may happen to any person of any age. People who would have died from their injury only a few years ago are being saved by medical advances. However, these injuries commonly result in permanent damage to the brain. The resulting limitations create many challenges for the person to overcome, including going to work after sustaining a TBI.

Functions that may be affected by TBI include, but are not limited to:

- Learning
- Social skills
- Motor and physical skills
- Personality and emotions
- Attention and concentration
- Mental and physical stamina
- Judgment and problem solving
- Academic skills, e.g., reading, math
- Short-term memory
- Language skills, e.g., comprehension, expression
- Sensory skills, e.g., vision, hearing

It is important for anyone who works with someone with a TBI to understand that TBI is *not* the same as mental retardation or mental illness. There are no medications or other medical treatments that can “fix” someone who has a TBI. Support from family, friends, and coworkers along with successes in the home, at the job and in the community is the best medicine.

Our goal is to assist people who have a TBI be successful in employment. While some survivors of TBI will relearn their skills and abilities, others must adjust to a new way of life. By working together with consumers, families, coworkers and employers, success after TBI *is* possible. People across the country are still capable and contributing members of society after having a TBI.

**For more information about TBI in the workplace, please contact:
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services**