

December 2023

Alabama Head Injury Task Force News



Zachary with Mia

Survivor Spotlight – Zachary Johnson, Chelsea, AL

I was in a car accident on May 10, 2022, and sustained a TBI. I was in a work truck and hit head on with an RV. I had numerous broken bones on the left side of my body. The RV's mirror pierced through my shoulder causing nerves to tear away from my spinal cord. During surgery, a fat emboli went to my brain causing micro strokes. I was in Neuro Intensive Care at UAB Hospital in Birmingham for 16 days. My parents were given a list of nursing homes because they never thought I would ever be the same again. But my parents didn't accept this news and knew God had a bigger plan.

I was transferred to Shepherd Center in Atlanta, GA on June 1, 2022. I was unable to walk, eat, hold my body up, or even have a cognitive thought. I was on the in-patient Acute Brain Injury floor and was in a very regimented therapy program. I had physical, occupational, speech, recreational, and Neuro therapy each day except Sunday. After completing 8 weeks of inpatient therapy, I moved to Shepherd Pathways, an outpatient program, and continued daily therapies for 8 weeks.

Once I was released, I returned home and started therapy at Spain Rehab in Birmingham for several more weeks. I have had 6 surgeries and will have surgery in February to gain movement in my arm. I am currently at the end my Vocational Rehab, which has helped me a lot. I have been released to return to work (two days a week) and to drive again.

I knew I had to trust God through my journey. I knew I could never give up. I have been happy with all my accomplishments, but walking again was the best victory that I had. I knew when I was able to walk, that I could conquer the rest, and I have. I have all my cognitive ability is back and most of my memory back. I have learned to completely trust God and that prayer works. I learned to accept help from others and that therapy works, it is not a waste of time. Believe in yourself and your therapist. Know each day is a victory even if it is small. I always told myself, "Keep going, Zach, it's hard, but you can do it!"



**2023 ALABAMA
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY
SUMMIT**



Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES

Alabama Department
of Mental Health

The 2023 Alabama Traumatic Brain Injury Summit was a Huge Success!

We appreciate all who attended the Alabama TBI Summit in October. The Summit provided the opportunity for attendees to acquire professional training, collaborate, network, and share with multiple partners. Speakers included Dr. Kim Gorgens (University of Denver), Dr. Anastacia Nichols (Emory University School of Medicine, Emory Healthcare Veterans Program), Dr. Madeline DiPasquale (Drucker Brain Injury Center – Moss Rehabilitation Institute), as well as leaders from the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, VitAL at

UA, the Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resources Coalition, and the ADMH Crisis Care Project. This event was co-sponsored by ADRS, ADVA, ADMH, and ADPH who shared information for professionals, advocates, and individuals with lived TBI experience. At the end of the day, a call to action was issued to forge the connections learned to increase partnerships around the state to assist individuals with brain injuries in navigating community supports thus increasing resilience and self-advocacy.

2023-24 Task Force Meetings

Thursday, 10am-12pm

March 14, June 13, September 5



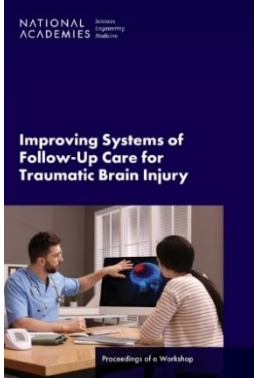
Visit AlabamaTBI.org



ADRS TBI Program and TBI Grant Staff members posing for a picture at the TBI Summit



One Roof is a HUD Continuum of Care that serves Jefferson, St. Clair, and Shelby Counties. One Roof operates and oversees the Coordinated Entry (CE) program for Central Alabama. Coordinated Entry is a HUD-mandated program designed to provide easy access to homeless services, quickly assess the vulnerabilities of persons seeking assistance, prioritize persons with the highest needs and vulnerabilities, and appropriately refer individuals and families to service provider agencies within the community. The CE program utilizes the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to measure individuals' and families' vulnerability to housing instability and continued homelessness. Learn more about [One Roof](#).



Improving Systems of Follow-up Care for Traumatic Brain Injury

The National Academies Forum on Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) hosted a hybrid public workshop in May 2023 to explore what is needed to better serve adult TBI patients who require follow-up care in support of their recovery at home. The ADRS TBI Programs was among the speakers invited to discuss when and how to follow up with less-severe TBI patients who have been discharged to their homes after a brief period of acute care, and the varied needs, issues, and considerations that relate to outpatient care and at-home symptom management during the approximately 6-month period following injury. ADRS's TBI Program was featured in a publication created to summarize the presentation and discussion of the workshop. [Click for more info about the publication.](#)



Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF) AHIF welcomes you to any of our 4 Zoom support group meetings each week. We have a Mindfulness Monday session Mondays at 2 pm, a Zoom Yoga session Tuesdays at 11 am, and recreational support groups every Tuesday & Thursday at 1 pm. To be added to the invite list, please email Nicole Asbill at nasbill@ahif.org. AHIF is working to finalize dates for its Recreational TBI Camps in 2023...with a weekend camp and week-long camp at Camp ASCCA and a weekend camp at Camp McDowell. If you are interested in a camp application, please email Chandraia Whitted, AHIF Camp Coordinator, at cwhitted@ahif.org. Learn more about [AHIF](#).

2024 TBI Camps in Alabama

Alabama District Pilot International TBI Camp – [April 19-21](#)
 Open Registration: January 1 Deadline: March 15

[AHIF Recreational Camps and Therapy-based Camps](#)
 Open Registration: ~January 1 Deadline: TBA

Joni & Friends Alabama Family Retreats – [June 17-21](#) and [June 24-28](#)
 Open Registration: TBA Deadline: March 31



Toll-Free TBI Helpline
1-888-879-4706
 The Registry Helpline had a total of 207 referrals and/or phone calls through the 4th quarter of FY23.



The **Adult TBI Program (ICBM)** pre-vocational program for adults served **472** caseload consumers and their families through the 4th 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](#).



The **Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS)** PASSAGES Pediatric TBI Care Coordinators have served a total of **394** consumers through the 4th 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](#).

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 4th quarter of FY23, **8,303** new records were received from Alabama Dept. of Public Health and **4,171** individuals were eligible to be contacted to provide information and referral assistance from ADRS, AHIF, and other community agencies.