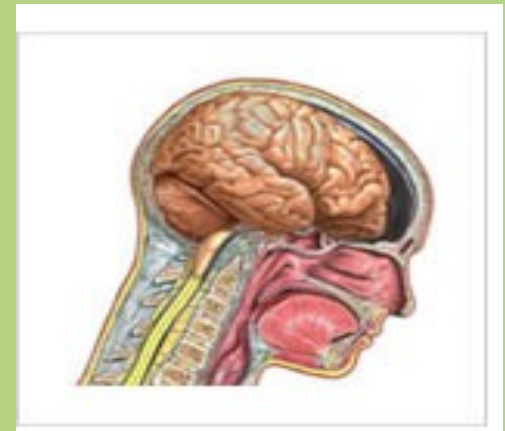


*Obtaining Special Education Services
for Students with
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)*



1800 N. Charles Street; Suite 400
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410.727.6352 or 1.800.233.7201
www.mdclaw.org

Maryland Disability Law Center

*Advocating to Improve the Lives
of People with Disabilities*

January 2011

WHAT IS TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY?

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is caused by a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. Common causes of TBI include motor vehicle and bicycle accidents, falls, sport injuries, and assault. The severity of TBI ranges from mild to severe. A mild brain injury can result in a significant disability.

Because the effect of TBI on one's life may not be readily apparent, TBI is known as the "silent epidemic" or the "invisible epidemic." The long-term effects of TBI can be serious, leading to disabilities impacting cognitive, emotional, sensory, and motor impairments. The disabilities arising from TBI can impact an individual's education, work, and relationships.

IMPACT OF TBI ON LEGAL RIGHTS

Individuals with TBI face many legal issues such as lack of appropriate supports and services in school, lack of or inadequate insurance coverage, denial of rehabilitative treatment, inadequate funding for public services, and inappropriate placement in a nursing facility or psychiatric institution.

NOTES

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Use this page to record names and phone numbers for people involved in providing services for your child:

POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF TBI IN DAILY LIVING

- Seizures
- Fatigue
- Functional changes affecting:
 1. Cognition such as short- and long-term memory, the learning process, problem-solving, and reasoning;
 2. Language such as communication, expression, and understanding;
 3. Senses such as taste, touch, and smell;
 4. Emotions such as depression, anxiety, personality changes, aggression, impulse control, and social inappropriateness.

WHAT IS MDLC?

Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC), a private, nonprofit legal advocacy organization, is the Protection and Advocacy agency for Maryland, mandated to advocate for people with disabilities. MDLC works to create a just and inclusive society by advancing the legal rights of people with disabilities, expanding opportunities to participate fully in all aspects of community life, and ensuring freedom from abuse and neglect.

HOW CAN MDLC HELP?

* MDLC can address educational issues for children with TBI, including:

- Breaking down the systemic barriers that prevent more students from being educated appropriately in their neighborhood schools;
- Advocating for students who need appropriate assistive technology services and devices in order to receive a free and appropriate public education or appropriate early intervention services;
- Advocating for students who are inappropriately disciplined by school staff, including suspension, expulsion, restraint, and seclusion; and
- Advocating for students with disabilities involved in the juvenile justice system to ensure that they receive appropriate special education services.

* MDLC can address Medicaid issues for children and adults with TBI, including:

- Handling cases for individuals on Maryland Medical Assistance or Waiver Programs who have been denied healthcare or covered services, or where such services have been delayed.

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Outreach and trainings on issues such as special education and covered Medicaid services for families and professionals about legal rights and processes;
- Technical assistance;
- Information and referral services;
- Short-term assistance; and
- Individual case representation.

For questions or requests related to special education services for students with TBI, please contact our Special Education Intake Department at (410) 727-6352, ext. 0.

For questions or requests relating to all other legal issues, contact the General Intake Department at (410) 727-6352, ext. 0.

Please call from 10 A.M. to 12 P.M., Monday through Friday.