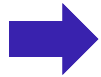


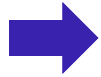
# Brain Injury and Minority Health



**“The residents of Tennessee experience poorer life expectancy than the residents of most other states. Additionally, there are many significant differences in this outcome across racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic lines within Tennessee.”<sup>1</sup>**



**People in racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to sustain a TBI and more likely to have worse outcomes. Reasons for higher rates of TBI include: Motor vehicle accidents, Substance Use, Suicide and Domestic Violence.**



**In Tennessee, Hispanics have the highest proportion of work-related Traumatic Brain Injuries.**



**Minorities are more likely to drop out of long-term studies for a variety of reasons. They are also less likely to receive follow-up care and rehabilitation related to a lack of insurance.<sup>2</sup>**

**Native American & Alaskan Natives: highest rate of TBI & fatality from TBI**

## BEST PRACTICE

**Care providers working with people in racial & ethnic minorities should:**

- **SCREEN** for prior history of Brain Injury
- **ASSESS** Cognitive & Functional Impairment
- **EDUCATE** staff on Brain Injury
- **EDUCATE** the person about their Brain Injury
- **PROVIDE** and **TEACH** Accommodations
- **CONNECT** person served with Community Resources



## COMMON PROBLEMS

**After Brain Injury, we often see problems with:**

- Attention, memory and new learning
- Slowed speed of processing
- Organization, problem solving & impulsivity
- Irritability, frustration & agitation
- Balance, dizziness & headaches
- Poor awareness of deficits & difficulties
- Difficulty being flexible, poor self-monitoring

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

**Care providers working with people in racial & ethnic minorities may see:**

- Looking uninterested because they cannot pay attention
- Appearance of defiance because they cannot remember the rules
- Slow to follow directions because they cannot process quickly
- Getting into fights because of irritability, anger and impulsivity
- Falling, bumping into things, often getting hurt
- Difficulty re-entering community because of cognitive changes
- Gets stuck on an idea or a way of doing something, does not recognize mistakes

**Black & Hispanic children are more likely to be impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) than White & Asian children. Cognitive & behavioral changes that ACEs can produce can look similar to brain injury. A brain healthy lifestyle will help.**

# Common Accommodations for Brain Injury Challenges

Here are some common and simple accommodations:

- Working for shorter periods of time
- Getting rid of distractions around you, like noise or movement
- Taking notes (on paper, in a notebook, on a phone or computer)
- Using a phone to set timers to remember appointments
- Repeating information to the person
- Slowing down when talking; giving them more time to respond
- Giving the person a list of house rules, written directions, or pictures to help them understand and remember
- Coaching the person with the injury to “Stop, think and plan” then act
- Coaching the person to take deep breaths when feeling angry or anxious



Take Note

## Tools for Best Practice



### Brain Injury Screening Resources:

- **NASHIA's OBISSS:** <https://www.nashia.org/obissprogram> - The OBISSS is highly recommended. It is made up of the OSU screening tool, a Symptoms Questionnaire and Strategies. It can be used electronically, on a computer, phone or ipad. It can be self-administered.
- **OSU TBI Identification Method:** <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/neurological-institute/neuroscience-research-institute/research-centers/ohio-valley-center-for-brain-injury-prevention-and-rehabilitation/osu-tbi-id>

**Brain Links' Strategies & Accommodations Tool:** <https://www.tndisability.org/rehabilitation>

### Symptom Questionnaire and Cognitive Strategies:

- Adult: [bit.ly/3FLkz0V](https://bit.ly/3FLkz0V)
- Juvenile: [bit.ly/4iS2bSC](https://bit.ly/4iS2bSC)

## Tennessee Resources

**Brain Links' Website** with many resources:  
[tndisability.org/brain](https://tndisability.org/brain)

**Brain Links' Toolkits** (for Service Professionals and Survivors): <https://www.tndisability.org/brain-toolkits>

**TN Department of Health TBI Program:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/3v5jrdt3>



**Tennessee Brighter Futures' Resource Pages & Training for Brain Injury:**

<https://www.tndisability.org/tbf-brain-injury>



**Resource Pages & Training for Minority Health:**

<https://www.tndisability.org/tbf-social-determinants-health>

**TN Brighter Futures is organized and facilitated by Brain Links through a contract from the TN Department of Health TBI Program.**



Minority Health Resources

### References:

1. Chavez-Lindell, T., Udeh, Ijeoma, et al. (2024). Health Disparities in Tennessee. The Tennessee Department of Health Disparities Elimination. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/program-areas/division-of-health-disparities-elimination/documents/HD\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_06122024.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/program-areas/division-of-health-disparities-elimination/documents/HD_Report_FINAL_06122024.pdf)
2. Sander, A.M., Lequeria, A.H. et al. (2018). Race/Ethnicity and Retention in TBI Outcomes Research: A TBI Model Systems National Database Study. JHTR. Jul-Aug;33(4):219-227. doi:10.1097/HTR.0000000000000395



<https://www.tndisability.org/brain>  
@BrainLinksTN

