The Misunderstood Victim
Assisting those with an ABI

Nils Rosenbaum, MD & Det. Matthew Tinney
Objectives

- What is an ABI
- What to expect with an ABI
- Communication tips and techniques
- Techniques to avoid victimization
- Tips for trauma informed care
What is an ABI?

- An acquired brain injury is an injury to the brain that has occurred after birth, which is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma.
Examples of an ABI

- Stroke
- Near drowning
- Hypoxic or anoxic brain injury
- Tumor
- Neurotoxins
- Trauma
- Lightening strike
What is TBI?

- TBI is defined as an alteration in brain function, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by an external force.
Examples of a TBI

- Fall
- Motor vehicle crash
- Fighting
- Explosive Percussions
- Sports
- Pedestrian
- Violence
Falls: 35.2%
Unknown/ Other: 21%
Motor Vehicle: 17.3%
Struck by/ Against: 16.5%
Assault: 10%

Centers for Disease Control and Injury Prevention Center
Brain injury can result in a range of outcomes:
- 52,000 die;
- 275,000 are hospitalized; and
- 1,365,000 are treated and released from an emergency department.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Injury Prevention
Phineas Gage
1823-1860
Phineas Gage

- Able to speak minutes after accident
- Able to walk
- Then long recovery
“He is fitful, irreverent, indulging at times in the grossest profanity (which was not previously his custom)…capricious and vacillating…Previous to his injury he possessed a well-balanced mind”

John Harlow, MD
Lobotomy

- The Nobel Prize for Medicine of 1949 was awarded to Antonio Egas Moniz for the discovery of lobotomy.
- Rosemary Kennedy
Common Misconceptions about TBI

“The truth is rarely pure and simple”
Myth one

- Brain injury can be detected immediately
Myth 2

- All improvement after serious injury must be made within the first year, or not at all.
Myth 3

- “They’ll be good as new!”
Myth 4

- Brain injured people have no control over their behavior
Myth 5

- A person wakes up from a coma raring to go
Myth 6

- Brain injury leads to Alzheimer’s or brain tumor
What to Expect with an ABI

- Personal Symptoms- What they notice
  - Headache
  - Concentration
  - Frustration
  - Isolation
  - Feeling incompetent
  - Anger
  - Depression
  - Restricted activities
  - Memory problems
What to Expect with an ABI

- Provider Signs- What you will see
  - Scars
  - Word finding difficulty/Rambling
  - Frustration
  - Poor social judgment
  - Disorganized
  - Anger
  - Social Viscosity
  - Inappropriate comments/behaviors
  - Perseveration
Social Communication Troubles

- Taking turns in conversation
- Maintaining topic of conversation
- Using an appropriate tone of voice
- Interpreting subtleties of conversation (i.e. Sarcasm vs serious statement)
- Responding to facial expression and body language
- Keeping up with others in a fast pace conversations
- Multiple conversation sources
Communication tips for working with People with TBI's

- People with TBI may…
  - Show Confusion
  - Have a poor memory
  - Ramble
  - Go off subject
  - Be socially inappropriate
- Don’t take these behaviors personally.
- Don’t take them as a sign of disrespect.
- Don’t misread them as a lack of desire for help.
- Remain Clam
- Repeat yourself
- Patience and understanding will go a long way
- One on one conversations
- 7 Active Listening Skills
Seven Active Listening Skills
Seven Active Listening Skills

- Reflective/Mirroring
- Open Ended Questions
- Minimal Encouragers
- Emotion Labeling
- Paraphrasing
- I Statements
- Effective Pauses
My Kids not listening so well ...
Open Ended Question Exercise
Two Question
Words that can't be answered with a yes or no ...

WHaT?

- What?
- How?
- And Tell me more
  - Use why with caution (how come is less accusatory)
Interview person to your left about their New Orleans Experience

- Try only to use open ended questions.
- Person being interviewed please answer “yes/no” questions clearly, and say only “YES!” or “NO!”
Seven Active Listening Skills

- Reflective/Mirroring
- Open Ended Questions
- Minimal Encouragers
- **Emotion Labeling**
- Paraphrasing
- I Statements
- Effective Pauses
Role Playing

- Emotion Labeling
- Turn to the person next to you
- One person turn back to presentation
- Guess the emotion you see on their face
Surprised
Angry
Fear
Shame
Disgust
Happy
Sad
Flirty
Trauma Informed Care
Trauma Informed Care

- Trauma-informed care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives.
Recognizing Trauma

- History of trauma
- Re-experiencing
- Hyper-vigilance
- Avoidance and numbing
Acknowledging Trauma

- Validate
- Normalize
- Avoid “it’s not your fault”
- Set up physical space
- Flow of services
Reducing Victimization

- Reduce distractions
- Use short term goals
- Offer assistance with forms
- Don’t over insist
- Treat adults as adults
- Offer/Carry pocket Brain Injury Card
Uncovering TBI History
Tips for History

- H- Were you hit in the head?
- E- Did you seek emergency room treatment?
- L- Did you lose consciousness?
- P- Are you having memory and concentration problems?
- S- Did you experience sickness or any other physical problems following the injury?
Tips for History

- What was the extent of your injury?
- Did anyone try to strangle or suffocate you?
- Did anyone shake you?
- Was your head slammed into an object?
- Did you fall and hit your head?
- Have you noticed any changes within yourself as a result of the crime?
Exercise  Role Play
Role Play

- One person will try to explain to the person living with TBI, the various ways to cook eggs.
Role Play

- The first person will try to explain to the second person at least five ways to prepare eggs, and then will try to explain the various techniques involved with each:
  - Fried,
  - Scrambled,
  - Poached,
  - Soft Boiled,
  - Hard Boiled,
  - Omelet
For the person explaining about the eggs

- Stay on the subject, it’s your job to explain the various ways to make eggs.
- Turn to the person sitting behind you
- The other person look at the screen and try to follow the rules listed. The person being interviewed will have symptoms of TBI, and the screen will prompt certain behaviors for you to act out.
Begin the cooking
Interrupt ...

- WITHOUT ASKING QUESTIONS!!!
- Make random comments.
- Interrupt at least once every fifteen to twenty seconds.
Get angry when you hear about anything that can get hot or burn.
Continually try to change the subject from eggs to BAKING CAKES
SWITCH ROLES and the new group should now look at the screen. Pick up where you left off in conversation about eggs, with new roles.
Begin the cooking
Use Foul language – Darn, Damn, Fuck, Shit … you get the idea.
Get angry when you hear the word “Egg”
NOW SAY NOTHING

Look blankly at the person.
The Misunderstood Victim – Questions?