



Let's Talk

Brain Injury in Children

“ My daughter Tanya fell off her bicycle and hit her head. She went to the emergency room, but they said she didn't need to stay in the hospital. Since then she has complained about headaches and is having trouble concentrating. Her grades are falling. She also has started to have problems with her friends. ”

—Regina

Has Your Child Had a Brain Injury?

A brain injury, also called traumatic brain injury, or TBI, can cause many different problems. Even a mild brain injury like a concussion can cause short-term problems.

Common causes of TBI in children include falls, sports injuries, and car and bike accidents. Your child may look the same, but his brain may not work as well as it did before. He may:

- Have problems paying attention or remembering things
- Have trouble doing things that used to be easy for him
- Have problems talking, reading, and writing
- Get frustrated or angry more easily
- Not be able to chew and swallow as well

Other professionals—such as doctors, psychologists, and therapists—may also work with your child. You and your child's teachers are an important part of the team. Letting everyone know how your child is doing helps the team know what to do next.

How Can a Speech-Language Pathologist Help?

Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, work with people who have speech, language, thinking, and swallowing problems. SLPs work in schools, hospitals, and clinics, and can even come to your home.

The SLP will find out what kinds of problems your child is having. Your SLP will test how well she pays attention, remembers, and solves problems. The SLP will also test her speech, understanding, reading, and writing. If your child is having trouble chewing or swallowing, the SLP can help her eat more safely.

Fast facts

- People with brain injuries can have problems with thinking, talking, and swallowing.
- Brain injuries can range from mild to very severe.
- Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, can help treat problems from brain injury.



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Your child's SLP can find ways to help her do better at school and at home.

How Can an SLP Help My Child With a Mild Brain Injury?

Even a mild brain injury can cause problems. While your child is healing, the SLP can help by:

- Making a schedule to give your child breaks during the day
- Working on ways to do schoolwork in smaller chunks
- Explaining to you and his teachers how to help him
- Helping your child feel less frustrated or discouraged

What if the Brain Injury Is More Serious?

Your SLP can help your child make the most of what she can do. The SLP will work with her on things that are hard to do and will help her find ways to be more successful. This can include:

- Practicing language and thinking skills
- Organizing and writing down things she needs to remember
- Using a daily schedule
- Learning how to pace herself
- Knowing how to control her behavior

“Tanya’s SLP worked with her on how to break her schoolwork into smaller pieces so she could concentrate. She helped Tanya find ways to remember her assignments and get them done on time. We asked her SLP to talk with Tanya’s teacher so he would understand what would help Tanya. She’s doing so much better now.”

—Regina

Brain injury can change your child’s life. SLPs can help.

To learn more about brain injury or to find an SLP near you who has been certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), visit www.asha.org or call 800-638-8255 or (TTY) 301-296-5650.

My SLP’s name is

Appointment

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American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
and