



Inside This Issue

- ✓ What Does a Pediatric Case Manager Do?
- ✓ Meet Sharice Hawthorne, Pediatric Case Manager
- ✓ Watch & Share: Brain Injury Education Series

Our free services support survivors of brain injury wherever they are on their journey. Most importantly, we count on you to connect those impacted by brain injury to our free services and programs by making a referral. Your support is invaluable in helping us reach individuals and families who can benefit from our resources.



Resources & In-Service Trainings Available



We have brochures & flyers available for you to share with your community.

Brain Injury Services is available to provide engaging, informative in-service trainings tailored to your team's needs. Our experienced staff delivers engaging, interactive presentations tailored to your organization's needs. Topics include an overview of Brain Injury Services and our programs, brain injury education, caregiver stress and self-care, stress management, grief and loss, and the relationship between brain injury and mental health. We also offer prevention-focused presentations on topics such as domestic violence and abusive head trauma (formerly known as shaken baby syndrome). Each training is designed to be interactive, practical, and directly applicable to the populations you serve.

To request resources or in-service training, contact Katy Schnitger at 703-451-8881 x 221 or kschnitger@braininjurysvcs.org

What Does a Pediatric Case Manager Do?

A Pediatric Case Manager at Brain Injury Services serves as a care coordinator and advocate for children and adolescents with brain injury, from 30 days old through age 18 or high school graduation. Pediatric Case Managers partner with children and their families, schools, healthcare providers, and community organizations to identify each child's unique needs and help ensure the right supports are in place.

Pediatric Case Managers assess a child's strengths, challenges, and needs; work with the child and family to develop individualized goals and plans; connect families with appropriate services and community resources; and collaborate with schools to promote understanding of how brain injury may affect learning, behavior, communication, and participation. Through ongoing coordination and support, Pediatric Case Management helps families navigate the often complex journey of living with a brain injury.

When to Refer a Child to Brain Injury Services

Consider referring a child or adolescent to Brain Injury Services when a brain injury is affecting—or may be affecting—their ability to function successfully at home, at school, or in the community.

A referral may be appropriate when a child or family is experiencing:

- Changes in learning, memory, attention, or executive functioning
- Behavioral, emotional, or social changes following a brain injury
- Difficulty returning to or succeeding in school
- Challenges with daily routines, independence, or participation in activities
- A need for school advocacy, accommodations, or additional educational support
- Difficulty identifying or accessing appropriate community resources and services
- New or changing needs as the child grows and developmental expectations increase

Because the effects of a childhood brain injury can emerge or change over time, families may benefit from support even when the injury occurred years earlier.

Brain Injury Tip: Behavior Is Communication

A brain injury can affect the brain regions responsible for emotional regulation, impulse control, attention, communication, and information processing. As a result, changes in behavior may be one of the ways a child's brain injury becomes visible at home, at school, or in the community.

Frustration, irritability, withdrawal, or emotional outbursts may signal that a child is overwhelmed, fatigued, having difficulty processing information, or struggling to communicate what they need.

Try this:

When emotions are running high, reduce demands and distractions, use clear and simple language, and allow extra time for the child to process and respond. Focus on helping the child regulate before addressing the behavior.

Remember:

Behavior changes after a brain injury may reflect an underlying cognitive, emotional, or communication challenge. Looking at what the behavior communicates can help identify strategies and supports that better meet the child's needs.

Supporting Students at School

An important role of a Pediatric Case Manager is helping children and families navigate the school-based educational planning process. Pediatric Case Managers can support families in developing a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) in collaboration with the school.

Support may include helping families prepare for meetings, understand and ask questions about the process, advocate for appropriate accommodations and services, and attending 504 Plan and IEP meetings alongside families. The goal is to help ensure that each child's brain injury-related needs are understood and appropriately supported at school.



Collaborating with our ComPASS Team

Pediatric Case Managers can also collaborate with Brain Injury Services' Community Participation and Skill-building Services (ComPASS) program, which provides brain-injury-skilled support services to help children and adolescents address challenges after a brain injury. Together, they can identify practical strategies and tools that support a student's independence and success at school, at home, and in the community.

ComPASS Tip:

After a brain injury, students may have difficulty with organization, memory, planning, or keeping track of assignments. ComPASS can help students and their families identify tools and strategies that work for their individual needs. For example, a student might use Google Keep to organize notes, create reminders and checklists, and keep important information accessible across devices.

Meet Sharice Hawthorne, Pediatric Case Manager



Brain Injury Services is pleased to introduce Sharice Hawthorne, Pediatric and Adult Case Manager. Sharice brings experience working with adolescents, college students, and veterans throughout her career.

Before joining BIS, Sharice provided clinical case management to adolescents in a residential treatment setting, where she collaborated with clients on individualized goals and supported them through transitions to continuing care.

We are excited to have Sharice on the BIS team and for our referral partners to get to know her as she supports individuals and families living with brain injury.



Brain Injury Education Course

Survivors • Caregivers • Family Members • Professionals

Watch and share our 3-Part Brain Injury Education Series. This educational webinar series is designed to provide a better understanding of brain injury, the recovery process, and the programs and services available through Brain Injury Services.

Whether you are a survivor, family member, caregiver, healthcare professional, or community partner, these sessions offer valuable information, practical resources, and opportunities to learn from brain injury specialists.

Brain Injury 101: An Introductory Course on the Basics of Brain Injury

- Learn the major functions of the brain and basic brain anatomy
- Learn fundamental brain injury terminology
- Understand common symptoms and treatment approaches
- Explore how to better self-advocate and identify relevant goals

Brain Injury 102: Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Support Strategies

- Learn about the science of brain injury recovery (neuroplasticity, cognitive reserve, growth mindset)
- Explore holistic wellness strategies to support physical, cognitive, emotional, and social recovery

Brain Injury 103: The Client Experience at Brain Injury Services

- Understand the typical journey a client takes when entering services at Brain Injury Services
- Learn how an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) is developed in collaboration with the client
- Explore the core programs and supports available through Brain Injury Services
- Identify key factors that contribute to successful recovery and participation in services

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbYnQl8Qxpn8&si=9P5qp2y6M1IXHAEY>

Our Referral & Intake Process

Who is eligible for services?

- ✓ Have documented evidence of an acquired, non-degenerative brain injury which occurred at least 30 days after birth.
- ✓ Be willing to participate in recommended substance use or mental health evaluations if clinically indicated
- ✓ Have legal status in the United States including but not limited to, student visa, work authorization, Green Card, or citizenship
- ✓ Reside in our service area
Counties: Arlington, Caroline, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, King George, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren.
Cities: Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, Fredericksburg, and Winchester.



Make the Referral

Fax the Referral Form and supporting documentation of an acquired brain injury to 703-451-8820.

What happens next?

Our Intake Case Manager reviews each referral and contacts the individual to discuss available programs, services, and resources.

Please allow approximately two weeks for follow-up. If a client reports they have not received follow-up, referral partners are encouraged to call BIS.

Tips for effective referrals:

Before Referring,

Please Confirm the Individual:

- ✓ Is aware of and agrees to the referral
- ✓ Has a general understanding of services
- ✓ Has expressed interest in participating in services

Include:

- ✓ The purpose of the referral (e.g., benefits assistance, transportation resources, employment services, support groups)
- ✓ Relevant background information such as memory challenges, housing instability, communication barriers, or caregiver concerns
- ✓ Medical records or supporting documentation of an acquired brain injury



REFERRAL FORM

Thank you for choosing to refer to Brain Injury Services.

To start the referral process, please complete this form and fax it directly to 703-451-8820.

- Include documented evidence of an acquired, non-degenerative brain injury that occurred at least 30 days after birth.
- For help making a referral, call (703) 451-8881.

Date	From
No. of pages	Phone
	Fax

PATIENT INFORMATION

Name of patient			
DOB			
Phone			
Email			
Address	City	Virginia	Zip
US Veteran	Yes	No	

PARENT/CAREGIVER INFORMATION

Name of Parent or Caregiver
Phone
Email

REFERRAL REQUEST INFORMATION

Diagnosis/ICD-9/10
Reason for referral

REFERRING INFORMATION

Referring name	Job Title	
Employer	Department/Divison	
Email	Phone	
Address		
City	State	Zip