BRAIN INJURY SERVICES

Connections

UNDERSTAND • SUPPORT • SHARE

December

Our monthly Connections newsletter with details about upcoming learning and social opportunities for clients and their loved ones of Brain Injury Services. To receive your secure online invitation, RSVP for each event you wish to attend.

Inova Loudoun Brain Injury Support Group

Tuesday, December 1
12 – 1:30 PM

Virtual

A community-based group for clients, loved ones, and caregivers. Meets monthly on the first Tuesday.

RSVP: Markita Gilbert I mgilbert@braininjurysvcs.org

Speaker's Bureau Human Library Project

Wednesday, December 2
11:30 AM – 12 PM

Caboose Commons
2918 Eskridge Road
Fairfax, VA

Join us for the Human Library Project, a safe space for open dialogue between human "books" and their "readers." Enjoy a cup of coffee, check out a human "book," and learn from a survivor's story that may help in your own life.

RSVP: Michelle Thyen | mthyen@braininjurysvcs.org or 703-451-8881, x232

Gentle Chair Yoga

Wednesdays
December 2 & 16
11 AM – 12 PM

Virtual

Enjoy a gentle mix of light mobility, stretching, meditation, and relaxation to support your health and well-being. BIS case manager and yoga instructor Paula Levin-Alcorn leads classes suited to all levels.

RSVP: Elaine Perkins | eperkins@braininjurysvcs.org

Stress-Free Gift Giving

Friday, December 18th
1 PM – 2 PM

Virtual

The holiday season can bring excitement, but gift giving can sometimes feel stressful! Join us as we explore simple tips for managing gift-giving stress, setting a budget, finding thoughtful gifts, and keeping the season enjoyable without feeling overwhelmed.

RSVP: Saleeha Hiriams | shiriams@braininjurysvcs.org

Community Opportunities

Brain Injury Services does not host the programs listed below. Please verify details with the organizer.

Support Groups

Inova Brain Choir | Every Wednesday, 12 PM | Inova Loudoun, 44045 Riverside Pkwy, Leesburg, VA
The Inova Loudoun Brain Choir is a therapeutic group for stroke and brain injury survivors, featuring weekly sessions in Leesburg. The choir uses singing, breathing, and music therapy to help participants improve communication, reduce isolation, and build community. Singing experience isn't a requirement. Contact Monika.Stolze@inova.org.

Living With Brain Injury Support Group | Every Friday, 10 AM – 12 PM | Virtual
The Living with Brain Injury group is a unique and supportive community of individuals recovering from brain injury. This support group is designed to enhance our recovery experience through respectful sharing and meaningful connections.
Contact: Kristen Galles at kgalles@comcast.net

Men's Social Group | First and Third Tuesdays, 3 – 4 PM | Virtual
Join us for the Men's Social Group, a relaxed virtual space hosted by long-time BIS clients Stephen Thomas and Johnny Nigh. This group offers an excellent opportunity to connect with others who share similar experiences and challenges of living with brain injury, and to make new friends. Each session will include discussion topics, with a focus on keeping things informal, supportive, and fun. If you'd like to participate, please reach out to Stephen: stephenjosthomas@gmail.com & Johnny: johnnynigh@hotmail.com

Front Royal Stroke Support Group | First Monday, 4:30 – 6 PM | In Person
Meetings are in the Front Royal, VA area. Locations will be determined based on the activity. Contact: Juhi Vora, CCC-SLP, at 812-369-9180 or jvora@valleyhealthlink.com

Winchester Brain Injury Support Group | Twice Monthly on Saturdays, Time Varies | In-Person
Handley Regional Library, 100 W. Piccadilly St., Winchester
Are you living with a Traumatic Brain Injury? Come join a newly formed group focused on supporting one another.
Call or text Carrie at 540-504-8629 for more information.

Fredericksburg Stroke Support Group | First Tuesday, 6:30 – 8 PM | Hybrid
Virtual or in-person, the John Fick Conference Center, 1301 Sam Perry Blvd, Fredericksburg
Free monthly support group for stroke survivors and caregivers.
Contact: Susan Halpin at 540-741-4815 or Susan.halpin@mwhc.com

Inova Fairfax Stroke Survivors and Caregivers Support Group | First Tuesday, 7 – 8:30 PM
Share your story and help others. Learn about ways to reduce your risk of stroke and discover community services available to you. Contact: fairfaxstrokesupport@inova.org.

Circle of Hope Recovery Meeting | First and Third Thursdays, 12 PM | Virtual
Circle of Hope is a unique support group for those living with both substance use disorder and brain injury. Join us to share, connect, and grow in a meeting where hope begins, and healing happens. More information: https://braininjuryhope.org/brain_injury_support_group.html

Writing for Expression and Connection | Second Tuesday, 6 – 7 PM |Virtual
Join the Health Story Collaborative for a free online writing meetup that welcomes writers of all levels. Writing helps us access and release our emotions, personal stories, and creative spirits. Fiction, non-fiction, poetry, or no particular style – this guided group is simply a chance to reflect and connect with others in a supportive environment. Open to those living with illnesses or disabilities, or caregivers. Learn more: https://www.healthstorycollaborative.org/writing-info

VHC Health Stroke Survivor's Group | Second Tuesday, 5:30 – 7 PM |In Person
1851 N. George Mason Dr, Garden Level Conference Room, Arlington
This group offers friendship, education, and access to resources.
Contact: https://vhc-stroke-survivors.ck.page/ and strokesurvivors@vhchealth.org

Community Opportunities Continued

Brain Injury Services does not host the programs below. Please verify details with the organizer.

Mindful Hope Meditation Session | First Wednesday, 12- 1 PM | Virtual
Hosted by Brain Injury Hope Network, this is a structured mindfulness gathering designed specifically for all affected by brain injury. Mindfulness can be a powerful tool for reducing stress, improving focus, and fostering emotional resilience. This meeting provides a supportive space to explore meditation, breathwork, and other mindfulness practices tailored to life after brain injury. Sign up for the email notification list: https://braininjuryhope.org/subscribe.htm

Watercolor for Calming and Creating | Third Wednesday, 6 – 7:30 PM | Virtual
Join Health Story Collaborative for a free online watercolor meetup that welcomes artists of all levels. Working with watercolors is an excellent practice for releasing our grip and letting things flow. Those just starting benefit from guided instruction, whereas longtime painters enjoy a designated time to create. Open to those living with illnesses, disabilities, or caregivers. Learn more: https://www.healthstorycollaborative.org/watercolor-info

BIHN "Open" Virtual Support Group Meeting | Every Monday and First and Second Tuesdays, 12 PM | Virtual
Open to all individuals interested in brain injury recovery—survivors, caregivers, and professionals. This meeting, hosted by Brain Injury Hope Network, offers a space for open dialogue and connection, where every story and experience is valued. Expect a supportive atmosphere conducive to sharing and learning from one another. Sign up for the email notification list: https://braininjuryhope.org/subscribe.htm

Caregivers and Supporters Virtual Support Group | Second and Third Wednesdays, 6 PM | Virtual
Join us for a welcoming space where caregivers can connect, share their experiences, and feel valued. Together, we'll foster a supportive environment for open dialogue, learning, and growth with others who truly understand the caregiving journey. Sign up for the email notification list: https://braininjuryhope.org/subscribe.htm

Stroke & Brain Injury Support Group | Third Thursday, 4 – 5 PM | Hybrid
An in-person AND virtual support group to share personal experiences, listen to others with a stroke/brain injury history, and learn about new research and information. Contact Hannah Balberde at Hannah.Balberde@Encompasshealth.com

Speaking on Purpose | Second and Fourth, and sometimes Fifth Thursday, 6:30 – 7:30 PM | Virtual
Speaking on Purpose is a supportive online community where individuals with physical and neurological impairments, such as those with brain injuries, can come together to practice speaking, build confidence, learn new skills, and have fun. While many people join Toastmasters to become better speakers, this group is open to all—*no Toastmasters membership is required to participate.* RSVP to Jan Delucien at jdelucien@gmail.com or call 703-851-4580.
https://sop.toastmastersclubs.org/

Trailblazers Social Club
Fairfax County Therapeutic Recreation Services' Trailblazers Social Club is for participants' ages 18+ with a primary physical disability (Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injury, etc.). The club meets two times each month to engage in leisure outings within the community. Members are responsible for making suggestions and voting on the activities each quarter. Trailblazers foster personal success and social growth through new friendships, participation in community events and leisure activities, development of leisure resources, and improving upon recreation skills. Learn more about membership and associated fees: Trailblazers Social Club

On-Demand Resources

Aphasia Recovery Connection & Lingraphica
Connect with people with aphasia and their loved ones from anywhere. Live online meetups facilitated by speech-language pathologists and other aphasia experts are available 7 days a week for FREE.
https://community.lingraphica.com/c/virtual-connections-sessions/

Community Opportunities Continued

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Virtual Center for Active Adults

The Virtual Center for Active Adults aims to enrich the lives of adults in Fairfax County while combating isolation. You can connect to programming that works with your schedule. Choose from various classes that will help you stay fit, stimulate your creativity, engage your mind, and provide entertainment from the comfort of your home.
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9D0cdqzRCqBizzYNaISIT0Cyp6mL8s0o

The Financial Empowerment Center at South County Workshops

The Financial Empowerment Center at South County offers a variety of free online workshops available to anyone. View workshops and register online: https://fecworkshops.timetap.com/#/

Love Your Brain Mindset on Your Own

Practice on your own time, wherever you are! Receive weekly emails with tools, including a brief video, yoga class, meditation, and yoga Nidra! Learn more: https://www.loveyourbrain.com/mindset/mindset-on-your-own

Birdability

Through education, outreach, and advocacy, Birdability ensures the birding community and the outdoors are welcoming, inclusive, safe, and accessible for everybody. In addition to current birders, we strive to introduce birding to people with disabilities and other health concerns who are not yet birders, so they, too, can experience the joys of birding.
https://www.birdability.org/

Webinars

BIAA Third Annual Stroke Symposium: Stroke Recovery: Body, Mind, and Relationships, December 5, 12 - 4:30 PM

No two stroke journeys look the same. But certain realities can show up along the way. The spasticity that changes movement. The cognitive and emotional shifts no one can see. The way a marriage reshapes itself. These are the realities that survivors, caregivers, and the professionals who support them navigate every day.

Across three focused sessions spanning body, mind, and relationships, leading experts will share clinical insight, research, and guidance on the realities of stroke recovery. Alongside them, survivors and caregivers will share their lived experiences and perspectives from their journeys.

Whether you're recovering, caring for someone who is, or providing clinical care or navigation for those who are, you'll leave with a deeper understanding of stroke recovery and the reassurance that wherever you are in your own journey, you are not alone.

Join the Brain Injury Association of America for a half-day virtual symposium built around conversations on stroke recovery across the body, mind, and relationships. **Click here** to register.

Caregiver Support

Virginia Caregiver Summit 2026

Friday, December 13, 2026 – Richmond, VA

This energizing, one-day event brings together caregivers, professionals, and partners from across Virginia for inspiration, connection, and practical tools to support caregiver well-being. Highlights include an inspiring keynote, breakout sessions, a statewide listening session, and a packed resource hall.

Learn more: https://dars.virginia.gov/aging/caregiver-support/caregiver-summit/