

Do you know or suspect you have a client with a brain injury?

Confirming a history of brain injury:

1. The gold standard for identifying brain injury is medical documentation.
2. If medical documentation does not exist, consider conducting a screen for lifetime history using one of the following resources:
 - a. OSU TBI-ID <https://goo.gl/gMUqbv>
 - b. Toolkit for Providers of Clients with Co-occurring TBI and Mental Health Symptoms

Refer to a specialist (e.g. neuropsychologist, licensed clinician, etc.) for a neuropsychological evaluation to determine deficits associated with brain injury.

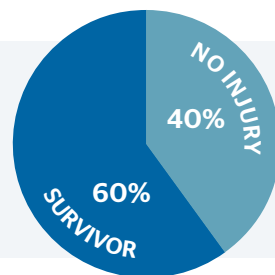
Common areas of impairment:

- Short-term memory
- Processing speed
- Attention
- Emotional regulation
- Light or noise sensitivity
- Impulsivity

Other outcomes may include:

- Substance abuse
- Mental health concerns
- Suicidal ideation

Incidence of TBI in Offenders:



Now What?

You know your client has a brain injury but that does not change the legal situation that they are in. Fortunately, there are simple techniques you can build into supervision and skill building strategies to increase the likelihood of success and compensate for brain injury deficits.

Activities to encourage:

- Mindfulness
- Yoga
- Support Groups
- Journaling
- Exercise
- Adequate rest
- Good nutrition



Attention

Might look like: Fidgeting, squirming, getting off topic

TIPS: Reduce distractions • Keep instructions brief • Work on one thing at a time

Sensory Motor Skills

Might look like: Appearing overwhelmed, emotional melt down, irritable

TIPS: Meet in quiet, calm environment • Schedule breaks • Encourage rest, hydration, nutrition, • Rescheduling if sick or overly stressed

Delayed Processing Speed

Might look like: Appearing confused, slow to respond, not following instructions

TIPS: Additional time to review information • Speak slowly, clearly • Check for understanding

Language (Social Pragmatic):

Might look like: Inappropriate body language, get in your space, over sharing

TIPS: Direct and concrete feedback • Role play to improve behaviors • Do not rely on body language

Short Term Memory

Might look like: Can't remember details, disorganized, appears manipulative

TIPS: Provide written reminders of appointments, instructions • Stick to routine • Summarize discussions about expectations and remind for next steps

Language (Receptive)

Might look like: Withdrawal, appearing confused, struggle with abstract language

TIP: Allow extra time to process • Ask if needed to repeat or rephrase • Instruct slowly and with one direction at a time

Expressive Language

Might look like: Not staying on topic, immature speech, lack of social etiquette

TIPS: Be patient • Compassionately give feedback • Allow extra time for them to respond

Initiation

Might look like: Appears unmotivate, needs constant cueing, follower

TIPS: Provide small, tangible steps • Help get started • Encourage checklists and calendars

Reasoning

Might look like: Concrete thinking, difficulty learning from past experiences, struggles with open ended questions

TIPS: Teach step by step problem solving • Point out possible consequences, outcomes • Speak concretely

Mental Flexibility

Might look like: Perseverating, appear stubborn or argumentative, resistant

TIPS: Provide respectful feedback • Prepare for transitions • Assist developing alternative plans

Emotional/Behavioral

Might look like: Argumentative, melt down, over or under reaction to events

TIPS: Model, practice positive interactions • Suggest breaks when appearing overwhelmed

Resources:

If you have a client that is in the community or returning to the community shortly, please refer them to the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado (BIAC). Additionally, BIAC will provide trainings, has a conference, other educational materials, networking groups, etc. Denver, CO 80222

Note: This pamphlet is not intended to be exhaustive of all compensation and accommodation techniques. It is a snapshot that contains easy to implement options.



Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado

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BIAColorado.org

Brain Injury & Criminal Justice

This tip card helps professionals who work in criminal justice understand brain injury and...

- Criminal justice overlap
- Strategies for working with survivors in the criminal justice setting

