



# NEWS

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### March Is Brain Injury Awareness Month

**Norristown, PA (February 26, 2019)** – March is Brain Injury Awareness Month. Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is the leading cause of disability and death in children and adolescents in the U.S. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the two age groups at greatest risk for brain injury are ages 0-4 and 15-19. Overall, TBI contributes to about 30% of all injury deaths.

Whether caused by a fall, a car crash, or being struck by or against an object, a TBI disrupts normal brain functions. The effects of TBI can last several days or can impact a person and their family for a lifetime. The CDC estimates 75% of TBIs that occur each year are concussions or other forms of mild TBI.

There are many ways to reduce the chances of sustaining a traumatic brain injury including:

- Buckling your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or a seatbelt that fits the child's height, weight, age, and developmental level.
- Wearing a seatbelt every time you drive or ride in a vehicle.
- Wearing a helmet when: riding a bike or wheeled vehicle, playing a contact sport, skiing or snowboarding, riding a horse, or batting and running bases in baseball and softball.
- Making living areas safe.
- Making sure your child's playground surface is made of shock-absorbing material.

In Montgomery County, the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Information & Education, Division of Health Promotion is creating awareness of TBI as well as working towards preventing and reducing the consequences of concussions by providing ConcussionWise™ education.

ConcussionWise™ is an engaging program that covers four critical phases of concussion management: Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery/Return to Play. It is designed to meet the needs of athletic trainers, physicians, coaches, parents, athletes, and other health care providers.

Additionally, the Division of Health Promotion is working with school districts to ensure each district has a concussion management team and referrals are being made to the local BrainSTEPS program. BrainSTEPS (Strategies Teaching Educators Parents and Students) assists Pennsylvania schools in creating educational plans for students following acquired brain injury.

Contact the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Promotion at (610) 278-5117 to find out more about program offerings.