

# Traumatic Brain Injury: What Teachers Should Know

## What Is TBI

A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. 1.7 million TBIs occur each year.

## A TBI Can Result From

- Falls
- Car wrecks
- Sports injuries
- Collisions with objects or other people
- Being shaken
- Any trauma to the head

## Common Symptoms of TBI

Cognitive/Communication	Emotional/Behavioral	Physical
Feeling dazed or in a fog Disorientation Confusion Difficulty concentrating Slowed information processing Difficulty learning new information Difficulty with memory Difficulty juggling multiple tasks Communicating in “socially unacceptable” ways Difficulty with concentration and attention	Irritability Quick to anger Decreased motivation Anxiety Depression Social withdrawal Does not get the “gist” of social interactions May comment on or react to things that seems random to others	Dizziness Weakness Changes in balance Headaches Changes in vision Changes in hearing Sleep disturbance Fatigue

## Identification of Students with TBI

- Many students with brain injury are not appropriately identified for accommodations.
- Challenges that result from a TBI are also common in students with other disabilities.
- TBI is an eligibility category under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Some students with TBI may need a 504 plan or special education services in order to succeed in school.

## Key Questions to Ask When Identifying Students with TBI

Did the student:

- Have a history of performing at a higher level?
- Have difficulties that began after an event likely to cause a TBI?
- Lose previously learned skills?
- Become unaware of loss of skills and abilities?
- Exhibit personality changes?
- Lose social skills or abilities?

**Notes:**

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