Toronto abi Network

Brain Injury Associations

- Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST) – *Melissa Vigar*
- Brain Injury Association of Durham Region – *Jeff Chartier*
- Camp Dawn – *Julie Dickison*

Linda Ngan, Project Manager – Toronto ABI Network

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Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST)

BIST
Brain Injury Society of Toronto

Melissa Vigar
Executive Director

Who are we?

- BIST is a non- profit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, that started in 2004 to provide support, education, awareness and advocacy to brain injury survivors/thrivers, their families and the larger community.
- We offer member driven programs and services out of our office at 40 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 205 (Yonge & St. Clair)

Support Groups

- We offer Social Worker facilitated support groups for Adults and Young Persons (aged 17-29) with ABI, as well as a Parent Support Group
- There is an option for virtual participation in our support groups
- We host a peer led caregiver support group for spouses
- We have a peer mentorship program in partnership with OBIA for caregivers and survivors
- A group for women with ABI will be launching in September 2018

Social Programs

- BIST offers:
  - Not So Blue Mondays – A creative social drop in program (weekly)
  - Tuesday Social Drop In – An informal drop-in to connect with peers (monthly)
  - Tuesday Community Outings – Free outings to the AGO, movies and other venues in the city (monthly)
  - What's Up Wednesdays – A relaxed social drop-in for youth aged 17-29 (monthly)
  - Wednesday Community Meetings – Guest speakers present on various topics related to ABI (monthly)

A monthly calendar advising of program times & locations is kept updated on our website www.bist.ca

Workshops

- Quarterly workshops by guest presenters on a variety of topics
- Upcoming workshops
  - April 26, 2018 Community Agency Fair and Art Show
  - July 21, 2018 – Returning to School Post Concussion
  - November 2018 (Date TBD) – Sexuality and ABI

Awareness

- You can find BIST throughout the year at various events educating the community on ABI
- Visit our website at areyouaware.ca
- This June you can find us at:
  - St. Michael's Hospital
  - Western Hospital
  - Sunnybrook Hospital
  - Pride Toronto

Advocacy

- BIST is a part of committees and advisory boards within the city including:
  - Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
  - Toronto Police Disabilities Consultative Committee
  - Vulnerable Road Users Coalition

How to join BIST

- BIST membership is open to survivors/thrivers, family members, caregivers, and professionals
- You do **NOT** need medical documentation or a referral to participate in BIST programming
- Annual fee for survivors is $5 or free if they participate in a short survey
- Online membership can be found at: http://bist.ca/join/
- Membership can also be completed before or after the start of BIST programs **Individuals are welcome to try out programming prior to joining BIST*
- Contact info@bist.ca or 416-830-1485 with any questions
- Want to stay informed of BIST programs & workshops? Contact mvigar@bist.ca to join our mailing list.

Transitional Support Coordinator (TSC)

- Position funded through the Ontario Trillium Grow Grant (three year initiative)
- Began in February 2018
- **Goal:** To support persons with mental health issues: cognitive challenges and other complex issues with applications for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Support required extends beyond what can be offered by OW or ODSP
- Aims to minimize barriers accessing services and have as few requirements for service as possible.

Supports Provided

- Secure identification
- Obtain medical services/family doctor
- Access supports
- Completing income support applications
- Navigating the process of ODSP or CPP-D
- Applying for additional income by completing income tax returns and tax credits
- Food security
- Arranging services and accompanying individuals to appointments
- Support maintaining income
- Keeping notes and reminders to ensure follow through
- Reminder phone calls and support maintaining a schedule

Why Do We Help?

Participants have identified the following reasons for support:

- Follow through with/at medical appointments, communications with medical staff
- Completion of paperwork and reports for application
- Obtaining health records as application evidence
- Comprehension of ODSP requirements, timelines, communication, appeals process and social benefits tribunal process
- Advocate for their own health needs with providers
- Literacy, memory and comprehension issues
- Lack of brain injury awareness in general community, "the invisible injury"
- Participants unsure where help can be found, TSC can direct, call, follow-up with community agencies, ABI and other

Benefits

- Improved overall health
- Improved access to alternative income
- Reduction of use of emergency social services
- Reduced dependency on emergency medical services
- Reduction of Ontario Works Costs

How to Access the TSC

- Contact the Transition Support Coordinator directly (no third-party referrals)
- Be an adult living within the City of Toronto (24 to 65 years of age)
- Feel they require support applying for OW/ODSP
- Identifies themselves as an individual with a disability that impacts their life

Contact Information

Transitional Support Worker
Laura Bellon
Cell: 647.271.7853
Main Line: 416.830.1485
lbellon@bist.ca

BIST Executive Director
Melissa Vigar
Tel: 647-748-0847
mvigar@bist.ca

BIST Programs and Services Coordinator
Julie Notto
Tel: 647-990-1485
Connections@bist.ca

BIST General Information Line
Tel: 416-840-1485
info@bist.ca

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BIST Brain Injury Society of Toronto

How to Connect with BIST

Website: www.bist.ca

Email: info@bist.ca

Facebook - @BrainInjurySocietyTO

Twitter - @BrainInjuryTO

Instagram - @braininjurytoronto

Linked In – Brain Injury Society of Toronto

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Brain Injury Association of Durham Region (BIAD)

Jeff Chartier

Executive Director

Brain Injury Association of Durham Region

A charitable, not-for-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors. Services include:

- Drop-in Social/Recreation Program
- Information and Referral
- Community Support Coordination / Transitional Support Coordination
- Homelessness Prevention
- Supported Independent Living
- Volunteer Program
- Support Groups / Entertainment Nights

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BIAD

Day Service/BIAD Happenings

- A drop-in program began in 2006 program
- Located at 850 King Street West, Unit 24, Oshawa
- Social and recreational opportunities
- This program runs Monday to Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m
- The program is constantly changing based on participant input
- Presently, we offer a creative writing class, arts & crafts, bingo for prizes, exercising classes for disabilities, brain gym classes, pool tournaments, a discussion group, movies, etc.
- There is a free lunch each day

Outreach Services

- Work on a one-to-one basis to address individual difficulties / needs and to link to other services
- Work directly in home to address transportation difficulties, and work with individuals in a variety of ways,
- Budgeting; bill payments; supplying coping strategies, organizational strategies, strategies to compensate for memory difficulties, completing applications, applying for financial assistance, referrals to various service agencies and advocacy

Supported Independent Living

- Provides support to individuals who reside in their own home
- Staff provides basic assistance primarily in the areas of daily living to maximize independence
- Amount of staff support varies among individuals and can fluctuate as situations arise

Accessing Services

To obtain our service the individual must:

- have experienced brain trauma that has altered their abilities in some way
- contact the service directly (no third party referrals are taken)
- feel they require support address barriers created by their brain injury and identify themselves as an individual with a disability that impacts their life

Special Projects

- *Transitional Support Initiative*
- *Homelessness Prevention Initiative*
- Both projects are operated without health based funding and tackle issues related to poverty

Facts about Brain Injury

- Within the next hour, 6 Canadians will suffer a brain injury!
- More than 18,000 Ontarians (50,000 Canadians) will suffer a brain injury this year!
- More than 11,000 Canadians die each year as a result of brain injury
- Young males are twice as likely as females to sustain a brain injury; more equal incidences in the elderly

Source: Toronto Rehabilitation Institute - www.torontorehab.com

Facts– cont'd

- Brain injury is more prevalent than multiple sclerosis, breast cancer, HIV/AIDS and spinal cord injury combined[1]
- Brain injury is the number 1 killer and disabler of people under age 40[2]
- After one brain injury, you are at 3 x greater risk for a second brain injury and 8 x greater risk for other bodily injuries[2]

[1]Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation – www.onf.org
[2]Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – www.torontorehab.com

Economic Costs of Brain Injury

- Neurotrauma injuries (brain injury & spinal cord injury) create a cost burden to Ontario between $2 – $3 billion annually [1]
- Each severe brain injury costs the medical system over $4,000 at the time of injury. [2]
- Costs remain approximately the same each year following the incident due to indirect expenses and follow-up treatment. [2]

[1] Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation – www.onf.org
[2] ThinkFirst Pensez d'Abord Canada – www.thinkfirst.ca

Economic Costs of Brain Injury

Research shows:

- 20% of people in forensic psychiatric settings have a history of brain injury[1]
- Half of Toronto's homeless population has a brain injury; 70% of those individuals experienced brain injury prior to homelessness[2]
- 44% of 235 provincial prison inmates reported a history of brain injury[3]

[1] Brain Injury Association of Canada – www.biac-aclc.ca
[2] Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – www.torontorehab.com
[3] Colantonio, Asbridge, Allen, et. Al.

Economic Costs Continued…….

- One shelter bed = $2,100 per month (average)
- One long-term care bed = $3,960 per month (average)
- One correctional facility bed = $4,300 per month (average)
- One hospital bed = $13,500 per month (average)(ii)

Campaigns

Brain Injury Association of Durham Region

Contact Information:

Jeff Chartier

Brain Injury Association of Durham Region

Unit 24 – 850 King St. W.

Oshawa ON L1J 8N5

T: 905-723-2732; 1-866-354-4464

E: jchartier@biad.ca

W: www.biad.ca

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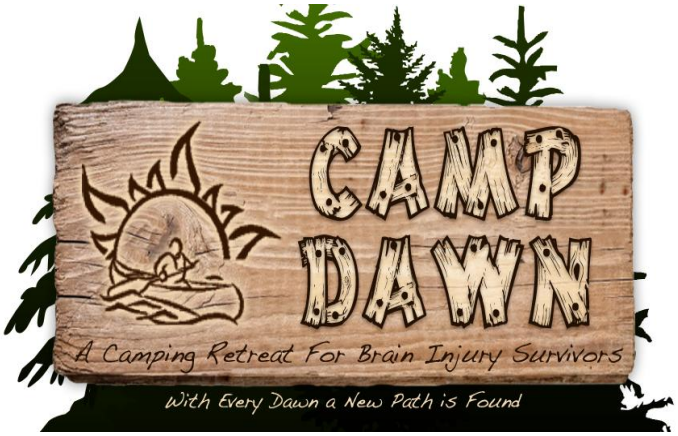
Camp Dawn

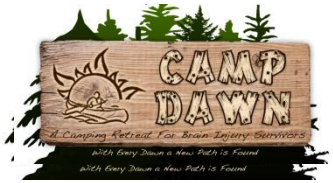
A Camping Retreat for Adult Brain Injury Survivors



Julie Dickison

President

Who we are



- Began as a partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Chatham Kent in 2003.
- Became a registered charity in 2005
- We host camp at Rainbow Lake, just outside Simcoe ON
- Our mailing address is in London Ontario
- In 2003, camp hosted 12 survivors and 5 leaders
- In 2017, we hosted 100 survivors and 45 leaders
- We are made up of a volunteer Board of Directors

What we do

- Host up to 100 abi survivors each September for 4 days
- Host up to 45 volunteer leaders
- Campers come from all over Southwestern Ontario
- Transportation is provided by camp from London/Sarnia and Hamilton

Who are our campers?

- ABI survivors, aged 18-65
- Mix of men and women, 60% men, 40% women
- Average age is 40, however many older/younger
- Campers must be independent to attend camp on their own, or they come with their own 1:1 attendant

Campers

- Campers are placed in cabins with 2 leaders
- Campers are at a range of points in their recovery
- Campers love the activities as well as the time to relax, meet new friends and rejuvenate

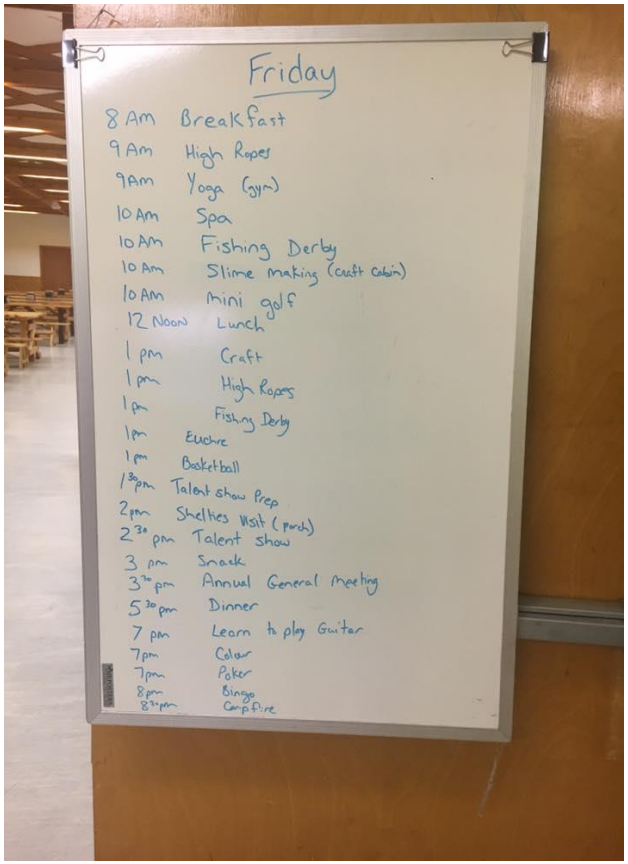
Our Leaders

- Leaders are 18 +
- University/college students, rehab professionals, community members, SLP/PT/OT, family members, friends
- Leaders are volunteers unless paid by an agency
- Leader training provided before camp, on going at camp
- Require first aid & police check with leader app

How Camp Operates

- Full day of activities (canoeing, high ropes, crafts, karaoke, hikes, yoga/meditation)
- Lots of down time (campers choose how to spend their time)
- 3 meals and 3 snacks a day prepared by camp kitchen staff (group meals)

More photos of our days!



Friday activities!

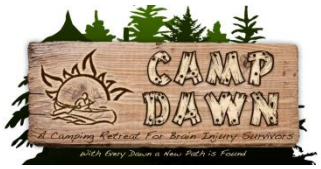
Giles and Mike waiting for high ropes!

Typical Day

Campers and leaders love the opportunity to try new activities and see each other succeed.

How are we funded/costs?

- Registered charity
- Camper fees are $165 total, leaders and volunteers do not pay
- Total cost to host camp is approx $45,000
- We rely almost exclusively on sponsorship, fundraising (Wine Tasting event, Hamilton BBQ), raffle, donations.
- Costs include; buses, food, rental of facility, insurance, high ropes, rental equipment



How can you come to camp?

- Leader applications on website April 1 www.campdawn.ca
- Camper applications May 2 www.campdawn.ca
- First come, first served with conditions. Camper committee will contact soon after application if further info is needed
- Campers who require support must come with a 1:1 attendant (leader who will work only with them)
- Acceptances are emailed the second week of August, with packing list, med instructions and all other information.

Questions?

- www.campdawn.ca
- Find us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/campdawn.ca/
- Find us on Twitter @campdawnON

- Email us campdawninfo@gmail.com
- Julie Dickison,Volunteer President
- Check out our YouTube video!

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Contact Information

info@abinetwork.ca

416-597-3057

To receive updates on future events visit:
http://www.abinetwork.ca/subscribe