

Information for Support Group Leaders

SupportLink, a newsletter to assist brain injury support group leaders, is published by TBI Project STAR at Carolinas Rehabilitation. TBI Project STAR also provides services for the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina Family and Community Support Office in Charlotte.

This Issue:

Page 1
BIANC Update

Page 2
Brain Injury Awareness

Page 3
Brain Injury Awareness
Month Proclamation

Page 4
BIANC on FaceBook

Page 5 & 6
Upcoming Events

Page 7 & 8
Regional Updates

Page 9
BIAA Advocacy Grasshopper
Brain Injury Websites

Page 10
SupportLink Email

Page 11
BIANC Membership
Information

Page 12
Fund Raising for Support
Groups

Page 13
Walk and Roll-athon
Information

Page 14
State Resources

Brain Injury Association of North Carolina Update By Sandra Farmer, President

The Brain Injury Association is preparing for Brain Injury Awareness Month in March by coordinating five Walk and Roll-athon events across the state and a Ride for the Rock cycling event in Raleigh. It is extremely important that we work together to let people know about the needs of people with brain injuries in North Carolina in 2010.

Most of you know that the state is facing severe financial difficulties and that the budget for the Division of Mental Health/ Developmental Disabilities/ Substance Abuse was cut by over 400 million dollars last year. Unfortunately, more cuts are likely for this year. We were able to protect the money that is available for people with traumatic brain injuries in the 2009 budget but we need to continue to fight to preserve that money in the future.

You can have an impact on your elected officials and local citizens by attending the BIANC events across the state. We are contacting local news agencies and media outlets to encourage them to attend the Walk and Roll-athons and the Ride for the Rock. An article in a hometown newspaper or TV evening news item is a great way to increase awareness about the number of people who have sustained brain injuries and their need for services and supports. A personal story about an individual family's struggles to care for their loved one with a brain injury is the best way to demonstrate the effect of brain injury in North Carolina.

Please visit our website at www.bianc.net or call us at 1-800-377-1464 to learn more about our walks and cycling event. We need to let everyone know that brain injury is a significant problem in NC affecting thousands of families across the state.

Thank you for your help!
Sandra Farmer

You can contact Sandra at sandra.farmer@bianc.net or by phone at 1-800-377-1464

Brain Injury Family and Community Support Offices

Asheville	1-866-890-7801
Charlotte	
TBI Project STAR	1-877-962-7246
Greenville	1-800-697-3115
Raleigh	1-800-377-1464

You can contact the Family and Community Support Office nearest you for resource information, or visit the BIANC website at www.bianc.net

Advocacy Today – Are YOU Ready, Willing, and Able to Work toward Proclaiming March as Brain Injury Awareness Month in your County and Community?

One thing that creates frustration among persons with brain injury and their advocates is the lack of awareness and information the public has regarding brain injury. Even though the incidence rate for traumatic brain injury is an estimated 1.4 million Americans each year, and another approximately 795,000 suffer a stroke, there is very little emphasis placed on how the prevalence of stroke, TBI and other brain injuries can impact the injured individual and their families. When breast cancer is mentioned, there is an immediate cognitive connection to the pink ribbons that the Susan G. Koman Foundation has made into a national symbol of breast cancer. The same holds true of the yellow “**Livestrong**” arm band that symbolizes testicular cancer, made popular by Lance Armstrong in his role as spokesman and advocate after his bout with the disease. While the incidence of brain injury is huge in comparison, there is no readily recognizable symbol that brings it to the forefront of consciousness for the average American.

Whether it is from the lack of a “Celebrity Spokesperson” with the clout to gain wide attention, or the nature of the injury itself, awareness of brain injury is terribly lacking. While the Brain Injury Association of America and state affiliate organizations have made some inroads into creating awareness and lobbying for services and funding, brain injury is still under funded, under served, and misunderstood by the majority of Americans.

SupportLink has often urged support group leaders to rally their groups and educate their local legislators and communities about brain injury. Many have made the effort to contact their legislators, set up displays and used other means for sharing information about brain injury, and some gains have been made. Sadly, the incidence of brain injury sustained by soldiers in the Iraq and Afghanistan has focused more attention brain injury than years of advocacy efforts, but sadly that attention does not translate into awareness of how brain injury impacts the civilian population in communities across America.

The lead-in for this article asked a question. “**Are YOU Ready, Willing, and Able to work toward Proclaiming March as Brain Injury Awareness Month in your County and Community?**” and your question is probably “**HOW** do I get March proclaimed Brain Injury Awareness Month?”

Each County and many communities have elected legislative or governing bodies that initiate policies, enforce existing statues and protocols, and conduct the business of the county and/or community. These local government bodies have the ability to make proclamations on behalf of their constituents.

We have included a form you and your group can use to have your local government issue a Proclamation declaring March 2010 as Brain Injury Awareness Month. While the process may vary from county to county and within communities, the basics are similar. Following the steps below can help your group get the proclamation done in your county and/or community, and insure that the larger community is aware of the proclamation.

- Contact the office of the entity (County Commissioners, Town Council, Home Owners Association, etc) and speak to the person responsible for preparing the agenda and ask to be on the agenda for the purpose of requesting a proclamation declaring March to be Brain Injury Awareness Month.
- Find out what the protocols connected with the meetings and the request to address the entity are.
- Some Counties have a proclamation request form that will need to be submitted before consideration will be made.
- Provide an advance copy of the proclamation wording to the entity to insure that the wording is consistent with the purpose of your request.
- Appoint a representative of your group to speak for the group if it is required at the meeting.
- Plan to attend the meeting where the proclamation will be read, even if addressing the issuing body is not expected.
- Once you have the sealed and signed proclamation, contact local news media and ask that they report on the proclamation.
- Have a prepared statement that can accompany the proclamation when it is distributed to the news media and have someone prepared to do an interview if that is a possibility.
- Post copies of the proclamation in as many public places as possible. Locations such as restaurant bulletin boards and grocery store exchange boards can reach many people.

The Proclamation below can be easily edited to meet the needs of any governing body. To request a copy of the proclamation in MS Word please email Peggy at peggy.philbrick@carolinashealthcare.org

Statistics for the proclamation were compiled from the following sources:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/tbi.htm> CDC TBI Fact Sheet *National Brain Injury Statistics: NC Detect 2007/2008* North Carolina Emergency Room Admission Statistics provided by North Carolina DHHS- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, State Center for Health

Statistics: http://www.census.gov/PressRelease/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/001630.html US Census Bureau Press Release 2009 (Military): *State Rank by number of Military Active Duty by state*: <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/358/5/453> New England Journal of Medicine 1/31/2008 *Number of Military with TBI*: <http://www.headinjury.com/sports.htm> Brain Injury Resource Center *Brain Injury in Sports Annual incidence of sports related brain injuries* <http://www.biaa.org/aboutbi.htm>: Brain Injury Association of America
General facts and information

A PROCLAMATION DECLARING MARCH 2010 BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, traumatic brain injury is a serious, national public health epidemic resulting in long-term disability for approximately 5.3 million Americans (1); and

WHEREAS, in 2008, there were 65,989 emergency department visits related to traumatic brain injury in North Carolina, with an average of 25% of these among adults 65 years and older; and

WHEREAS, falls are a leading cause of brain-related injuries in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in North Carolina in 2008, there were 10,151 motor vehicle related emergency department visits due to traumatic brain injury, 66% of which were among persons from age 15 to 44; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina has approximately 86,000 active military personnel and the fourth largest military population in the United States; and

WHEREAS, up to 18% of service members returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been diagnosed with or have shown signs of brain injury; and

WHEREAS, approximately 300,000 sports related brain injuries occur each year and because the signs of brain injury are not always well recognized, athletes may put themselves at risk for another injury; and

WHEREAS, a concussion, or mild brain injury, does not necessarily result in loss of consciousness and often goes undetected; and

WHEREAS, prevention is the only known cure; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services as the lead state agency, the Brain Injury Advisory Council, the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina and Brain Injury Support Groups across North Carolina strive to make prevention and safety measures part of the culture in North Carolina;

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, the _____ of _____, in the state of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim the month of March 2010, as "BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH" in _____, North Carolina and call upon our citizens and interested groups to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of and prevention of brain injuries.

SEAL

Signatures

BIANC has a Facebook Page!

By Brittnye Batchelor

As we enter a new decade, it is very eye opening to me the amount of involvement we all have in technology. I rarely send any letters via snail mail because it is much easier and faster to send an email. I even find myself communicating with most loved ones over the internet instead of through a phone conversation. Technology has made our lives more convenient. Communication being more convenient has good qualities and bad qualities. One bad quality is that it is not as personal. However, because it is more convenient, we are able to do it more and are more willing to do it.

One great thing that has come along is the social networking site, Facebook. There are over 350 million active users on Facebook and it has become a way for old friends to reconnect or for class members to find each other after graduation.

While I was in college, Facebook was first introduced to a select number of colleges. East Carolina University, my alma mater, was one of the colleges selected to test it out. Since then, Facebook has grown and now anyone can become a member.

Because of the advanced technology world that we live in now, I thought that it would be important for us to reach out to new members and potential members of the Brain Injury Association through Facebook. Now anyone that is a member of Facebook can become friends with the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina (BIANC)!

If you would like to become a friend of BIANC on Facebook, simply go to www.facebook.com, and if you are a member sign in as usual! If not, there is a link on the front page where you can create a new account. You should do it! You'll love it!

After becoming a member, go to the search box at the top right hand corner of your homepage. Type in "Brain Injury Assoc NC". This is the name of our Facebook Profile. Once you press enter it will come up with "search results". Click on the profile with the name "Brain Injury Assoc NC". At the top of the page there will be a box that says "Add Friend". Click on this box. After you click on the box another box will appear and will ask you to confirm that you would like to add Brain Injury Assoc NC as a friend. Click confirm! Within a few days I will respond as the administrator of the BIANC Facebook page to confirm you as a friend! Once I have confirmed you, Facebook will notify you that you are officially friends with BIANC!

After adding us as a friend on Facebook, you can support BIANC by "supporting our cause" on Facebook!

Causes on Facebook is an application that you add to your Facebook page. Any Facebook user with a little passion and initiative can create a cause, recruit their friends, and keep everyone up to speed on related issues and media, and you can even raise money. You may donate to our cause via credit card.

In order to join and support our cause, there is a very simple process! After becoming friends with BIANC, you are now able to view our Facebook page. To the bottom left hand corner you will see a box that says "support our cause" Simply click on that button. It will ask you to "allow" causes to access your information. This is perfectly safe, it is only asking you this so that you may log into Facebook and log into "causes" under the same user name on Facebook. Once you have confirmed that you will allow "causes" to access your information, you will have joined our cause. From there it will instruct you on you can recruit your friends to access our "cause" and join and support us as well! Within our "cause" page you may donate to us at any time!

We hope that you will consider adding us as a friend on Facebook. We will continue to try to keep you updated as much as possible through snail mail, email, and now through Facebook! I try to keep our Facebook page up to date and check it as much as possible, so feel free to write to us through Facebook with any questions or requesting information!

BIANC currently has 59 'friends' on our Facebook page and we have 100 members who are supporting our 'Cause'. We have collected our first two donations through Facebook of \$48. We hope to be able to reach more individuals through our Facebook page to offer support and assistance and increase awareness about the challenges of living with brain injury.

Call Brittnye at 919-833-9634 if you would like more assistance. See you in cyber space!

Brittnye Batchelor is the Assistance Outreach Coordinator and Day Program Coordinator for BIANC. Brittnye, who joined the BIANC staff in 2009, is a great resource for not only our state organization, but to our support group network. Thank You, Brittnye for facilitating the next level of connectivity for persons with brain injury and their families in NC!

Upcoming Events

RIDE FOR THE ROCK

March 6, 2020

A 50k and 100k Bicycle ride to promote awareness, safety and a fund raising event for the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina

For additional information visit the Capital Cycling Club website at

www.capcycling.org



MARCH and APRIL 2010

Annual Walk & Roll-a-thons

Visit the

Brain Injury Association of North Carolina website

www.bianc.net for registration information or

contact BIANC at 1-800-377-1464



Save the Date

Camp Carefree

Brain Injury Survivors and Family Camp



Stokesdale, North Carolina

September 17, 18, 19, 2010

Do you know of an event of interest to persons with brain injury and their families? Let SupportLink know and we will share the information. Contact your local Family and Community Support Office with the information or email us at peggy.philbrick@carolinashealthcare.org

“Walk in Their Shoes” ...a Father and Son Walk 460 Miles to Create Awareness of Brain Injury

Joshua Brantner was an all-star athlete in basketball, baseball, soccer and in-line skating. He could, and did, do it all. That was before that Sunday in September 2001 when his life changed forever. While partying with friends, Joshua climbed about 30 feet into a tree, lost his footing and fell to the concrete below.

For the next three months, Joshua remained in a coma. His prognosis for recovery was grim, but in November, he stirred from the coma and squeezed his Mother's hand. After months more in the hospital, a nursing home stay and several more months of inpatient rehabilitation, he was able to go home. Eleven months after the accident he was still unable to speak, eat, drink, or stand. The family quickly learned to manage his complex medical needs, including administering medications, feeding through a tube in his stomach, suctioning his airway and much more.

Joshua's miracle recovery is still a work in progress. He has gained weight and now has limited movement in his extremities that allows him to walk with the help of a special device. He continues working on speech abilities and is able to eat some solid foods. Joshua works out everyday, strengthening his muscles. Determination and perseverance continue to drive his recovery.



There is more to Joshua's story than just that of a teenager who chose to climb a tree and fell as a result. It is the story of behavior and carelessness. Joshua was carrying a fake I.D. when his accident happened. Doctors were just about to call another child's parents to inform them that their son was dying when Joshua's family was able to convince them that the I.D. was forged.

While Joshua was in Rehabilitation, he learned to sign the alphabet, which became his primary means of communication, as it is today. His biggest joy is sharing his testimony of making unwise choices and the consequences of those choices, and the blessing of faith and healing with thousands of young people in middle school, high school, and college.

Joshua and his father, Harold Lawrence, have recently set a new goal for educating others to the dangers of behaviors and carelessness that lead to brain injuries which forever change lives. They will be making a 460 mile walk from Florida to North Carolina. Along the way they will share with high risk groups and the media their unique brain injury awareness message of prevention and the consequences of carelessness.

There is a reason this story is included in SupportLink. The walk will end here in North Carolina at Hinds' Feet Farm in Huntersville. There will be a huge receptionas in PARTY...to celebrate their arrival, and EVERYONE is invited.

**This is your invitation to Join Us
For a cook-out and reception and give**

A Hero's Welcome

to honor

Joshua Brantner and Harold Lawrence

as they end their 460 Mile “Walk in Their Shoes” Walk

to create Brain Injury Awareness

Where: Hinds' Feet Farm

1426 Black Farms Road, Huntersville, NC 28078

When: 2:00 pm Sunday, March 28, 2010

There will be plenty of food and fun. Bring your lawn chair and come prepared to celebrate this remarkable young man and his dad. We will see you there!

Look for additional details during the next few weeks.

From East to West...happenings across the State

Down East

By: Sandie Worthington

There is a new mailing address for the Greenville Brain Injury Family and Community Support Office. The new BIANC address in Greenville is; P.O. Box 30496, Greenville, NC 27833 and the phone number remains 1-800-697-3115. You can contact the office by email at sandie.worthington@bianc.net

The Walk-n-Rollathon in Greenville will be April 17 at the Town Commons. We are looking for sponsor and participants. If you need additional information, visit the BIANC website at www.bianc.net for details and registration materials.

The search continues for donated office space for the Family and Community Support Office. Any one who has suggestions of possible places to look, please let us know.

South Central

By: Peggy Philbrick

The **Charlotte Area Brain Injury Association's** (CABIA) December meeting was a celebration of the holidays with lots of food, friendship and fun. Instead of a gift exchange, members of the group brought items to the meeting to send to a group member's son who is in the military serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The group members were excited about giving back to the military men and women serving our country. Members enjoyed the February meeting learning about internet resources such as the new Brain Injury Association of NC (BIANC) Facebook page, Lash and Associates new Blog, and videos and information on brain injury available on BrainLine. Also in February, the group is planning a bowling trip. Thanks to Barbara Westphal for organizing the bowling trip. Plans are also underway for the annual cookout, boating and waterskiing at Lake Norman in June. Groups from all across NC attend this annual event and it's always a great day of fun!

Gayle Pittman and Jackie McDonald of the **Concord Brain Injury Support Group** participated in a TBI 101 training conducted by Project STAR for service providers and Piedmont Behavioral LME staff. By sharing their stories with those serving persons with brain injury, they added a valuable insight into how family caregivers care for and advocate for their family members with brain injury. A big "Thank You" to Gayle and Jackie!

The **Union County Brain Injury Support Network (UCABISN)** once again hosted the annual Christmas Celebration. Attendance was at an all time high, with close to 200 people. In spite of nasty weather, both Asheville and Wilmington and many points between were represented.



Trudy and Jashun model seasonal hats



CABIA members celebrate the season



Members of Rowan Support Group

Rowan County Brain Injury Support Group celebrated their one year anniversary in December with cake and other refreshments. A primary focus of the group is to create awareness of brain injury within their community. Although they have only been meeting for one year they have made great strides toward this goal. They are currently working with the Rowan County Commissioners office to have March proclaimed as Brain Injury Awareness Month in Rowan County. The photo was provided courtesy of Nadine Cherry, co-leader of the group. Thank you Nadine!

The Charlotte Family and Community Support Office welcomes Linda Hilton as our Volunteer Family Ombudsman. Linda will be working with families and persons with brain injury to provide information and to help them connect with resources within their community. Linda's knowledge and experience is already proving her a valuable asset to our office.

Does your group have upcoming events or reports of things you have done? Let SupportLink know and we will include your news in the next edition.

Central

by: Susan Fewell

The BIANC staff is hard at work planning Brain Injury Camp. Donna White will once again be the Camp Director. Important decisions, such as; Band vs DJ; menus; activities and other things are being made. The dates are September 17th through September 19th, so mark you calendars now!

A one day recreation event is being planned from 10am until 2pm on June 5th at Harris Lake County Park. Come join us for this great outing featuring fishing, arts and crafts, exercise and a potluck lunch. For additional information contact Susan Fewell at 1-800-377-1464.

The Raleigh Family and Community Support Office has a new staff member. Staci Thornton has joined the staff as Fundraising and Event Planning Coordinator. Staci is currently working on the Walk and Roll-athons and other fundraising initiatives, including identifying and recruiting corporate sponsors. Welcome, Staci!

We are sad to announce that Sergeant Robin Bristow, leader of the Jacksonville support group has been transferred to California. BIANC would like to thank her for her efforts in making that group a success. She will be missed. On that note, we are looking for someone to assume the leadership role of a group in the Jacksonville area. If you are interested, please contact Sandi Worthington at 1-800-697-3115 or Susan Fewell at 1-800-377-1464.

Out West

by: Karen Harrington

The plans for the Walk & Rollathon are well underway. The event will be held at Carrier Park on April 17th. Come Join us for the fun and to raise awareness of brain injury.

Dora Davis, Volunteer Ombudsman for the Western Region is now working at the Family and Community Support Office some and is in the process of completing training for her new role. She is looking forward to working with persons with brain injury and their families.

Hinds' Feet Farm – Asheville is continuing to grow. Enrollment is up to approximately ten members daily. Members are enjoying the many things they do as a group, especially cooking gourmet meals once a week when a professional chef comes in to lead the effort. They are volunteering at local agencies where they are learning about their community through serving others.

Most of all...we are waiting for Spring!!!!



Do you have ideas to share with other support group leaders? Would you like SupportLink to feature your Support Group in an upcoming edition? Do you have great fundraising ideas? All contributions are appreciated. Contact us at 704-355-1502 or 1-877-962-7246 or email us at peggy.philbrick@carolinashealthcare.org

Books to Read...Blogs to Blog on...Articles to Download...

In the last edition of SupportLink, we told you about the updated webpage for Lash and Associates Publishing. This site becomes more interesting by the day. If you have not yet visited this webpage, you have a treat in store when you do.

On the BLOG homepage, you can read articles and papers by persons with brain injury, family members and others. The articles range from heart rending to humorous, but one thing they all have in common is that they are relevant to persons with brain injury and their families.

For those who like to read, there are many books that you can order, or if you want, you can order a free catalogue that list many books, pamphlets, tip cards and self-help tools. Many of the books and other products are unique to Lash and Associates.

Share the information with members of your support group.

<http://www.lapublishing.com/>



What is Grasshopr?

It is more than just the misspelled name of a green bug! Grasshopr is the name of the Grassroots web host that houses grass roots advocacy information for the Brain Injury Association of America "BIAA-Grassroots".

The Brain Injury Association of America was founded in 1980 and is the leading national organization serving and representing families and individuals with brain injury. There are more than 40 chartered state affiliates as well as hundreds of local chapters and support groups across the country. BIAA provides information and support to states and individuals through its website and support line.

Do you want to join "BIAA-Grassroots" on Grasshopr? Just go to the website <http://www.grasshopr.com/>, click on the BIAA logo symbol and it will display a link to a page where you can fill out your membership request form to become a member. Just click on "Join Now" on the Membership line and fill out the registration form.

Once you are a member you will receive legislative email updates (formerly Policy Corner Updates) from Grasshopr about legislative actions, funding and policies that could affect brain injury. You will be able to post to or read the members blog page and get information on many topics.

Staying informed is a vital component of being a support group leader. In the last edition of SupportLink, this column addressed contacting your local legislators to educate them about brain injury. BIAA-Grassroots on Grasshopr offers information that you can use to help you and your group members to become good grassroots advocates on a national level.

Being informed and knowing how to use the information you have is important. Brain injury, while gaining more attention due to the military incidence of TBI, is still far from the household words that breast cancer or autism have become. By signing up to be a member of BIAA-Grassroots, you and your group members can receive the email alerts directly from BIAA through Grasshopr. This will allow you to respond quickly to action request and to share the information with others via email.

To say simply that there is work ahead for brain injury advocates is a gross understatement. Labor is perhaps a more appropriate word to describe the effort it will take over the next year and beyond. With budget constraints and the financial crisis that the nation and the states find themselves in, it is fair to say that organizations and individuals must fight harder than ever before to make their voices heard. So, hop on Grasshopr and do your part!

BRAIN INJURY WEB-CONNECT...

Websites about brain injury

www.brainline.org

This site has information on brain injury and features videos and articles that educate about TBI.

www.bianc.org

The Brain Injury Association of North Carolina has state information and coming events as well as links to newsletters and other information

www.biausa.org

The Brain Injury Association of America website offers information on national brain injury events, statistics and links to many other sites

www.cdc.gov

Centers for Disease Control offers statistics and materials that can be used to educate others. Information is free to download or it can be ordered through the site

www.dvbic.org

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center offers information for military and veterans with brain injury and their families

www.hrsa.gov

Health Resources and Services Administration offers links to information about health care and resources across the nation.

www.waiting.com

A website that gives a detailed overview of brain injury, from initial injury through reentry into the community.

If you find websites that you would like to share please send us the information. We will include them in Support Link.

Peggy Philbrick 704-355-4354 or

peggy.philbrick@carolinashealthcare.org

SupportLink E-mail

SupportLink often receives emails from support group leaders asking for information. The email below is from a group leader.

“Peggy,

My group is a mixed bag of survivors and family members with varying levels of need for services. One of the things I am struggling with is how to find speakers with a broad appeal. If the scheduled speaker is not addressing something that directly affects them, they do not show up. It is embarrassing to schedule a speaker and have only a few of the group show up. Does this happen to other groups?”

SupportLink Response:

You are not alone in this situation. Most groups are exactly as you describe yours. With varying needs. As new members join the group, there may be a need to focus on areas other group members have already dealt with, but it is important that all needs be addressed.

The adage that “if the shoe fits”, seems to reflect the response of group members to speakers that are not directly addressing a need or concern that is personally relevant to them. For many group members if the speaker’s message does not directly affect their situation they choose not to participate, instead they participate only when “the shoe does fit”.

Addressing this situation could be as simple as asking group members who will not directly benefit to attend in order to support those who will. Often persons who have already accessed services or agencies will know better what questions to ask than those who have had limited exposure.

One way to address this is to start a conversation with your group about what a support group is, how it functions and how group members can support each other. The poor attendance due to lack of interest in a specific topic or speaker can be addressed as part of the conversation about supporting each other.

Pointing out that experienced group members can be good advocates for less experienced group members is a way to encourage total participation. By pointing out that the speaker will be addressing certain issues, and asking those who have prior knowledge or experience to be sure to participate by helping lead discussions and asking the appropriate questions can help ensure their attendance.

Getting a consensus from the group members about the speakers who would be beneficial to the group is also an important part of making sure that the group members stay engaged. One method of doing this is to have an annual planning meeting to discuss what topics the group would like addressed by speakers during the months ahead.

Do you have a question about group facilitation or leadership? SupportLink will try to answer your questions. Just send us an email at peggy.philbrick@carolinashealthcare.org

Supporting support group leaders in North Carolina is a goal of Project STAR, BIANC and all of the Brain Injury Family and Community Support Offices. If you prefer to talk to someone in person, call the Family and Community Support Office in your region.

Become a BIANC Member

If group members would like to become members of BIANC and cannot pay the full membership price, they can join for the \$5.00 reduced rate for survivors and family members. Membership numbers are important as they increase the legislative influence of BIANC. Group members can become a member of BIANC for one year and will receive information from both BIANC and the Brain Injury Association of America.

Below is a membership application form to share with members of your group. For additional information about BIANC membership, contact the Raleigh Family and Community Support Office. 1-800-377-1464

Brain Injury Association of North Carolina

How to Reach Us

Family Helpline

1-800-377-1464

bianc@bianc.net

BIANC has four regional offices:

Asheville

Community CarePartners

68 Sweeten Creek Road

Asheville, NC 28803

828-277-4868 Fax: 828-277-4869

1-866-890-7801

Raleigh

P.O. Box 10912

Raleigh, NC 27605

919-833-9634 Fax: 919-833-5415

1-800-377-1464

Charlotte

Carolinas Rehabilitation

1100 Blythe Boulevard

Charlotte, NC 28203

704-355-1502 Fax: 704-355-9480

Greenville

P.O. Box 30496

Greenville, NC 27833

1-800-697-3115

Visit our website

www.bianc.net

Membership in the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina provides an opportunity for **you** to demonstrate your interest in and support for survivors and families in North Carolina. Who should join? **Brain injury survivors, family members, friends, nurses, doctors, therapists, rehabilitation specialists, case managers, attorneys**, other professionals, and **organizations** that work with individuals who have had brain injuries.

Benefits of membership include: discounted registration for events sponsored by the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina, and subscription to the *Starting Point* newsletter. All membership fees to this non-profit organization are tax-deductible.

- **Basic Membership** is \$38 a year. Includes all benefits above. No survivor or family will be denied membership due to finances. A reduced rate is available.
- **Executive Membership** is \$100 a year. Includes the additional benefit of recognition in BIANC's publications.
- **Platinum Membership** includes all of the above benefits, as well as a certificate suitable for framing and recognition on our website, which receives over 3000 visitors each month, for \$250 each year.
- **Corporate Sponsor Programs** are also available. These include all of the above benefits plus advertising space in BIANC publications, tickets to the annual golf tournament, and sponsorship of campers at the survivor's retreat. Contact BIANC for more information.

Our financial viability is largely dependent upon the generosity of our members. You can help now by becoming a member. Join by completing and returning the membership form below.

Membership Form

- Basic individual membership.....\$38/yr
 Platinum membership.....\$250/yr

- Executive membership.....\$100/yr
 Please send me an information packet on the Corporate Sponsorship Program

Name

Company

Address

City State Zip Code

E-mail

Telephone

I am a: Survivor Family member Professional

Other

Card No. _____ Exp: _____

Send to: Brain Injury Association of North Carolina
PO Box 10912, Raleigh, NC 27605 11

Master Card Visa Check enclosed.



Fundraising for the “fun” of it! ...

Funding the needs of the group

Support Groups, even those that have no activity other than meetings, have expenses that can include refreshments, mailing, copying or other miscellaneous expenses. Often paying for these routine expenses becomes the responsibility of the group leader or other group members collectively.

Raising money to support a support group can be done in many ways. The scope and means of fundraising will be different, depending on the amount the group hopes to raise, but the consistent factors need to be that there is a plan, everyone is involved and it is fun for all who participate.

A good fundraising plan requires organization and follow-through. There are several steps to forming and carrying out the plan. A good fundraising plan will address the following

How much money is needed?

In order to set a fundraising goal, consider the cost of the needs of the group for general operations for things such as postage, refreshments, etc. Consider the projected cost of other activities that the group likes to have funds to participate in such as outings and other events. The answers to these considerations will dictate the amount of money the group needs to raise.

How will the funds be managed and controlled after they are raised?

Some support groups have officers who fill the role of president or treasurer and as such manage the finances of the group, but other groups do not. If a group does not have someone already designated as the person to manage the funds of the group, it is important to decide who will fill that role before raising funds. Getting group consensus is important. Protocols about what can and cannot be paid from the group funds should be established before any fundraising is done.

How should raising the funds be approached?

Knowing your community and the people in positions to help can be an important factor in fundraising. In some cases approaching area businesses with a letter describing your group and your goals will be enough. Businesses often budget a certain amount to help community organizations. One large donation, or several small donations, will often meet the need. If larger sums are needed it may be necessary to organize events to reach the fundraising goal. In either case, it is important to provide information about your group, what it does, and what the money raised will be use for. Fundraising events should be fun for those who participate.

Suggested fundraising events

- **Buy Low-Sell High**

Purchase small items at dollar stores or other cheap retail outlets and package them in such a way as to promote your group. Set up a table at local venues and sell the items for more than they cost. (Example: One group bought votive candles for \$1.00 each, put them in clear cellophane bags with a card about their group and some brain injury facts. These sold for \$3.00 each in front of their local grocery store.)

- **Change for a Cause**

Label small ½ pint plastic zip-lock bags with “Change for a Cause” and the name of your group. Insert a card about your group and some brain injury facts. Group members can distribute the bags to friends, relatives, and other contacts, asking them to put the change in their pocket each night into the bag for one week. Collect the bags at the end of the week. You may be surprised at how much your collect.

- **Penny Pounding**

How many pennies are there in a pound? This is a good question, but not the point. Challenge group members to see how many pounds of pennies each one can collect. Have a prize for the one who collects the most. Most people view pennies as a nuisance and will give them to whoever ask, so collecting them can be fun and profitable.

These Ideas are simple and easy, and may be something for groups to consider, but often groups can come up with innovative ideas that will work in their own community. It is also important to remember that BIANC offers grants to support groups for projects. For additional information on applying for a grant through BIANC contact Susan Fewell at 1-800-377-1464.



Come join your friends and make new ones at the annual Brain Injury Association Walk & Rollathon nearest you. Encourage your group to get together, form a team and come have a great time! We greatly appreciate your participation and look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Walk & Roll-athons.

Walk & Roll-athon Locations	Date	Contact Information
Honeycutt Park, Fayetteville	March 20, 2010	Jamie Pierce: 919-833-9634 Susan Fewell: 919-618-3003
Lake Crabtree Park, Morrisville (Raleigh)	March 27, 2010	Brittnye Batchelor: 919-833-9634 Jonna Roy: 919-833-9634
High Point City Lake Park, High Point	April 10, 2010	Susan Fewell: 919-618-3003 Peggy Nelson: 336-882-1911
Carrier Park, Asheville	April 17, 2010	Karen Harrington: 866-890-7801 Staci Thornton: 919-833-9634
Town Commons, Greenville	April 17, 2010	Sandie Worthington: 800-697-3115 Brittnye Batchelor: 919-833-9634

Walk & Roll-athon Schedule:

Volunteer Check-in – 8:00 am

Registration – 9:00 am

Music & Activities for the Family – 9:30 am

Awards and Kick-Off for Walk & Roll-athon – 10:00 am

Walk & Roll – 11:00 am

Lunch – 11:30 am

Please Call BIANC at 1-800-377-1464 with any questions;
The Brain Injury Assoc. of NC, PO Box 10912, Raleigh, NC 276

State Agencies

Support group leaders are often asked questions about resources. It is often hard to know where to refer people who need help. The websites below are some of the state agencies that persons with brain injury may benefit from. Look for local links to get the location nearest you.

- North Carolina Division of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services Traumatic Brain Injury Program www.dhhs.state.nc.us/mhddsas/tbi
- Department of Social Services Programs www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/programs/index.htm
- NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation www.dhhs.state.nc.us/DVR/VRS/consumer.htm
- NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Independent Living Programs www.dhhs.state.nc.us/DVR/IL/ilhome.htm
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services - A chart showing Medicaid eligibility guidelines for North Carolina residents www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/basocmedelig.pdf
- The United Way local office search page www.UnitedWay.com
- North Carolina Social Security Administration www.ssa.gov
- North Carolina Disability Determination Services www.dds.its.state.nc.us/faqs/default.asp
- The Brain Injury Association of North Carolina Regional Office Information www.bianc.net



Contributed articles do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of Project STAR or Carolinas Rehabilitation, and are wholly the opinion of the contributing author.

O2/16/2010 TBI Project STAR at Carolinas Rehabilitation is funded in part by North Carolina DHHS's DMH/DD/SAS project number 1990