

About Us

The Ontario Brain Injury Association is a charitable organization dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by acquired brain injury. For more than 30 years, OBIA has provided accessible programs across Ontario at no cost to ensure that education, awareness, and support are available to those who need it.

OBIA is affiliated with 21 local brain injury associations throughout Ontario that also provide resources to their communities, raise awareness, and support those who are affected by brain injury.

Nearly half a million people are living with an acquired brain injury in Ontario and another 45,000 will sustain a brain injury this year. In light of this, OBIA's programs and resources continue to be of great need to support communities across Ontario.

All programs have been formed to benefit those with brain injury and their loved ones. Most importantly, programs are offered at no cost to participants.

To find out more visit our website at www.obia.ca or contact 1-855-642-8877.

OBIA Helpline 1-800-263-5404



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The OBIA Helpline offers emotional support for anyone seeking a confidential, compassionate, and non-judgmental ear. The Helpline provides

information, resources, and support for any concerns callers may have, as well as advocacy support and connecting people with resources.

Common topics include: coping with brain injury, loneliness, isolation, the stigma associated with an invisible disability, income supports, information regarding concussion/brain injury, and supports available for caregivers.

Survivors need to know that they are not alone in dealing with challenges related to brain injury and that OBIA is here for them. The Helpline provides callers with emotional support, empowerment, and appropriate community referrals.

Our Helpline is available Monday-Friday 9:30 AM - 4:00 PM EST at 1-800-263-5404.

For more information about this service, visit www.obia.ca/helpline/ or contact Support Services at 1-800- 263-5404 or support@obia.on.ca.

Online Connection and Inclusion Support Group (for Persons with Concussions/Brain Injury)

OBIA provides a free online support group to individuals coping with challenges related to a concussion, post-concussive syndrome, or other acquired brain injuries. Our Online Concussion Support Group is a safe space where people can seek support for their mental well-being and develop strategies to manage symptoms. Groups are facilitated by a registered social worker and clients can participate via phone or computer.

Groups consisting of 8-10 participants run 60 minutes per week, over 8 weeks, and are offered

throughout the year. Small groups allow for client-centered discussion and ensure that every participant can be supported.

Each session, strategies to help support mental wellbeing and resilience after a concussion are taught and participants have the opportunity to share their experiences. Confidentiality is maintained using a privacy policy and an online platform that safeguards privacy.

For more information about this program, visit <https://obia.ca/support/online-connection-inclusion-support-group/> or contact Vijaya Kantipuly (Group Facilitator) at 855-642-8877 ext. 249.

Peer Support Program

OBIA's Peer Support Program facilitates the relationship between individuals with lived experience (Mentors) and individuals who are seeking support during their journey with brain injury (Partners). This program offers personalized support to those with a brain injury and caregivers, as mentor/partner matches are based on similar experiences, needs, and individual interests. Matches are made province-wide and are coordinated through local Brain Injury Associations across Ontario.

The program is easily accessible to participants, via telephone or Internet, allowing individuals to receive support from the comfort of their own homes. Partners speak once per week, and their partnership lasts for one year.

To effectively support their partners, all individuals interested in becoming a mentor undergo comprehensive training by the Provincial Peer Support Coordinator organized by their local Brain Injury Association. This will take place over Zoom. Mentors are provided with the opportunity to help others by sharing their journey with brain injury.

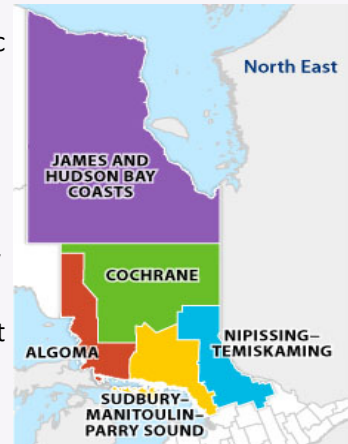
This program is made available to all survivors, family members, and unpaid caregivers at no cost and is truly an enriching experience for both partners and mentors.

WE ARE CURRENTLY SEARCHING FOR PEER MENTORS. SEE CONTACT INFORMATION BELOW TO PARTICIPATE!

For more information about this program, visit <https://obia.ca/support/peer-support-program/> or contact Carla Thoms (Provincial Peer Support Coordinator) at 855-642-8877 ext. 227.

North Eastern Ontario Advocacy Program

The program serves the geographic area of the North-Eastern LHIN to individuals living with acquired brain injury, and those with co-occurring diagnoses of addiction and/or mental health, including many who are frequently involved with the justice system. This program also provides support for caregivers, hoping to decrease the use of emergency, crisis, or inefficient services.



For more information about this resource, visit <https://obia.ca/support/support-services-in-north-eastern-ontario/>

Online Caregiver Support Group

OBIA's Online Caregiver Support Group allows caregivers to connect with each other in a confidential setting, from the comfort of their own homes. Through the sharing of experiences, caregivers can exchange ideas & manage stress.

Our completely web-based group is facilitated by a Registered Social Worker. Each group includes 6-8 people who meet online, once a week for 8 weeks. All you need to participate is:

- access to a computer, tablet, or cell phone with video & high-speed internet
- able to commit to all sessions

This service is completely FREE, but does require registration. **Next available sessions will be for September 2023 with registration opening June 2023.**

For more information about this support group contact Lekshmi Jayakrishnan at (905) 641-8877 ext. 251 or email lkrishnan@obia.on.ca. You can also visit <https://obia.ca/support/online-caregiver-support-group/>.

Caregiving after Brain Injury Modules

On March 31st, 2020, OBIA launched a new information website: **Caregiving After Brain Injury**. Through a series of 6 modules, this website provides support and resources to caregivers and family members who are supporting a loved one with a brain injury.

Funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, OBIA is happy to provide this valuable website at no cost. Utilizing materials produced for the project "Support, Hope & Resiliency: An Education and Training Program for Caregivers of Acquired Brain Injury Survivors," this website truly delivers beneficial knowledge for Caregivers eager to learn more about ABI and how to care for those living with it.

For more information about this resource, visit <https://caregiverinfo.ca>.

Get Involved in OBIA's Research - Brain Injury Impact Study

OBIA has recently transitioned our research to the Brain Injury Impact Study. The purpose of this study is to better understand the impacts of brain injury on those living in Ontario.

This information will be utilized to better inform government, insurers, researchers, and service providers who are examining ways in which people living with a brain injury can be better served.

Two questionnaires are available: one for individuals with lived experience and another for

caregivers/family. Your participation in the Brain Injury Impact Study will help amplify the voices of those living with brain injury in Ontario.

For more information or to participate, visit <http://obia.ca/participate-in-research-survey/> or contact Leah Hughes (Strategic Initiatives and Research Assistant) at (905) 641-8877 ext. 102.

Brain Injury Speaks: Stakeholder Engagement Network of Ontario

Decisions affecting the brain injury community in Ontario should incorporate input from those with lived experience. To provide this input, OBIA founded Brain Injury Speaks, an active engagement network to inform and respond to decisions made by the government. This community is home to more than 500 people impacted by brain injury.

The voices of survivors, family, and caregivers, who identify as the network's "stakeholders" accomplish this goal by working collaboratively. Those who join the network have the opportunity to be heard through emails, phone calls, and surveys on current issues related to brain injury. All feedback is presented as one provincial voice so that the most important issues can be heard loudly, and effectively.

To join the network or receive more information visit <http://www.obia.ca/about-brain-injury-speaks>



BRAIN INJURY SPEAKS
Stakeholder Engagement Network of Ontario

OBIA
ONTARIO BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION
education • awareness • support

Join the Brain Injury Speaks Stakeholder Engagement Network and become a part of an exciting and growing community to improve the care and support of those living with Brain Injury.

Visit: obia.ca