Healing the Brain: Mild Traumatic Brain Injury in Central Vancouver Island Adolescents

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Introduction
Mild Traumatic Brain Injuries (mTBI), commonly called concussions, are most prevalent in youth 15-25 years of age. This research will help The Nanaimo Brain Injury Society expand their services.

Although most adolescents recover quickly, the short-term cognitive and social deficits they face can place them behind. Long-term effects can impact their life-course.

There are few evidence-based treatment guidelines to reduce symptoms and promote rehabilitation.

Methodology
- Research was conducted through an online questionnaire
- Target population: adolescents (15 to 19) & parents/guardians of adolescents
- Participants did not need to have experience with mTBI to participate
- 229 Respondents 35% Parents 65% Teens

Research Goals
- Assess knowledge of teens and parents
- Gain insight into how teens are currently experiencing mTBI
- Identify service needs to assist program development

Preliminary Results

Knowledge

On a scale of 1-5 how much do you feel you know about concussions?

- Most parents rate their level of subjective knowledge as fairly high and their teens’ knowledge as low.
- Teens rate their subjective knowledge of mTBI in the middle.

Current Experiences

The number one cause of mTBI is sports followed by falls.

The majority who experienced concussion sought treatment (61.2%). The most common treatment was a doctor or hospital.

Doctors are reported as the both the most helpful service (26.7%) and least helpful service (19.5%).

Of those who did not seek treatment, 50% do not believe that their injury was severe enough to warrant treatment.

Services

Almost half of respondents (49.3%) are unsure of any resources for treating mTBI.

The most helpful services offered advice and information or treatment (43.8%). Services are found least helpful based on lack of information, bad service or advice (35.3%).

When seeking treatment 70.3% said they would go to a doctor, hospital, or other medical health professional.

Only 43.9% of teens said they are likely to go to a hospital if they hit their head.

Educational support and stress management services are rated most likely to be used, with group and art therapies as least likely to be used.

Accessing services is preferred through combinations including both in person and online methods.