

HeadSTRONG

The Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado is the go-to resource for help and services for survivors of an injury to the brain, their families, and providers.

Caregiver Column

Tristen Smith, *Legal Guardian his brother, Chad, Pikes Peak Challenge Hiker, and member of the BIAC Board of Directors*

On April 27, 2010 our lives changed forever. My brother Chad suffered a traumatic brain injury in a horrific car crash. After many months in a coma at Denver Health, Chad awoke to an entirely different life. A once tremendous athlete, Chad now found himself completely helpless and in need of 24-hour care. To this day, he still requires high levels of care, but he continues to amaze us with his progress. Recently, he was picked back up for physical and music therapy and has been making frequent trips to the gym to build up his strength. It has been a long, tough journey for Chad but thanks to support from his family and caretakers, he hasn't given up hope of returning home.



“Thank you to the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado...”

When Chad had his injury, I was 24 and still finishing up my undergraduate degree at the University of Denver. Like most families, we had little idea of what to expect and were terrified of the uncertainty that this injury had created. As Chad likely did, we felt lost, alone and scared. As Chad's legal guardian, I did my best to learn about brain injuries and help handle his affairs. Unfortunately, at that time I was not aware of the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado (BIAC) and the plethora of services they provide to brain injury survivors and their families. I really could have used their help!

In 2013, I was introduced to BIAC through a friend and started participating in the Pikes Peak Challenge every year.

The Pikes Peak Challenge is BIAC's number one fundraiser and provides critical funding for the mission. After learning about BIAC, I knew I wanted to not only raise funding for them but also awareness of this great organization. Had I known about BIAC at the time of Chad's injury, I am certain the process would have been much easier, and we would have had a partner to assist us through such difficult times.

“Team Chad” was just me that first year, but has grown to around 10-20 hikers every year and our fundraising efforts have increased significantly. We will continue to support BIAC and the Pikes Peak Challenge so that BIAC can continue to improve the quality of life for

brain injury survivors and their families. A few years ago, BIAC asked me to sit on the board of directors to be a voice from the families, and I was happy to take on that role. Being on the board has allowed me to get a much better understanding of the amazing work BIAC does every day and has only strengthened my desire to be a part of the organization and support it.

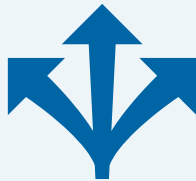
Thank you to the BIAC for being there for us and all brain injury survivors and their families. We really cannot thank you enough. ■

New Programs

BIAC is excited to announce updates to its support programs around the state. Survivors, family members, and caregivers now have three unique options to choose from:

Resource Navigation

Resource Navigation is our foundational support program for survivors, family members, and caregivers. It is intended to be quick and easy to access.



- All ages
- No application to complete
- Phone, e-mail, and in-person support available

Examples of Support

- Finding medical providers
- Understanding brain injury
- Filling out paperwork
- Connecting to community-based resources
- Problem-solving

Education Consultation

After a brain injury, children and youth may have challenges in the classroom and their families may need support navigating the education system.

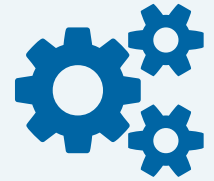


BIAC has a Youth Education Liaison specialist on staff who provides free, statewide consultation and support services to children and youth, aged 0-21, with a documented brain injury.

Examples of support:

- Providing parent/guardian education of services and programming options available in schools
- Assisting in the partnership between parents and schools
- Educating parents and school teams on how a student has been impacted by their brain injury
- Collaborating with schools on intervention planning
- Attending transition, IEP, MTSS & other planning meetings
- Partnering with hospitals to help with transition to school
- Any other student specific educational needs/concerns/questions

Self-management/ Skill Building



Self-management is a program designed and available for survivors of a traumatic brain injury (TBI) who want to invest time in improving their skills in specific areas that can be challenging after a brain injury. BIAC Advisors will work one-on-one with each participant to assess their strengths and weaknesses, identify natural supports in their life, and develop strategies for building specific skills with the goal of greater self-sufficiency.

- 6-month program
- 4 hours of meetings each month with an advisor
- Regular homework

Areas of focus for Self-management*

**Participants can identify up to 3 specific tasks listed below which they would like to work on during the six months in services*

Communication:

- Calling and scheduling appointments
- Pre-planning for meetings with professionals

Scheduling/Planning:

- Using a calendar
- Managing schedules
- Meal planning

Prioritization/Organization:

- Organizing and managing paperwork
- Managing important contacts
- Sorting mail and understanding its contents
- Creating and prioritizing a to-do list

Questions?

Contact us today at (303) 355-9969 or visit us online at BIAColorado.org.



BIAC's Work in the Criminal Justice System

In 2014, BIAC partnered with state and other local agencies to support professionals and survivors in the criminal justice system on a four-year federal grant.

Our work is a product of growing researching that reveals approximately 60% of justice-involved adults have a history of traumatic brain injury as well as about 30% of juveniles. Additionally, survivors have higher rates of recidivism, and are more likely to utilize services while incarcerated and less likely to complete treatment. These realities are costly for taxpayers, frustrating for professionals, and devastating for survivors.

Our partners at the University of Denver have conducted extensive research on the rates of TBI among incarcerated individuals at the Denver County Jail. The numbers they found were found to be on par with previous studies. Because of these findings, MINDSOURCE - Brain Injury Network, under the Department of Human Services, obtained a federal grant to engage with the criminal justice system and community agencies. This grant established screening and identification processes in 18 correctional sites across Colorado and referred those with substantial impairment to BIAC for community-based support. At the outset of the grant, the hope was that this engagement would increase the likelihood of success for survivors as they leave the system and re-integrate into their communities. Over the course of the project, BIAC received nearly 400 client referrals, half of which became involved with our case management program. BIAC's role also included training for professionals in the field to equip them with tools

and strategies for more positive interactions with survivors. We have provided training for professionals at all levels of the criminal justice system: law enforcement, magistrates, judges, attorneys, probation officers and other agencies serving justice-involved individuals.

The grant ended in May of this year but BIAC's work in supporting justice-involved survivors continues. Through continued partnerships with MINDSOURCE and correctional agencies around the state, we have a full slate ahead of us for growing collaboration, building capacity within the criminal justice system, and connecting with the many survivors we know to be involved in the system. Our approach is to support and empower justice-involved survivors with education, compensatory strategies, and community resources.

BIAC is very proud of the role we have been able to play these last 4 years, but it cannot be overstated how much the survivors we have met through this work continue to be an inspiration to us. Despite their circumstances, these individuals have shown a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and gratitude for their connection with BIAC. Having education about their injuries and tools to improve their outcomes, many of their journeys have been nothing short of remarkable. Several of our clients have even been in the spotlight this past year with local and national news outlets, (including Newsweek, Denver Post, and others) highlighting their extraordinary resilience and transformations. We are proud of their successes and grateful to them for sharing personal experiences that we know will bring hope to others. ■

Upcoming Events and Classes

Classes and Workshops

For registration and questions, contact Heather at 720-907-1455 or Heather@BIAColorado.org.

Unless otherwise noted, classes and workshops are held at BIAC's Denver office at 1325 S. Colorado Blvd, B-300, Denver, CO 80222.

Art Classes - Denver

Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month through December
10:00 - 11:30am

Art Classes - Colorado Springs

Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month through December
1:30 - 3:00pm

Encompass Health
325 S. Parkside Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Grief & Loss Group

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month through December
1:30 - 2:30pm

Music Therapy

Every Thursday through December
10:15 - 11:15am

Needlework

Every 3rd Tuesday of the month through December
10:00 - 11:00am

The Mindful Brain

Every 1st Tuesday of the month through December
10:00 - 11:15am

Recreation Programs & Social Activities

For registration and questions, contact Linda at 303-562-0401 or Linda@BIAColorado.org.

Frozen Assets

January 14 - 18
Cost: \$1,390

An adaptive ski program for all levels of skiing ability. Equipment is provided. Two days of skiing and riding, 1 day of adventuring through Breckenridge with options to snowshoe, explore town, trip to the Breckenridge Recreation Center, yoga, home cooked meals, and time with old and new friends. Accommodation is at the Griffith Lodge in Breckenridge.

Ignite Adaptive Ski Program

February 11 and March 11
Cost: \$75 (half-day)

Beginners or sage skiers! BIAC is offering two half-day retreats in partnership with Ignite Adaptive Ski Program at Eldora Ski Area. These events are fun and affordable, with qualified instruction in alpine, x-country, snowboarding and snowshoeing. Equipment included. Just pack a lunch and snacks. Need to provide you own transportation. There is direct round trip bus service from Boulder to Eldora at least twice a day.



Larimer Square - Holiday Event

December 12

Join us as we explore Denver's oldest and most historic block, Larimer Square in Denver. You can do some early holiday shopping or just wander around the inspired mix of independent shops, chef-driven restaurants, and lively clubs. We will meet for a light lunch at one of the cafes under the signature canopy of lights above.

**LOOKING FOR
THE PERFECT
HOLIDAY GIFT?**

**Frozen Assets and
Ignite Adaptive
Ski Program
would make
wonderful
holiday gifts!**



Brain Injury Professional Networking (BIPN)

The BIPN groups seek to “improve the availability of services and supports for individuals with brain injury, promote the ongoing sustainability of community support systems, and share resources.”

For information, visit

BIAColorado.org/brain-injury-professionals-network/

or contact Liz Gerdman at Liz@BIAColorado.org

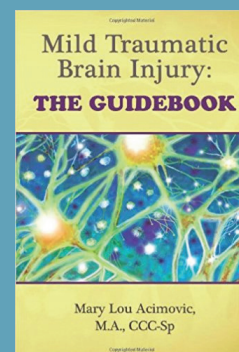
or 303-562-3298.

Resource Highlight

Learn about resources that BIAC staff, survivors, and families find valuable.

Mild Traumatic Brain Injury: The Guidebook

by Mary Lou Acimovic, MA, CCC-Sp



THANK YOU TO OUR PIKES PEAK CHALLENGE PARTICIPANTS!

On September 8, 2018, supporters like you gathered to walk or hike in support of the over 500,00 individuals living in Colorado with an injury to the brain.

For over 30 years, the Pikes Peak Challenge has been the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado's flagship fundraising event. By participating in or supporting the event, BIAC is able to continue to be the go-to resource for help and services for survivors of an injury to the brain, their families and providers.

On behalf of the board, staff, and individuals we serve, thank you for your support!



PikesPeakChallenge.com





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**Thank You
For Your Support!**



BIAC

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BIACColorado.org

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in Head**STRONG**?**

Contact Gavin Attwood, CEO
303-562-3199 or Gavin@BIACColorado.org

Colorado Gives Day

Tuesday, December 4, 2018

One of the largest one-day giving movements in the country.

Each December, Coloradans come together with the common goal to strengthen the community by helping to power nonprofits. Go to **ColoradoGives.org** and search for Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado under the Donate menu to support our organization.

We are the go-to organization for survivors and families in the brain injury community. Our trusted staff listens, understands, and provides survivors and families with solutions to help navigate their path to recovery.

Do You Shop on Amazon?

Please consider using AmazonSmile while shopping online.

Amazon will donate .5% of your purchases to the charity of your choosing (no donation required on your part). BIAC is an eligible charitable organization and we hope you choose us!



Your Support Makes a Difference!

Thank You,
The Staff and Board of BIAC

**Thank
You!**



amazonsmile

Staff in the Spotlight

Jaime Horsfall, *Deputy Director of Professional Programs*

What is your role at BIAC?

I am the Deputy Director of Professional Programs. My primary responsibility is managing BIAC's criminal justice program.

What has surprised you most about working with BIAC?

What continues to surprise me is BIAC's positive work culture. BIAC has grown immensely since I began, and still, we are a collective group of professionals that are optimistic, caring and passionate about our work.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?

While it may sound cliché, spending time with my family is the thing I love the most. I have two small children so there is never a dull moment! ■



Brain Injury Research

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new clinical recommendations for healthcare providers treating children with mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), often referred to as concussion. The *CDC Guideline on the Diagnosis and Management of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Among Children*, published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, is based on the most comprehensive review of the science on pediatric mTBI to date—covering 25 years of research.

Offering clinical recommendations that cover diagnosis, prognosis, management and treatment, the CDC Pediatric mTBI Guideline is applicable to healthcare providers in all practice settings.

Five key recommendations:

- 1 Do not routinely image pediatric patients to diagnose.
- 2 Use validated, age-appropriate symptom scales to diagnose.
- 3 Assess for risk factors for prolonged recovery, including history of mTBI or other brain injury, severe symptom presentation immediately after the injury, and personal characteristics and family history (such as learning difficulties and family and social stressors).
- 4 Provide patients and their parents/caregivers with instructions on returning to activity customized to their symptoms.
- 5 Counsel patients and their parents/caregivers to return gradually to activities after no more than 2-3 days of rest.

Visit goo.gl/CrFk62 for more information.



Brain Injury Alliance

C O L O R A D O

1325 South Colorado Boulevard
Suite B-300
Denver, CO 80222
info@BIAColorado.org
BIAColorado.org



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