

# The T.O.V.A. Times

## ***Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Can Cause Attention Disorders***

***Brain Awareness Week - March 15-21, 2010***

***Did that fall or accident just cause a painful bump on the head? Maybe a short-lived mild concussion? Or possibly an attention disorder?***



The Test of Variables of Attention (T.O.V.A.™) can help you determine the extent of the problem.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is an often-unrecognized consequence of accidents and sports injuries. Each year, TBI results in an estimated 37,000 hospitalizations, 430,000 emergency room visits, and 50,000 deaths in children age 0-14 (1). It is a leading cause of hospitalizations and death in children (2).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a national special education law, characterizes TBI as “an acquired injury to the brain caused by external physical force” (3) that can result in a disability or impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

We already use objective measures to screen for hearing and visual problems for children in school. We can establish using the T.O.V.A. along with behavior ratings to objectively screen for attention problems and minimize their consequences when undiagnosed and untreated. This is particularly important for the non-hyperactive, non-impulsive children who aren’t disruptive; they often don’t get diagnosed early, if at all, and develop secondary problems such as low self-esteem and depression. If we were screening children for attention problems, we’d not only be able to make the

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diagnosis and initiate treatment early, we'd also then have a baseline T.O.V.A. available for comparison to assess attention after an injury or accident.

Do you use the T.O.V.A. Intervention Reports to provide helpful management strategies for the school and the family? The T.O.V.A. School Intervention Report (in your T.O.V.A. software) is compatible with IDEA and can be used to efficiently and effectively communicate with teachers and other school personnel to increase the student's chance for success in school.

Similarly, the T.O.V.A. Home Intervention Report (also in your T.O.V.A. software) is easily adapted for the family to use in managing the child's behavior by helping them to create expectable rewards and consequences, as well as establishing behavioral guidelines and effective interventions.

Look for more on schools in next month's newsletter!

## References

1. Schneider, AJ, Shields, BJ, Hosteltler, SM, Xiang, H, Smith, GA. Incidence of pediatric traumatic brain injury and associated hospitalization resource utilization in the United States. *Pediatrics*, 2006; 118:483-492
2. Langlois JA, Rutland-Brown W, Thomas KE. Traumatic brain injury in the United States: emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Nation Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2006.
3. U.S. Department of Education, IDEA regulations: Sec. 300.8(c)(12)



If you need any T.O.V.A. assistance, please email your request to [The TOVA Company](#).