



# Project B.R.A.I.N. Currents

## Brain Injury Transition Specialist for Children's Hospitals

**Project BRAIN proudly announces a groundbreaking achievement that will change the way families and students access Traumatic Brain Injury services in Tennessee.** The first Brain Injury Transition Specialist was hired in September, 2010 and will begin working within Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt serving as an educational resource for the hospital, the family and the school system. The Transition Specialist will follow up with families after they leave the hospital to inform them of TBI-related services and options. Essentially, this is to ensure a smooth transition by acting as a bridge for families between the hospital and the schools.

Among other duties, the specialist will call the family of the student three times over six months after discharge to touch base and offer resources. Those may include Project BRAIN training for the student's educators, referral to their local TBI Program's Service Coordinator, and reviewing Project BRAIN's handouts to determine if there may be reason to return to a doctor for follow up since the injury. Whenever possible, the Specialist will meet with the family at the hospital and the Specialist will always make a series of follow up phone calls after discharge for any student with the diagnosis of TBI (mild, moderate or severe).

**How wonderful it will be for families to hear the voice over the phone of our Specialist checking in with them about their child after he/she is released from the hospital!** Ideally, the student will be doing well and the parents will be reassured that there are helpful resources "just in case" and that will be the end of the call. However, most importantly, there will also be parents with concerns who need more information and that is where we can make the difference for the family. Project BRAIN staff are very happy to be in the planning stages of bringing a Brain Injury Transition Specialist to children's hospitals in east and west Tennessee in the near future.



My name is **Jahnli Ancheta**, and I am the new Brain Injury Transition Specialist for Project BRAIN. This is a new and very exciting step for Project BRAIN, and I am so overjoyed and honored to be a part of it.

I have been married for two years and just moved to the Nashville area from Chattanooga, TN. I attended Southern Adventist University where I obtained a Bachelors of Science in Social Work degree. I have experience working with a diverse population of older adults with a variety of backgrounds and disabilities. Those experiences have made me very passionate about the work that not only the Tennessee Disability Coalition is doing but also all of the organizations within the Disability Co-Op.

Another important thing about me is that I have personally experienced how a brain injury can affect an injured child and his or her family. Several years ago, my twin brother was in a car crash where he sustained a near fatal brain trauma. Thankfully he is with us today and doing well, but the experience instilled in me great empathy for families that have to experience what my family went through and a strong passion to help those families move forward. I am proud to be a part of the efforts towards helping families rise above those obstacles and am looking forward to the journey to come.

### Media Buzz...



In recent weeks the media has given a lot of attention to concussions for student-athletes. As Project BRAIN moves forward to support student-athletes, we want to point out some important facts:

- Congress considers establishing standards on head safety and concussion management
- Students cannot return to play until cleared by doctor
- House committee holds a hearing with grieving mother and athletes
- From 2005 to 2008 school years, an estimated 400,000 concussions occurred within high school sports

**It is important to remember that the developing brain is vulnerable.**

The bill being considered is the ***Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act***. The bill would enforce evaluations from students who have suffered concussions before they return to play.

Per Dr. Gerry Gioia, Chief of Pediatric Neuropsychology of Children's National Medical Center in Washington, schools are not adequately prepared with the necessary systems, knowledge and skills to properly support the return of concussed student-athletes. He also notes that the same academic support structure that is provided for more severe brain injuries must be provided for students with concussions. <http://www.cnn.com/2010HEALTH/09/23/football.concussions.brainindex.html>

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**Project BRAIN Beams with Pride**

Our Project Coordinator and Middle TN Resource Specialist, Paula Denslow, was the recipient of the prestigious Tennessee Emergency Medical Services for Children's Award as **Children's Advocate of the Year!**

Based on Paula's tireless efforts to reach this year's milestone for Project BRAIN, partnering with TN Children's hospitals to provide effective communication links for families, she was recognized for her leadership in expanding Project BRAIN's goals and her dedication to children across the state. The Brain Injury Transition Specialist position is just one of the many projects Paula has moved to action and we are very, very proud of her.



Pictured: Dr. Michael Carr, T.C. Thompson Children's Hospital, Ty Denslow, Paula Denslow, Dr. Barry Gilmore of LeBonheur Children's Hospital at the Pediatric Emergency Conference on October 1, 2010.

**Think about it...**

Of all of the words that come to mind with concussion and sports related injuries, do we always acknowledge that the fact that a concussion is a Traumatic Brain Injury and that all concussions are potentially serious injuries?

B N V R W G N C E L B I S N O P S E R N  
 F A W E Y K Z O N N I K X O Y Q C Q A A  
 V S S G F G N N I T R D P A R E N T R U  
 M F Q N Z A A S Q S S P E Z I C G E A S  
 T J I I I K C C U I S T X S O I T N K E  
 P Y X R R Y S I S F N U S A U U Y N O O  
 M C D L E P Z O M U N W C E R F X J Q U  
 F Z E L N C N U L U P H V N R L N G X S  
 T C L E I G J S M V F I T U O K C O N K  
 B E I B A S R N T Y Q O B P B C I C C G  
 T B A I R X K E G H P E M E R G E N C Y  
 T A D M T P M S O L E M X I A Y Z Z I D  
 B C X M M L N S A Y G F J Q I S H U T U  
 F L X Z E A P Y G K Y H M K N X U G Z Z  
 E E U H Y I T P G Y U H T F V T B H R G  
 N D X R T M H E W S F X V U S S R N Y V  
 B O J A R A I M S F O P B Z T L M M N W  
 J I L P C Y P C B L M X O P H B U C S J  
 F Y Z I F Q X R G L C K J R Y N A M G U  
 D V K X F R X O Z K W M C P Y S G W M H

Find the following terms about concussion and sports related Traumatic Brain Injuries:

BELLRINGER	DIAGNOSIS	PARENT
BLURRY	DIZZY	RESPONSIBLE
BRAIN	EMERGENCY	REST
COACH	HELMET	RETURNTOPLAY
CONCUSSION	HOSTAL	SCAN
CONFUSED	KNOCKOUT	TBI
CONSCIOUSNESS	NAUSEOUS	TEAMMATE
		TRAINER

**Media Buzz...** continued

Appearing on the Today show, Mark Adickes, former NFL player, now an orthopedic surgeon and father of a high school football player discussed the importance of concussion awareness. He talked about proper fitting equipment and coaching awareness to better educate parents and players to prevent injury risks. <http://www.usafootball.com/articles/displayArticle/7602>

The Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) has implemented a new concussion policy that all member schools must follow effective this 2010-2011 school year. **In order to address this critical issue, the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) has drafted the following language and made it a part of every sport rule book publication:**

"Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional."

The NFHS has also developed a free 20-minute course online entitled "Concussion in Sports – What you Need to Know" that encourages every individual to take. It can be accessed at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

For more information regarding TSSAA policies, you can visit the website at [www.tssaa.org](http://www.tssaa.org).

**2010-11 Training Events Calendar**

- Nov 8** TBI Advisory Council Meeting, Nashville
- Nov 11-12** TN Assoc. School Nurses Conference, Murfreesboro
- Nov 17-19** Rural Health Assoc. of TN Conference, Pigeon Forge
- Feb 22** Project BRAIN's TBI Pre-conference Symposium, Nashville
- Feb 23-24** TN Special Education Conference, Nashville
- Mar 11** Brain Injury Association of TN Conf, Nashville
- Mar 17-18** Federal TBI Grantee Leadership Mtg., Bethesda, MD



TENNESSEE DISABILITY COALITION

Project BRAIN is supported in part by project H21MC06739 from the Department of Health & Human Services Health Resource and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Additional support is from the TN Dept. of Education Division of Special Education. The contents of the Publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DHHS. Project BRAIN is a program of the Tennessee Disability Coalition, implemented through a contract with the TBI Program of the TN Dept. of Health.