

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Understand: [Understand the basics about ABI](#)

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Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/understand-the-basics-about-abi

Understand the basics about ABI

Build your knowledge so you can provide effective support.

Definition

An Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is an injury to the brain after birth caused by:

- trauma, often a bump to the head or a jolt to the body
- a medical event, including an illness or a treatment for an illness.

Types of ABI

Types of ABI

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)
is an umbrella term



Three types of brain injury.

Source:
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ABI is an umbrella term for three types of brain injury.

1. Concussion:

- a mild traumatic injury to the brain usually caused by a bump to the head or jolt to the body
- negatively affects the brain
- effects usually resolve in three weeks
- requires rest to allow healing
- increases vulnerability to subsequent injury (Second Impact Syndrome), if activity is resumed too soon
- also called mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI).

2. Traumatic brain injury (TBI):

- a significant injury usually caused by a bump, blow, or shake to the head or body
- changes how the brain usually functions
- can alter a child's emotional, intellectual, communication, and social behaviour
- requires rest to allow healing
- can range from moderate to severe
- more prevalent in children living in areas of social and economic deprivation or who were impulsive or risk takers prior to injury
- can result in long-term changes and challenges.

3. Non-traumatic brain injuries:

- caused by internal events or illnesses, such as strokes, tumours, choking, infection, or cancer treatments
- similar characteristics to TBI.

Source: Adapted from *Educational implications of acquired brain injury*, by Sue Walker, Brain and Spine Foundation, UK, 2009.

Causes of ABI

Acquired brain injuries can be caused by a wide range of events.



Source:

Reproduced from Pate Rehabilitation
<https://www.paterehab.com/about-abi/>

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The need to raise awareness

Recent research indicates that ABIs, particularly from **undiagnosed concussions**, are having a significant negative impact on the wellbeing, learning, and wairua of a large number of children and young people in our learning environments.

Due to a lack of understanding, children and young people may find:

- they do not receive support that assists their recovery
- they are placed in situations that may create stress and anxiety, increase risk of injury, and inhibit recovery
- changes to behaviour and difficulties in learning may be misinterpreted.

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