The Importance of Timely Evaluation after Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

WHY IS TIMELY EVALUATION OF TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI) IMPORTANT?

- Accurate identification increases others' understanding of the root cause of a student's difficulties. An understanding of what is causing the problems can lead to better support services for the student.
- There are very few services available for adults with TBI who did not have a special education TBI eligibility.
- A SPED eligibility during the school years may help in establishing eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

WHY NOT JUST IDENTIFY THE STUDENT AS LEARNING DISABILITY, OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT OR A DIFFERENT ELIGIBILITY?

- Other disabilities are less variable over time and setting. If a student with a brain injury is not identified as having TBI and issues arise later, the TBI may be forgotten.
- Additional needs may occur after the student is no longer eligible under another disability category.
- Difficulties resulting from the injury may not be recognized as associated with the brain injury.
- Identifying a student with a TBI as eligible under another category contributes to the under-identification of students with TBI. This contributes to TBI being considered a low-incidence disability.

504 PLAN IS A GREAT PLACE TO START

Because TBI is the only disability related to a specific event, accommodations on an IEP may not be immediately available. Often, it is appropriate to start with a 504 Plan and then if the symptoms remain, move to an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Documentation is important, students with TBI can have late onset of problems, or the problems can be quickly forgotten,

© 2023 University of Oregon. Use for personal educational purposes only. No further copying or distribution is allowed.

as they are often "invisible". Documenting a TBI can assure that a student's TBI will not be overlooked in the future and the student will be able to get help when they need it. Medical issues related to TBI are likely to be ignored in the school setting without a formal plan. Fatigue and sleep issues are commonly found in individuals with TBI and may not be recognized as a symptom of a bigger problem. Accommodations at the school level is an effective way to support students with TBI.

© 2023 University of Oregon. Use for personal educational purposes only. No further copying or distribution is allowed.