



**BIST**  
Brain Injury Society of Toronto

Funded by:



Presented by Melissa Vigar & Katie Manikas

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**SPEAKERS:**  
**MELISSA VIGAR**

*Melissa Vigar is the Executive Director of the Brain Injury Society and has worked in the field of brain injury for almost twenty years, supporting individuals and families in both the non-profit and private sector. Melissa has overseen the design and implementation of several ABI community-based programs that focus on community integration, poverty reduction, homelessness, intimate partner violence, criminal justice education, resourcing and support coordination. She currently sits on the ABI Network Advisory Committee and is the co-chair of the Ontario Brain Injury Association's Advisory Committee and the Civilian Co-Chair of the Toronto Police Beyond Disabilities Consultative Committee.*



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## SPEAKERS: KATIE MANIKAS

*Katie Manikas - Has over 18 years in ABI services, providing support in both residential and community service settings. Katie has worked in front line service delivery and manager roles to provide community advocacy, client support and program development, for poverty reduction, justice involved and homelessness prevention for ABI services. Currently, she is working as a Private Consultant for program development/proposal writing in addressing service gaps for non-profit agencies across the province.*

# WHY ARE WE DOING THIS TRAINING?

- Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is highly prevalent among jail and prison inmates and those who have come into contact with the criminal justice system. As many as 80% of incarcerated adults have a reported history of TBI.
- Clinicians, researchers and people with lived experience of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) recognize that Brain Injury and the Criminal Justice System is an important public health issue.
- Brain Injury can be **invisible**: it might not be identified through screening or in any justice system documents.
- Brain Injury can affect all aspects of a person's involvement with the justice system **and community reintegration**
- We know this can pose unique challenges for all those supporting/working with them - The aim of this toolkit and training is to help.

## TRAINING AIMS:

### Discuss

- Brain injury, its global prevalence & the challenges it presents

### Provide

- Provide education on the intersection of brain injury and the criminal justice system and strategies to support individuals for more successful outcomes

### Review

- Review the ABIJUSTICE.ORG website, it's features and how to access/utilize it

## WHAT IS ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY



Handicap Caché



Hidden Disability



- A Brain Injury can be Traumatic or Non-Traumatic in Nature. A traumatic injury is an injury caused by blunt trauma to the head (MVAs, assault, fall, etc.). Examples of a Non-Traumatic Brain Injury include stroke, tumours, anoxic injuries (loss of oxygen to the brain).
- “Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a leading cause of disability in all regions of the globe. The global incidence rate of TBI is estimated at **200 per 100,000 people per year**; however, this rate is uncertain and a likely underestimate”  
([https://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/16/Suppl\\_1/A17.2](https://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/16/Suppl_1/A17.2))
- Brain injury is the leading cause of death and disability for Canadians under the age of 40 and in the developed world
- TBI severity may range from “mild” (i.e., a brief change in mental status or consciousness) to “severe” (i.e., an extended period of unconsciousness or memory loss after the injury). Most TBIs that occur each year are mild, commonly called concussions.
- People with brain injuries are globally overrepresented in homeless populations, the justice system and amongst victims of Intimate Partner Violence

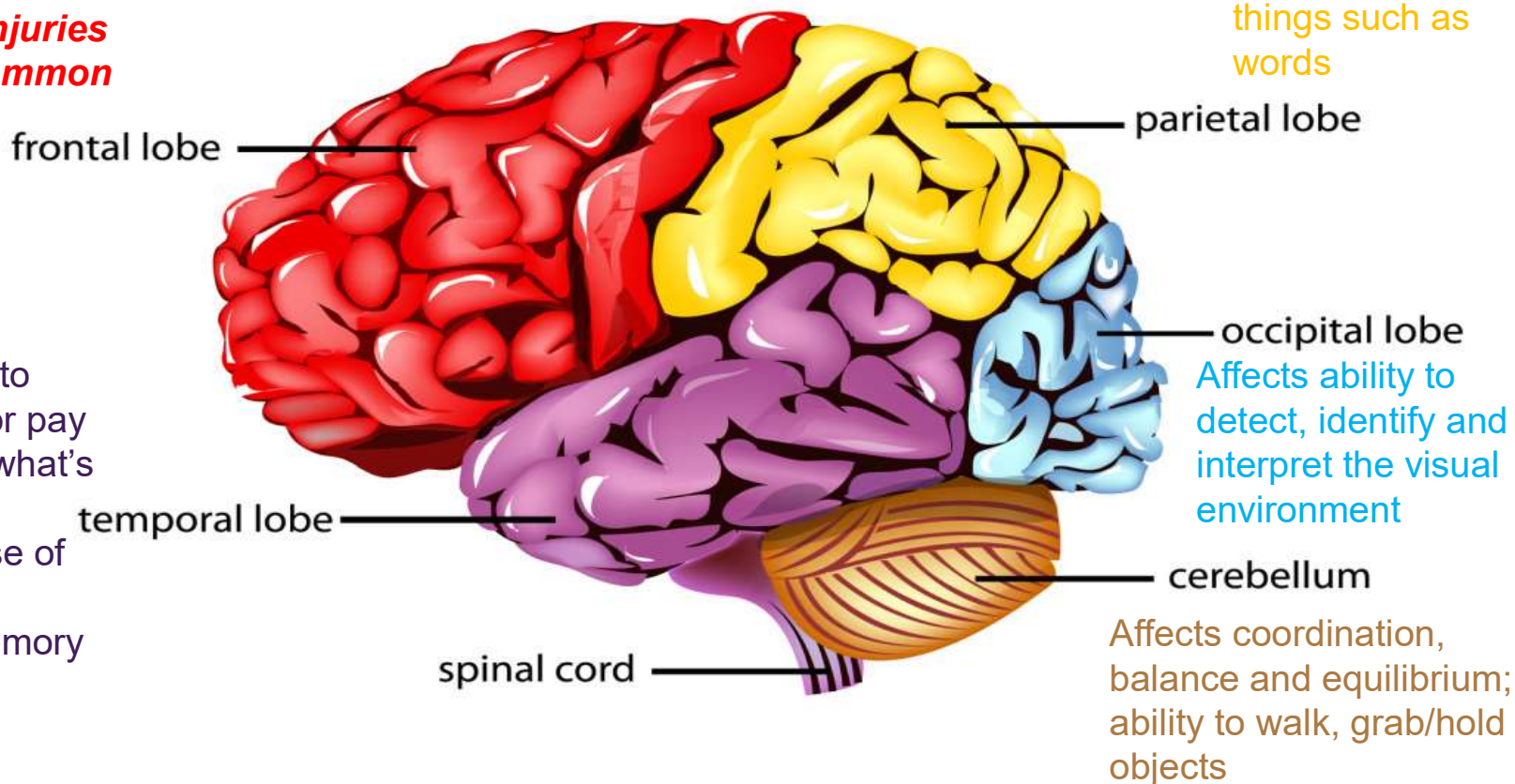
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Affects awareness, initiation, personality, emotions, planning and judgement, impulse control, and reason  
**\*Frontal Lobe Injuries are the most common type of injuries**

Affects sensory recognition, as well as remembering things such as words

## Parts of the Human Brain

Affects auditory cortex, communication, ability to understand language or pay attention to sounds of what's going on around them, affects behaviour, sense of humour, likely to have seizures, long-term memory loss



## ISSUES THAT CAN ACCOMPANY A BRAIN INJURY – HOW CAN THESE PRESENT THEMSELVES? HOW DO WE ADDRESS THEM?

Attention,  
Memory,  
Executive Functions

Processing Deficits &  
Communication  
Impairments

Sleep Disorders &  
Fatigue

Physical  
Impairments/  
Coordination  
/Balance

Pain

Over stimulation  
Light, sound,  
conversation

Vision and Hearing  
Changes or Loss

Depression, Anxiety,  
Social Isolation

Substance use,  
Mental Health  
Challenges

Loss of employment/  
Financial Stress

# BRAIN INJURY: CRIMINAL JUSTICE POPULATIONS

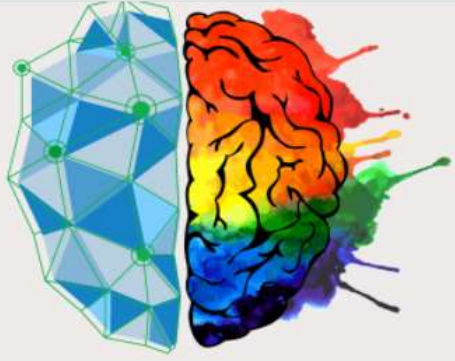
- As many as 80% of incarcerated adults have a reported history of TBI. (Williams et al., 2010; Schofield et al., 2006; Mclsaac et al., 2016; Schofield et al., 2016)
- Approximately 50% of youth who have been charged with an offence have a documented history of TBI (Wszalek & Turkstra 2015, Snow et al 2011)
- Adverse early life experiences are common for persons with a history of TBI and incarceration particularly for criminalized women. (Colantonio et al., 2014)
- In Ontario, men and women who sustained a TBI were about 2.5 times more likely to be incarcerated than men and women who had not sustained a TBI. (Mclsaac, Matheson et al., 2016)
- Recent findings indicate that people with TBI are more likely to incur a serious charge and less likely to achieve discretionary release.

**WE ARE GOING  
TO TOUR THE  
WEBSITE  
TOGETHER AND  
SHOW YOU  
HOW TO BEST  
USE IT**

The BIST Legal Educational Awareness Project (LEAP) has developed, organized and delivers in person and web based resources and education sessions for people with lived experience or who are working with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) involved in the criminal justice system.

An innovative concept that utilizes technology to enhance supportive legal services and programming for people with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) in both the City of Toronto and across Ontario.

The program incorporates technologies, web-based teaching tools and community outreach, enhancing the capacity for accessible services within the justice system.



**BRAIN INJURY COMMUNITY**



**LEGAL COMMUNITY**

PROJECT PARTNERS



[www.abijustice.org](http://www.abijustice.org)

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



BIST is happy to provide trainings and share resources with any agency who would like to learn more



Email us at [info@bist.ca](mailto:info@bist.ca) or call us at 416-840-1485 if you would like to be on our mailing list

Keep in Touch! Connect with us on Social! [www.bist.ca](http://www.bist.ca)



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“People love to say, “Give a man a fish, and he’ll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he’ll eat for a lifetime.” What they don’t say is, **“And it would be nice if you gave him a fishing rod.”** That’s the part of the analogy that’s missing.”

**TREVOR NOAH**

FOUNDER & CHAIR OF THE  
TREVOR NOAH FOUNDATION

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