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Invisible Injuries: Traumatic Brain Injury, Domestic Violence and Strangulation



Being **choked**,
strangled or
hurt in the
head can cause a
brain injury.

Getting help can **save your life**,
learn more by scanning the code:



or visit www.odvn.org/brain-injury-survivors/



This project is supported by Grant #16-0000-0001 awarded by the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Investigation, to the Ohio Domestic Violence Network.

What Do You Think? (1)

What is different about an acquired disability than a disability present at birth?

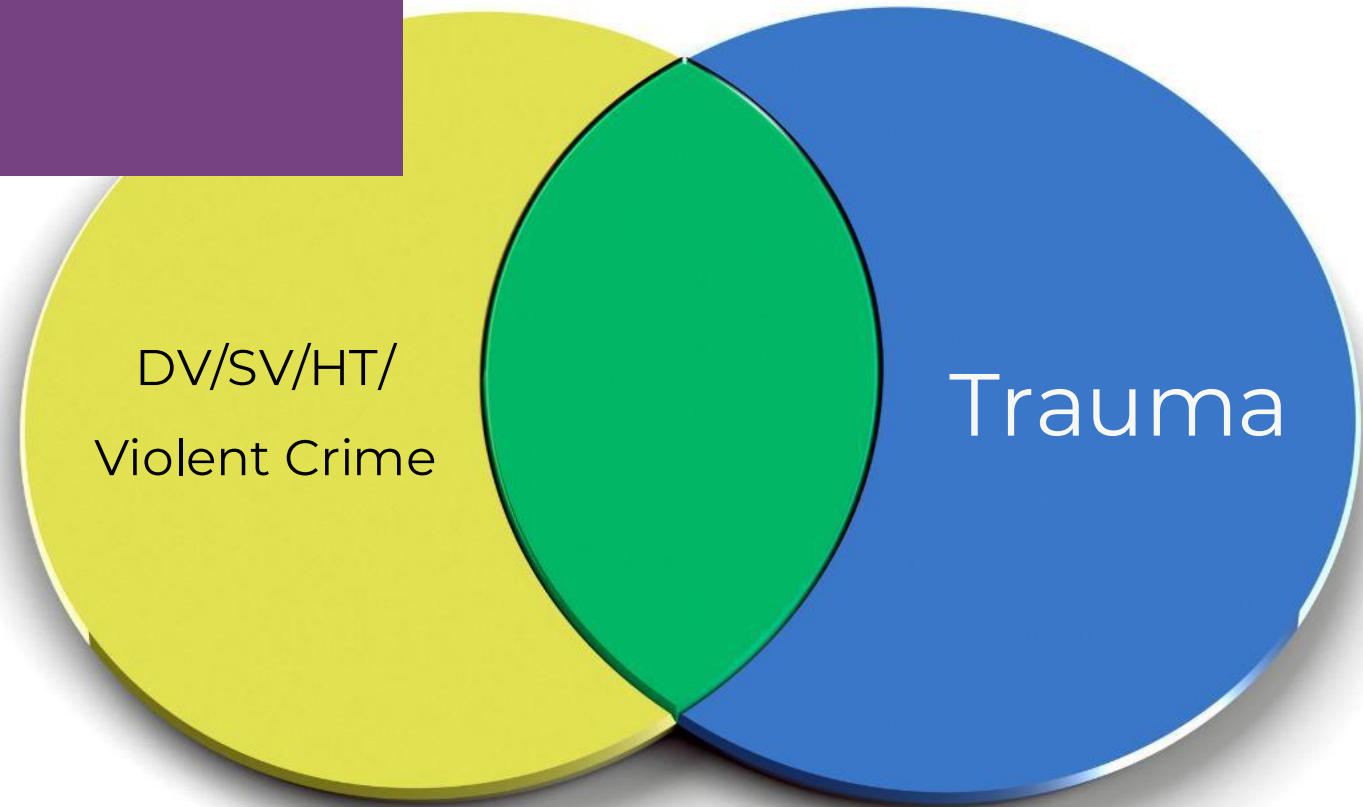


This is terrible
violence to
experience, hard
stuff to discuss, and
it's us too.

#FACT



Intersections





Definition of Domestic Violence

- A pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain and maintain power and overt control over their partner.
- Coercive control's goal is to strip away a person's freedom and sense of self. It can often include degradation, mind games, surveillance and micro-regulation of a person's life.





Types of Domestic Violence



Economic
Abuse



Sexual
Abuse



Psychological
Abuse



Physical
Abuse



Emotional
Abuse



Substance Use/Mental Health Coercion

- Used by abusers to maintain power and control, increase dependence on abuser, and decrease credibility
- Use of substances or maintenance of mental health may not always be in a person's control.
- Punitive behaviors addressing what appears to be non-compliance can be retraumatizing and defeating.

What Do You Think? (2)

What are some examples of mental health coercion and substance use coercion?



What Do You Think? (3)

How often are the domestic violence survivors you work with hurt in the head, neck, and face—including strangulation?



A Significant Missing Piece



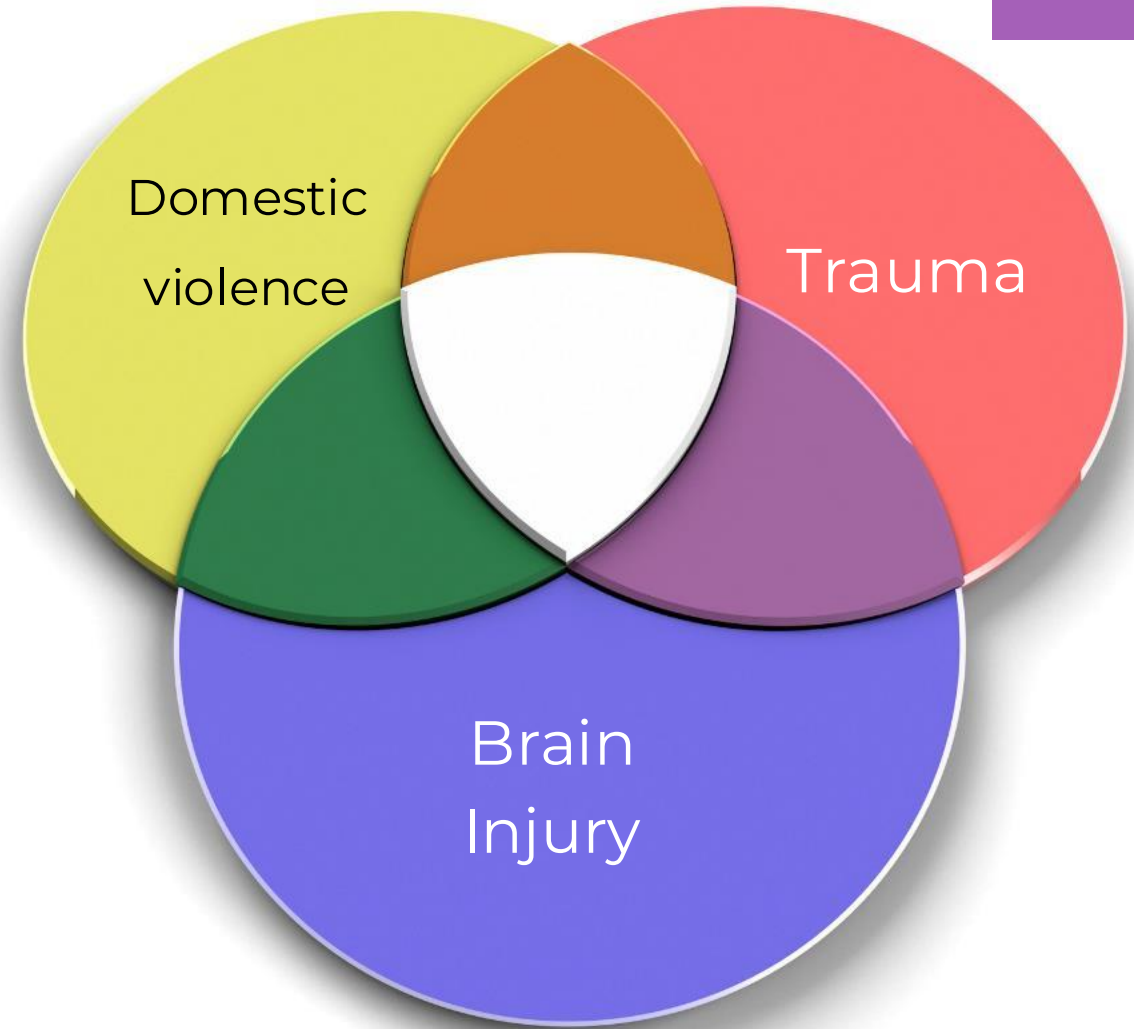
www.youtube.com/watch?v=zp7uBCJ6Sko&t=85s

What Do You Think? (4)

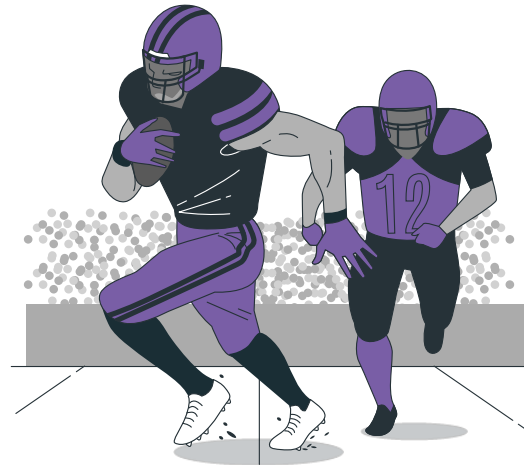
How often do you work with people using substances or who have overdosed?



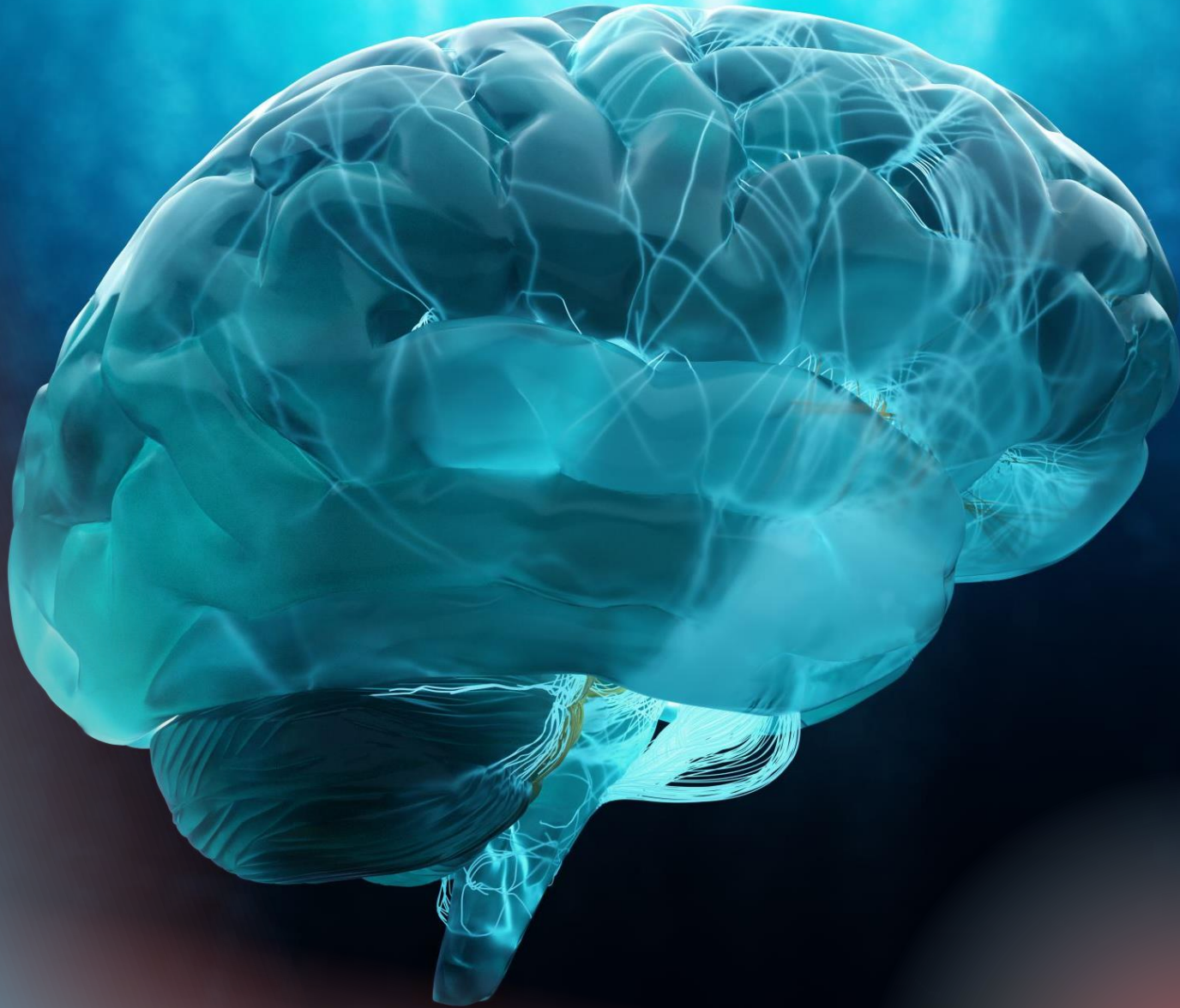
We've missed
that repeated
head injuries
and
strangulation
lead to brain
injury.



What causes concussions or traumatic brain injuries?



For every 1 NHL player:
5,500 survivors of
DV sustain a brain
injury each year



“When
you’ve seen
one brain
injury,
you’ve seen
one brain
injury.”



Strangulation



Significant safety and lethality risks

○ Terrifying and traumatic tactic of coercive control

○ Very dangerous abusers

○ Increases lethality risk 7.5 times (once) to 10 times (repeatedly)

○ Safety planning is very important!

○ Often no external signs or marks



Other lethality factors

Abuser uses or threatens with a lethal weapon, owns a gun or can get one easily

Abuser tried or threatened to kill survivor or children

Increase in violence severity or frequency

Constant jealousy, control of activities, following or stalking

Abuser threatened or tried to commit suicide



Strangulation is traumatic & a cause of brain injury

Restricting oxygen and nutrients to the brain causes hypoxic-anoxic brain injury

Survivors don't call it strangulation: choking, put hands on neck, grabbed me, etc.

Survivors often unsure if they passed out or lost consciousness

Survivors have signs and symptoms of brain injury as well as strangulation

Strangulation is often minimized and brain injuries are unidentified and unaddressed



Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

What Do You Think? (5)

What do you know about
concussion or traumatic
brain injury?



A TBI Involves:

External force to
the head or body
and
disrupted brain
function





Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Concussion (1)



Mild TBI and concussion are two terms for the same thing



Clinical diagnosis-there is no conclusive test



Victims are unaware



It looks different with everyone, and impact varies greatly



Effects can be temporary or permanent



Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Concussion (2)



Signs and symptoms don't always appear right away



Repetitive head trauma is particularly damaging



Sub-concussive hits have a significant impact



Imaging is not reliable to diagnose brain injuries



Managing symptoms is key to treating brain injuries



Impacts and Symptoms

Brain Injury Changes How Survivors *Think, Feel & Act*



Thinking
Cognitive



Physical



Emotional
Behavioral

Voices of Survivors



Nina



Rebecca



Paula

Signs and symptoms that were noticed but not connected to brain injury

<https://vera.wistia.com/medias/a5ifq26rn6>

Cognitive Impairment

Problems with a person's ability to think, learn, remember, use judgment, and make decisions.



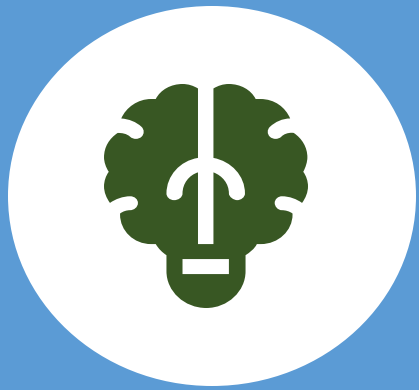
How someone processes information and thinks.

Functional Limitations

Restrictions in performing everyday activities due to physical or mental impairments.



What someone can do.



Concussion Symptoms

Survivors may experience...

- Physical symptoms
- Cognitive symptoms
- Emotional symptoms
- Behavioral issues
- Sleep based issues

Rivermead Post Concussion Symptoms Questionnaire

Modified (Rpq-3 And Rpq-13)⁴² Printed With Permission: Modified Scoring System From Eyres 2005 ²⁸

Name:

Date:

After a head injury or accident some people experience symptoms that can cause worry or nuisance. We would like to know if you now suffer any of the symptoms given below. Because many of these symptoms occur normally, we would like you to compare yourself now with before the accident. For each symptom listed below please circle the number that most closely represents your answer.

0 = not experienced at all
1 = no more of a problem
2 = a mild problem
3 = a moderate problem
4 = a severe problem

Compared with **before** the accident, do you **now** (i.e., over the last 24 hours) suffer from:

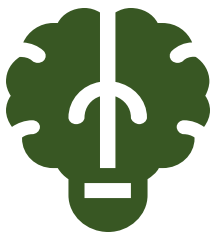
	not experienced	no more of a problem	mild problem	moderate problem	severe problem
Headaches	0	1	2	3	4
Feelings of dizziness	0	1	2	3	4
Nausea and/or vomiting	0	1	2	3	4
Noise sensitivity (easily upset by loud noise)	0	1	2	3	4
Sleep disturbance	0	1	2	3	4
Fatigue, tiring more easily	0	1	2	3	4
Being irritable, easily angered	0	1	2	3	4
Feeling depressed or tearful	0	1	2	3	4
Feeling frustrated or impatient	0	1	2	3	4
Forgetfulness, poor memory	0	1	2	3	4
Poor concentration	0	1	2	3	4
Taking longer to think	0	1	2	3	4
Blurred vision	0	1	2	3	4
Light sensitivity (easily upset by bright light)	0	1	2	3	4
Double vision	0	1	2	3	4
Restlessness	0	1	2	3	4

Are you experiencing any other difficulties? Please specify, and rate as above.

1.	0	1	2	3	4
2.	0	1	2	3	4

Administration only:

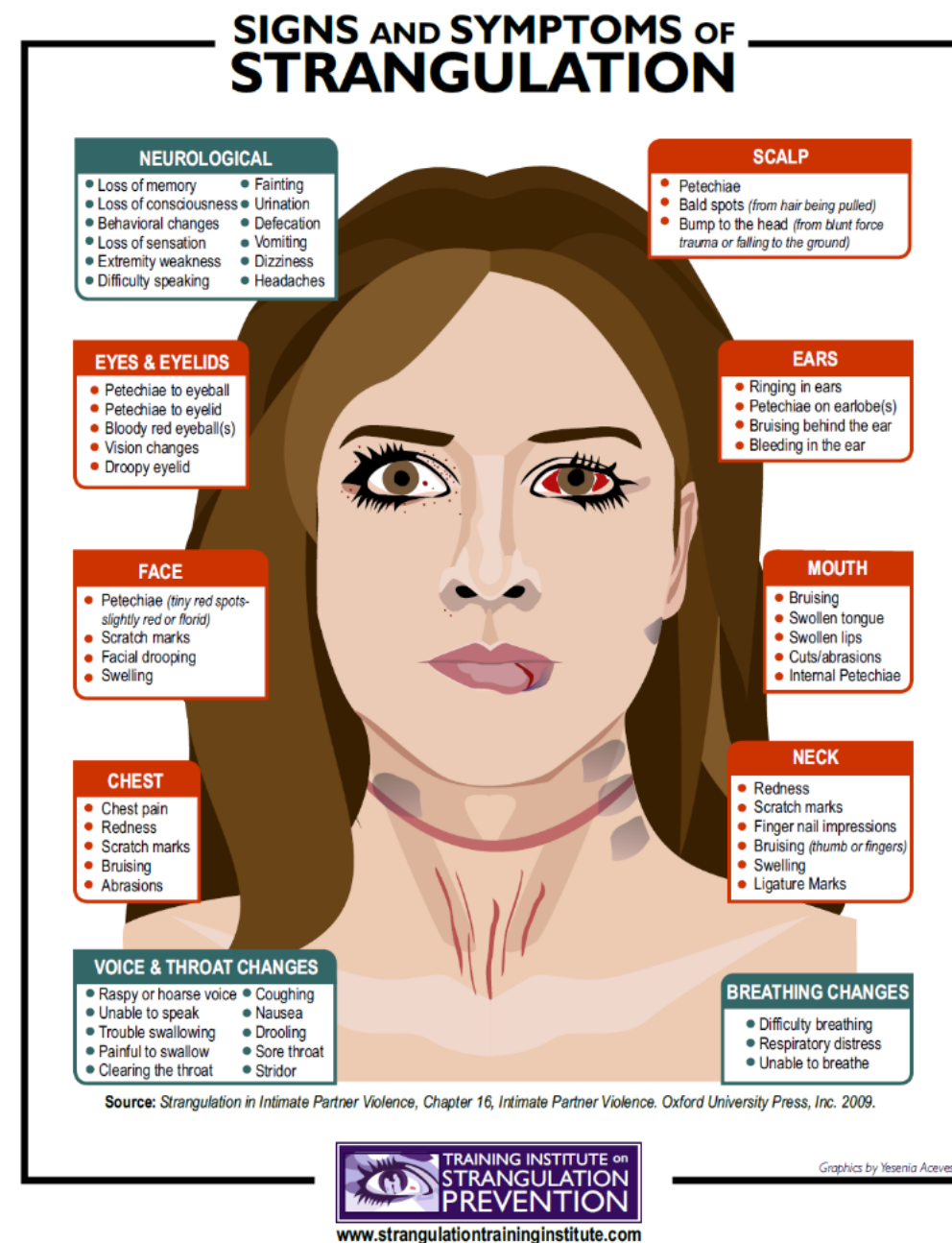
RPQ-3 (total for first three items)	
RPQ-13 (total for next 13 items)	



Strangulation

Survivors may experience...

- Neurological changes (brain injury)
- Voice and throat changes
- Breathing changes
- Injuries to scalp, mouth, neck, face, eyes and eyelids, and ears, and chest



Common Brain Injury Symptoms

Difficulty understanding directions

Appears to be slow or non-responsive to requests

Trouble remembering things

Rapid mood swings with no apparent reason

Difficulty with organization and multitasking

Acting impulsively with others


Responding too aggressively to others

Anxiety, depression and withdrawing from social interaction

Being more sensitive to lights and sounds



Supporting Survivors with Traumatic Brain Injuries



WON'T
OR
CAN'T?

Changes how we see things

Service Provision
Perspective



'6'

'9'



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strangled or
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CONNECT
ACKNOWLEDGE
RESPOND
EVALUATE

A brain injury aware, trauma-informed framework focusing on awareness, accessibility, and accommodations.

Next Steps



CONNECT
ACKNOWLEDGE
RESPOND
EVALUATE

Educate

Yourself, survivors, colleagues, and others

Accommodate and Strategize

Provide services and support survivors in a way that meets unique needs

Collaborate

With each other, DV programs, brain injury services, and other partners

PINK CONCUSSIONS

FEMALE BRAIN INJURY FROM SPORTS, VIOLENCE,
MILITARY SERVICE

HOME DONATE PRESS ABOUT DV TASK FORCE BRAIN PLEDGE RESEARCH RESOURCES PINK AWARDS AW
EVENTS CONTACT SIOBHAN

PINK Concussions Partner-Inflicted Brain Injury Task Force

Violent hits to the head and the body
can cause a brain injury.

Being strangled or choked can result in
a brain injury.



ncussions.com



PinkConcussions.com

What Do You Think?

What is one next step
for you?





Contact

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Disability Programs

Founder of The Center on
Partner-Inflicted Brain
Injury

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