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*Creating a better future through brain injury prevention,
research, education and advocacy*

Each year, at least 1.5 million Americans sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) resulting in more than 4,000 individuals sustaining a TBI on a daily basis. One million people are treated and released annually from hospital emergency rooms after sustaining a brain injury. Brain injury claims more than 50,000 lives and leaves more than 80,000 individuals with lifelong disabilities each year. The “silent epidemic” of brain injury is illustrated best by a 1999 statistic from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—***there currently are at least 5.3 million Americans living with a disability as a result of brain injury.***

With traumatic brain injury occurring every 21 seconds, this public health concern ranks as the leading cause of death and disability in children and young adults. For those who survive and their families, brain injury is life altering. Serious physical impairments are a frequent result, as are a variety of cognitive, behavioral and emotional complications. In addition, the costs related to brain injury are staggering. Individuals with severe brain injury typically face five to 10 years of intensive rehabilitation with cumulative costs exceeding \$35 billion annually.

The Brain Injury Association of America was founded in 1980 by a group of individuals who wanted to improve the quality of life for their family members who had sustained brain injuries. Despite phenomenal growth over the past two decades, the Association remains committed to its grassroots. The Brain Injury Association of America encompasses a national network of more than 40 chartered state affiliates across the country, as well as hundreds of local chapters and support groups.

The Association envisions a world where all preventable brain injuries are prevented, all unpreventable brain injuries are minimized and all individuals who have experienced brain injury maximize their quality of life.

By acting as a clearinghouse of community service information and resources, participating in legislative advocacy, facilitating prevention awareness, hosting educational programs and encouraging research, the Brain Injury Association of America and its affiliates work to reach the millions of individuals living with the “silent epidemic” of brain injury.

The Brain Injury Association of America’s Family Helpline receives approximately 15,000 calls each year from individuals with brain injury, family members and providers seeking assistance, education and support. The Family Helpline is, for many, the first point of contact and support during the tumultuous times following a brain injury. The trained Information and Resources Department, who manages the Family Helpline, provides resources to individuals involved in brain injury.

All of the Association's chartered state affiliates deliver core services in their communities, including education, advocacy, support and prevention. The affiliates act as a clearinghouse of information and resources, often available to callers through statewide, toll-free family helplines. One of the Brain Injury Association of America's goals is to provide individuals with information that will assist them in being their own best advocates.

Additionally, the Association spearheads a network of information exchange through its collaboration with the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC). A number of publications emanate from this partnership, including *TBI Challenge!*, a newspaper geared toward those affected by brain. The Association also educates its constituents with the Brain Injury Resource Center™ (BIRC™), an interactive, computer-based, multimedia system, as well as its Web site – www.biausa.org – geared toward those affected by brain injury.

Currently, prevention is the **only** known cure for brain injury. Through programs geared to all age levels, the Association devotes a great deal of effort toward teaching children and adults how to prevent brain injuries from occurring. The Brain Injury Association of America represents its interest in brain injury prevention through participation in national coalitions, including the SafeUSA Planning Council, the Healthy People 2010 Consortium and the National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration's (NHTSA) national Bicycle Safety Network. Fact sheets and current information on brain injury prevention are provided on the Association's Web site.

The Brain Injury Association of America's Government Relations Department is strongly committed to advocating at the Federal, state and local levels of government on behalf of individuals with brain injury and their families. Chief among the Association's legislative victories was the 1996 passage of the Traumatic Brain Injury Act, which was reauthorized by Congress in October 2000. The Brain Injury Association of America participates in a number of disability-related coalitions and has played an important role in the passage of legislation as diverse as the Workforce Incentives Improvement Act and the Assistive Technology Act, while working to prevent the erosion of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which protects the constitutional rights of children and adults with brain injury.

The Brain Injury Association of America is proud to be the only nonprofit organization working on behalf of individuals with brain injury and their families. The Association recognizes the tireless accomplishments of its constituents across the country—from individuals with brain injury, medical professionals and family members to educators, attorneys and corporate partners. Much of the Association's success is due to the support of these courageous people.