



Brain & Spinal Injury
Trust Fund Commission

Go Ahead, Ask

RESOURCES BY CATEGORY

Advocacy	2-4
Assistive Technology	5
Education	6-7
Emotions/Behavior	8
Employment Services	9
Financial Assistance and Benefits	10-11
Housing	12
Medical Equipment	13
Personal Support/Home & Community-Based Services	14-15
Prescription Assistance	16-17
Rehabilitation: Adult, Children	18
Transportation	
Driver's Evaluation	19
Used/Discount Vehicle Sales	20
Vehicle Modifications	21
Notes	22-24

Greetings –

Piecing your life together after an injury is difficult. You may feel like you've traveled to a country where you don't speak the language. Even figuring out which questions to ask can be frustrating.

That's why we've created this booklet. The questions and resources listed here are meant to get you started, to ease your confusion. As you go forward, remember you are not alone:

- Traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and disability for anyone under age 45 in the U.S.
- In 2005, nearly 50,000 Georgians sustained a traumatic brain or spinal cord injury doing everyday activities like driving, playing sports, and working around the house.

Fortunately, there are organizations to assist you. Here are just a few of the resources for information and referral:

Brain Injury Association of Georgia, www.birf.info – (404) 712-5504

National Brain Injury Information Center (BIAA), www.biausa.org – (800) 444-6443

National Spinal Cord Injury Association, www.spinalcord.org – (800) 962-9629

Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, www.silcga.org – (770) 270-6860

Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Center, www.paralysis.org – (800) 539-7309

Christopher Reeve Foundation, www.ChristopherReeve.org – (800) 225-0292

Agewise/Gateway Connection, www.agewise.atlantaregional.com – (404) 463-3333 (800) 676-2433

Don't hesitate. Go ahead, ask for what you need. By asserting yourself, you'll become the expert.

Sincerely,

Kristen E. Vincent, *Executive Director, Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission*

ADVOCACY: Knowing your rights and advocating for yourself is very important. Learn from and join others.

Questions to ask:

- What are my legal rights? Who do I call? *(This may be related to school, housing, public transportation, employment, accessibility or medical claims.)*
- If I'm being discriminated against because of my disability, what do I do?



Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission: See www.bsitf.state.ga.us to learn about local and federal advocacy initiatives for people with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries.

Brain Injury Association of Georgia: A charitable organization working together with families and professionals in Georgia to provide education, advocacy and support for those affected by brain injury. Call to learn about local support groups.

www.birf.info | 1441 Clifton Rd NE, #114-A, Atlanta, GA 30322 | (404) 712-5504

Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA): *Founded in 1980, the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is the leading national organization serving and representing individuals, families and professionals who are touched by a life-altering, often devastating, traumatic brain injury.*

www.biausa.org | 8201 Greensboro Drive, Suite 611, McLean, VA 22102 | (800) 444-6443

Georgia Advocacy Office: *A non-profit organization that provides advocacy to people with disabilities who have been abused or neglected, or who may need assistance in getting out of an institution.*

www.thegao.org | 150 E Ponce de Leon Ave., Suite 250, Decatur, GA 30030 | (800) 537-2329

Georgia Legal Services: *A non-profit organization that provides free legal services to low-income people in civil matters.*

www.glsp.org | 104 Marietta St., Ste. 250, Atlanta, GA 30303 | (404) 206-5175

Let's Get Together: *For nearly 20 years, Let's Get Together Inc. (LGT), is a website that has been promoting the people and groups that are making a difference in the disability movement. Provides links to topics, events, blogs and newsletters.*

www.lgtinc.org

National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA): *A national non-profit organization that strives to provide individuals with spinal cord injuries with information and resources available that will help educate and empower them to maintain a higher level of independence, health and personal fulfillment. Also provides peer support.*

www.spinalcord.org | 6701 Democracy Blvd., #300-9, Bethesda, MD 20817 | (800) 962-9629

Parent to Parent of Georgia: *Parent to Parent provides support and information to parents of children with disabilities. In addition to other resources, parents are matched with a supporting parent based on the child's disability, health care need, or special concerns. Regional offices are listed on the website.*

www.parenttoparentofga.org | Central Office, 3805 Presidential Parkway, #207, Atlanta, GA 30340
(770) 451-5484 (800) 229-2038

Southeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center: *The Southeast DBTAC promotes awareness about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accessible information technology (IT), and the rights and abilities of people with disabilities.*

www.sedbtac.org | Southeast DBTAC, 490 Tenth Street NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30318 | (800) 949-4232

State of Georgia ADA Coordinator's Office: *Provides comprehensive educational and technical support for State agencies so that those programs, services and activities operated by the State of Georgia are accessible and usable by everyone.*

www.state.ga.us/gsifc/ada | Mike Galifianakis, State ADA Coordinator's Office, c/o Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission, 270 Washington Street, 2nd Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30334 | (404) 657-7313

Statewide Independent Living Council of GA, Inc.: *The SILC of Georgia is a nonprofit, non-governmental, consumer-controlled organization that provides disability information, financial support, and technical assistance to a network of seven Centers for Independent Living (CILs) located throughout the state.*

www.silcga.org | 1431-C McLendon Drive, Decatur, GA 30033 | (770) 270 -6860

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY: Technology is transforming the lives of people with disabilities. Options range from such low-tech solutions as reading stands and modified eating utensils to such high-tech equipment as voice-activated computers. Call these organizations to see what works for you.

Questions to ask:

- What technology is available to me to increase my independence? (This may include wheelchairs or other mobility devices, home modifications, environmental controls, computers, communication devices or cognitive devices.)



Friends of Disabled Adults and Children, Inc. (FODAC): *FODAC is a non-profit organization that provides medical equipment to disabled people in the metro Atlanta area who could not otherwise afford it (they cannot ship items). Serves metro Atlanta.*

4900 Lewis Rd, Stone Mountain, GA 30083 | (770) 491-9014

Tools for Life: *The Tools for Life Assistive Technology Resource Centers (ATRCs) are "hands-on" learning centers for demonstration, education and evaluation of products available on the market today. They are also a resource for Georgians with disabilities, families, friends, health care professionals and other professionals who are interested in seeing, learning and experimenting with new and existing assistive technology.*

www.gatfl.org | Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, Conyers | (770) 934-8432

EDUCATION: Education is a right for every American regardless of their level of ability. Even so, parents of children with disabilities often encounter significant challenges to getting their child a proper education. If you are concerned, there are many organizations that can assist you with educational support for your child.

Questions to ask:

- Who can help me go back to school?
- Does my school have a “Disability Services Program” (for college students)?

Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation Services: *This organization can assist with paying for education.*

www.vocrehabga.org | vrpcustomer-service@dol.state.ga.us | (404) 657-2239 (866) 489-0001

Disability Services (for colleges): *Ask for more information at your college registrar's office.*

Georgia Department of Education (DOE): *Obtain information about parental rights for students receiving special education services, eligibility for services, and special education contact information for each county. Serving students with disabilities from ages 3-22.*

www.doe.k12.ga.us/curriculum/exceptional/tbi.asp | 1870 Twin Towers East, Atlanta, GA 30334 | (404) 656-3963

Parents Educating Parents and Professionals (PEPP): *PEPP, Inc., a non-profit corporation dedicated to improving the quality of life and dreams for all families of children, youth, and adults with disabilities.*

www.peppinc.org | 3680 Kings Highway, Douglasville, GA 30135 | (770) 577-7771 (800) 322-7065

Parent Leadership Support Project of The Georgia Advocacy Office: *The goals of the Project are:*

- *To train advocates and enable Georgia parents of children with disabilities and other concerned citizens to master information, and negotiate systems in order to secure the educational opportunities that are mandated for children with disabilities;*
- *To support grassroots parent leadership efforts; and*
- *To sustain shared learning among advocates.*

150 E Ponce de Leon, Ste 250, Decatur, GA 30030 | (800) 537-2329

Parent to Parent of Georgia: *Parent to Parent provides support and information to parents of children with disabilities. In addition to other resources, parents are matched with a supporting parent based on the child's disability, health care need, or special concerns. Regional offices are listed on the website.*

www.parenttoparentofga.org

Central Office, 3805 Presidential Parkway, #207, Atlanta, GA 30340

(770) 451-5484 (800) 229-2038



EMOTIONS/BEHAVIOR: Behavioral problems can be one of the most challenging issues facing an individual and their family after a brain injury. If you or someone you care about is experiencing emotional, behavioral or psychiatric problems caused by a brain injury contact your physician or a psychiatrist or neuropsychologist that specializes in traumatic brain injury.

Questions to ask:

- What causes behavioral problems?
- How can I manage my emotions?
- Where can I find a support group?

Agewise Connection/Gateway: *AgeWise/Gateway Connection is a free Information and Referral Assistance program for older adults and people with disabilities. Trained professionals provide information about services from a vast database about programs appropriate for an individual's situation, including: housing options, in-home services, retirement planning, home-delivered meals, utility assistance, leisure and volunteer opportunities and much more.*

Atlanta Regional Commission, 40 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30303

www.agewise.atlantaregional.com | aginginfo@atlantaregional.com | (404) 463-3333 (800) 767-2433

Brain Injury Association of Georgia: *A non-profit charitable organization working together with families and professionals in Georgia to provide education, advocacy and support for those affected by brain injury. Call to learn about local support groups.*

www.birf.info | 1441 Clifton Rd NE #114-A, Atlanta, GA 30322 | (404) 712-5504

EMPLOYMENT: The work you pursue after your injury may not be the same as what you did before, however, employment is possible. Employment services and laws, like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), protect your right to work. In fact, companies with certain government contracts are required to seek people with disabilities in order to comply with the ADA. The agencies below will help you explore your employment options.

Questions to ask:

- What support is available if I want to go back to work?
- How will my benefits be affected if I go back to work?



Benefits Navigator: *This service provides comprehensive benefits counseling to people (ages 14-65, including transitional teenagers) who are eligible for Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) to understand the impact working (earning income) will have on their benefits.*

www.bpaoga.com | Shepherd Center: 2020 Peachtree Road, Atlanta, GA 30309
Sally Atwell: (404) 350-7589; Curtis Rogers: (404) 350-7598 | (866) 772-2726

Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation Services: *Assists people with disabilities to secure jobs, vocational counseling and training, job development, and funding for goods and services that are related to returning to work, after becoming disabled. Services include, but are not limited to: home modifications, education, vehicle modifications, computers, assistive technology, and job coaching.*

www.vocrehabga.org | vrpcustomer-service@dol.state.ga.us | (404) 657-2239 (866) 489-0001

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS: Traumatic injuries are expensive. No one should underestimate the financial strain a traumatic injury can have on individuals and their families. Fortunately, several government programs and healthcare initiatives exist to relieve financial stress.

Questions to ask:

- What kind of support exists to help pay for costs related to my disability?
- Where can I get financial help or support with the personal care and daily living needs I have?
- What resources are available to help me pay for my medicines?

Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission: *The Trust Fund provides funding for services and items that will improve the quality of life, increase independence, and allow inclusion in the community for individuals with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries (priority given to those in at-risk situations).*

www.bsitf.state.ga.us | 2 Peachtree St., NW, Ste.26-426, Atlanta, GA 30303 | (888) 233-5760

Credit-Able/Getting Ahead Association: *This organization provides guaranteed loans for assistive technology, home and vehicle modifications to Georgians with disabilities, their families, caregivers, and/or employers.*

www.gatfl.org | (800) 497-8665

Georgia Department of Labor/VR Tools for Life Program: 1700 Century Circle, B-4, Atlanta, GA 30345

Georgia Partnership for Caring: *Assists uninsured residents of Georgia with non-emergency health care assistance and prescription assistance.*

www.gacares.org | P.O. Box 450987, Atlanta, GA 31145-0987 | (678) 578-2920 (800) 982-7468

Medicaid: *Provides medical assistance (doctors, pharmacists, and hospitals) to people who can't afford to pay for some or all of their medical bills.*

www.dch.state.ga.us | Call to find your local office: (800) 282-4536

Medicare: *Provides health insurance (hospital and doctor's services) to people 65 years of age and older, and some disabled people under 65 years of age (eligibility begins two years after date of injury).*

www.medicare.org | Call to find your local office: (800) 669-8387

Social Security Administration: *Provides cash benefits to people who have worked and have become disabled. This entitlement program ensures that citizens with disabilities receive benefits from this program.*

www.ssa.gov | Call to find the office in your area: (800) 772-1213



HOUSING: The Fair Housing Act protects and encourages people with disabilities to live independently, whether in their own home or in one that is accessible and affordable. Resources range from vouchers to advice on universal design for people who'd like to own or modify a home.

Questions to ask:

- How can I find someone who is qualified to make my home more accessible?
- How do I find an affordable and accessible place to live?
- How do I find assistive living or a personal care home for someone with my disability?

AARP: www.aarp.org/families/home_design/

Department of Community Affairs: *The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) operates a host of state and federal grant programs including Section 8.*

www.dca.state.ga.us | 60 Executive Park South NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30329 | (404) 679-4940 (800) 359-4663

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): *Homeownership Centers insure single-family FHA mortgages and oversee the selling of HUD homes.*

Five Points Plaza Building: 40 Marietta Street, Atlanta, GA 30303 | (800) 767-4483 (404) 331-5001

Georgia Housing Search: www.georgiahousingsearch.org/

National Association of Home Builders: www.nahb.org/directory.aspx?sectionID=686&directoryID=188

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT: If you need equipment to help you walk or to manage daily activities, look under “medical equipment” in the telephone book or ask at your local pharmacy for recommendations.

Questions to ask:

- What kind of equipment would make me more independent?
- What kind of equipment would make it easier for my caregiver to help me?

Friends of Disabled Adults and Children, Inc. (FODAC): *A non-profit organization that exists to provide medical equipment to disabled people in the metro Atlanta area who could not otherwise afford it (they cannot ship items).*

www.fodac.org | 4900 Lewis Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Mike Maijala: mmajjala@fodac.org | (770) 491-9014



PERSONAL SUPPORT/HOME & COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES: The programs listed here were established to help people with disabilities receive funding for personal care assistance so they can remain in the community and in their own homes if they choose to. In addition, home health care providers assist with daily activities, everything from bathing to community activities. You can find these providers by calling Agewise/Gateway Connection at (800) 676-2433 or look for “home health agency” in the telephone book.

Questions to ask:

- Who can I call to find professionals to take care of me in my home (attendants, home health aides, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech therapists)?
- Where can I find someone to take care of a person with a traumatic injury while I work or while he/she is home alone?

Community Care Services Program: *Provides in-home and community-based services for people who are elderly or are otherwise functionally impaired or disabled. Funding provides in-home care for those who would otherwise receive services in an institution such as a nursing facility, personal care home or group home. Average amount of 3-5 personal support hours per day. Serves all areas.*

www.northwestga-aaa.org | Area Agency on Aging: PO Box 1793, Rome, GA 30162 | (800) 759-2963

Independent Care: *Offers services that help a limited number of adult Medicaid recipients with physical and cognitive disabilities live in their own homes or in the community instead of an institution such as a nursing home. Waiting list for services. Provides an average of 6-10 hours per day of in-home care.*

www.ghp.georgia.gov

GA Health Partnerships: 1455 Lincoln Parkway, Suite 800, Atlanta, GA 30346
(800) 982-0411 Ext. 3632 or 3601 or 3643 or 3403

SOURCE (Service Options Using Resources in Community):

Offers services to adult SSI recipients with physical disabilities in order for them to live in their own homes instead of in an institution such as a nursing home. No waiting list for services.

Emory University Healthcare System (call for regional offices):
1841 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329 (404) 728-6555

Spinal Cord Injury Information Network:

www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=22411

Suite 101(disability articles):

http://disabilities.suite101.com/article.cfm/personal_care_attendants__part_1



PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE: The programs listed here help people with low incomes and/or little or no insurance afford necessary medications.

Questions to ask:

- Where can I get financial help to pay for my prescriptions?

Eli Lilly: *Lilly Answers is a patient assistance program for low-income Medicare enrollees who do not have prescription drug coverage. The LillyAnswers card allows people with disabilities under Medicare to pay a \$12 fee for a 30-day supply of certain retail-distributed Lilly drugs.*

www.lillyanswers.com | Eli Lilly and Company, Lilly Answers, PO Box 219296, Kansas City, MO, 64121 | (877) 795-4559

Free Meds and Solutions: *This organization's website offers applications to apply to 170+ programs offering 1,000+ brand name drugs. If you don't have Internet access, call their toll-free number for assistance.*

www.freemedsandsolutions.com | Med Solutions, 422 Waiālae Ave., #373 Honolulu, HI 96816-5330 | (877) 354-6337

Georgia Cares: Provides seniors and people with disabilities information about prescription drug assistance, Medicare, Medicaid, Medicare Supplemental Insurance (Medigap) and other health insurance issues. Serves *Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, and Webster Counties.*

www.lcrdcaaa.org | 1428 Second Ave, PO Box 1908, Columbus, Ga. 31902 | (800) 249-7468

Medicare: *This website offers information about public and private programs that offer discounted or free medication, programs that help with other health care costs, and Medicare health plans that include prescription coverage.*

www.medicare.org | Call to find your local office: (800) 669-8387

Pfizer Pharmaceutical Company: *Through Sharing the Care, Pfizer donates most of its advanced medicines to low-income, uninsured patients through a network of 380 community, migrant and homeless health centers across the country. Serves Wrightsville, Atlanta, and Savannah.*

www.sharingthecare.com | (800) 984-1500

PhRMA-Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association: *Helping Patients brings together pharmaceutical companies, doctors, patient advocacy organizations and civic groups to help low-income, uninsured patients get free, or nearly free, brand-name medicines. This site provides access to 275+ public and private assistance companies, including 150+ programs offered by pharmaceutical companies.*

www.helpingpatients.org | (888) 477-2669

Wal-Mart: *Wal-Mart offers over 300 different generics available for \$4 per prescription fill or refill (up to a 30-day supply). You can get these prescription drug savings whether or not you have any prescription drug coverage through your company, under Medicare or any other plan. The program is available at all Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and Neighborhood Market pharmacies.*

www.walmart.com

REHABILITATION – ADULTS: Adults who have been injured often require specialized care to rebuild skills necessary for everyday life. After an injury additional medical and rehabilitation services that may be needed include: medical management, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, cognitive therapy, assistive technology, mobility/wheelchair adaptations, sports medicine consultations, driver evaluations, neuropsychological evaluations, psychological support and vocational rehabilitation. For specific resources, see page 1.

REHABILITATION – CHILDREN: In addition to physical rehabilitation services, you should seek support for the emotional needs of your child and your family. Contact your child’s pediatrician or family physician to find local resources. It is very important to plan for your child’s return to school. Meet with the principal and/or counselor at the school your child attended to discuss the support services your child needs to make a successful transition back to school. For specific resources, see page 1.

(Note: An in-depth guide listing children’s services will be available from the Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission in early 2008.)

Questions to ask:

- I have never had rehabilitation. How do I know if I need it?
- How do I find a specialist who knows how to treat my injury and disability?
- What rehabilitation services (physical, occupational, speech therapy, cognitive therapy, and neuropsychological assessments) are available to me in my community?



TRANSPORTATION – DRIVER’S EVALUATION: The ability to travel is essential to independence. Thanks to the development of assistive technology and improved public transportation, there are many options for people with traumatic injuries to travel locally and abroad. Depending upon the level of your injury, you may need to complete a driver’s evaluation to determine the range of transportation options for you. Contact your local rehabilitation facility to find an organization that can do an evaluation.

Questions to ask:

- I cannot drive anymore. Where can I learn to drive again?
- Where can I find a used, accessible vehicle?
- Is there an organization that can modify my car or sells used modified cars?



TRANSPORTATION – USED/DISCOUNT VEHICLE SALES

Disabled Dealer Magazine: *Monthly publication offering a variety of vehicles for sale. Serves the Southeastern states.*

www.disableddealer.com | southeast@disableddealer.com | 2391 Leisure Lake Drive, Atlanta, GA 30338
(770) 457-9697

Friends of Disabled Adults and Children, Inc. (FODAC): *A non-profit organization that exists to provide medical equipment to disabled people in the metro Atlanta area who could not otherwise afford it (they cannot ship items).*

www.fodac.org | 4900 Lewis Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30083 | Mike Maijala: mmajjala@fodac.org
(770) 491-9014

TRANSPORTATION – USED/DISCOUNT VEHICLE SALES

National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association: *NMEDA, a non-profit trade association of mobility equipment dealers, driver rehabilitation specialists, and other professionals helping people with disabilities to drive or be transported in vehicles modified with mobility equipment. Its Quality Assurance Program (QAP) is the recognized accreditation program for the mobility equipment industry.*

www.nmeda.org | 3327 W. Bearss Ave., Tampa, Florida 33618 | (800) 833-0427

Georgia Dept. of Transportation: *Information about Georgia's transit system.*

www.dot.state.ga.us | No. 2 Capitol Square, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30334 | (404) 656-5267

Easter Seals, Project ACTION (Accessible Community Transportation in our Nation): *Easter Seals Project ACTION promotes cooperation between the transportation industry and the disability community to increase mobility for people with disabilities under the ADA and beyond. Extensive resources include, hotline, in-depth website, training and technical assistance.*

www.projectaction.easterseals.com | 1425 K Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005 | (800) 659-6428

The Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission enhances the lives of Georgians with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries. Guided by the aspirations of people with traumatic injuries, the Commission supports lives of meaning, independence, and inclusion. As the state's Lead Agency on Traumatic Injuries, we:

- Administer the Central Registry to identify those who are injured,
- Distribute resources through the Trust Fund, and
- Advocate for improvements in statewide services.

Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission
Two Peachtree Street NW, Suite 26-426
Atlanta, GA 30303

P (404) 651-5112

F (404) 656-9886

Toll-free (888) 233-5760

info-bsitf@dhr.state.ga.us

www.bsitf.state.ga.us

The resources in this booklet were compiled in February 2007. Please let us know if you have others to recommend; we will post them on our website, www.bsitf.state.ga.us.



Brain & Spinal Injury
Trust Fund Commission