RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF

Traumatic Brain Injury in Rhode Island

May 2022

Traumatic brain injury (TBI)

TBI is an injury that is caused by an external force to the head. TBIs can range from a mild concussion to a severe head trauma. Mild TBIs and severe TBIs have different symptoms.

Mild TBI

Memory loss

Period of confusion

Ringing in the ears

Loss of consciousness

Severe TBI

Coma

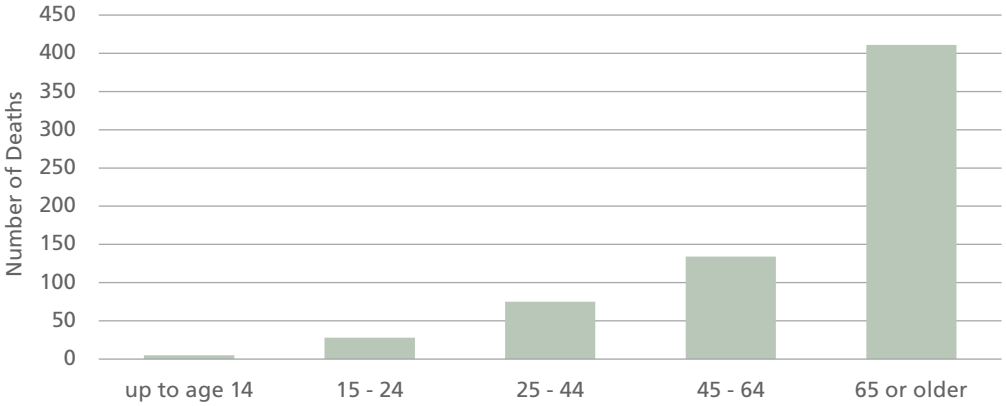
Emotional problems

Seizures

Death

You can get a TBI at any age. People who are older are more likely to have TBIs that result in long-term injury or death.[1]

TBI Mortality in Rhode Island by Age, 2016-2020



The leading cause of TBI-related death differs by age range. For children younger than age four, homicide is the leading cause of TBI-related death, and for children and adolescents age five to 14, it is motor vehicle accidents. For adolescents and adults age 15-64, the leading cause of TBI-related death is suicide, and for adults age 65 or older, it is unintentional falls.

There are simple things you can do for yourself or loved ones to prevent TBIs.

1. **Buckle up**
   Whether it's a seatbelt, a helmet, or a gun safety lock, make sure everything is properly fastened for protection.
2. **Check your surroundings**
   For children, make sure there are gates made of shock-absorbing materials at the top and bottom of every staircase. For older adults, make sure all trip hazards, such as area rugs, are removed.
3. **Phones down, heads up**
   Driving and walking are more dangerous when people are distracted. Prevent accidents. Pull over to the side of the road and stop before using your phone. If you are walking, step aside if you need to use your phone.
4. **Call a friend**
   Check in on yourself and your friends, family, and neighbors. Watch for signs and symptoms of severe depression. Get professional help when you need it.

RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF *continued*

Who is most at risk for TBIs?

In addition to age, sex also influences someone's likelihood of getting a TBI. Males are more likely than females to get TBIs.[2]

In Rhode Island, males were

10x

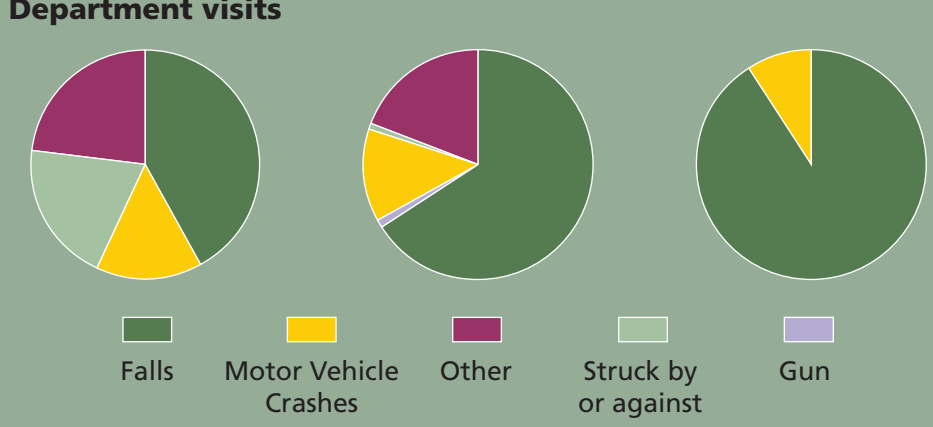
More likely to **die from TBI due to self-injury** than females

2x

More likely to **die from a TBI** than females

Causes of TBI

TBIs can be caused by many things, and TBIs can result in visits to the Emergency Department, hospitalizations, and death. In Rhode Island, accidental falls are the most common cause of TBI. Motor vehicles crashes and blows or strikes to the head are also common causes of TBIs in the state.



TBIs and Sports

It is common for children and adolescents to get TBIs while they are playing sports. In 2019, 15% of high school students in the United States reported having at least one sport-related concussion.[3]

Children's and adolescent's brains are still developing and have higher risk of negative effects from a concussion. Severe TBIs in children can impact muscle function, speech, vision, hearing, and taste and can cause changes in personality or behavior.

In terms of sports

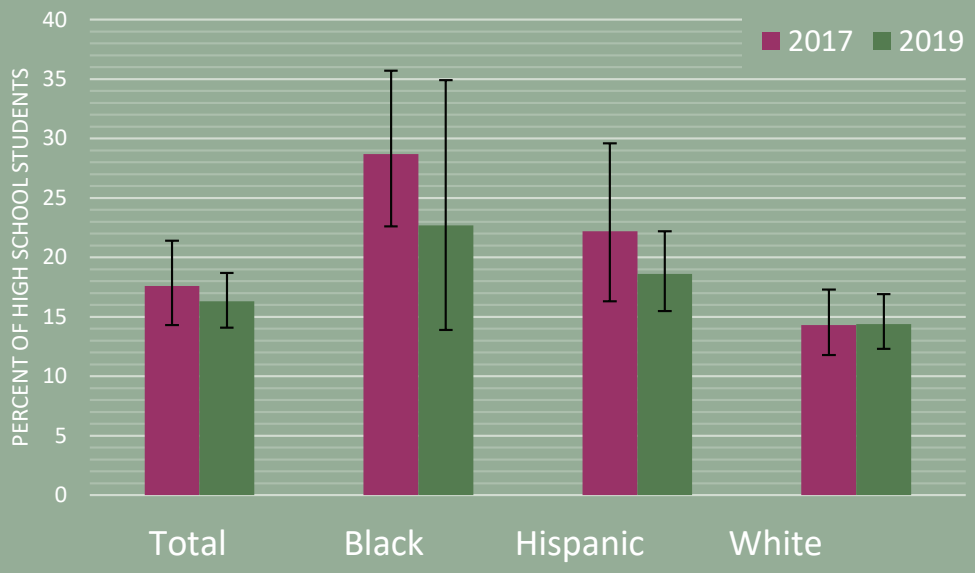
Football has the highest risk for concussion

For girls, soccer and basketball have the highest risk for concussion

RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF *continued*

Who is most at risk for TBIs?

According to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), nearly one in five Rhode Island high school students had one or more concussions. Among Black students, concussions are even more common. YRBSS data show that nearly one in three (29%) of Black high school students in Rhode Island have had one or more concussions.



Resources in Rhode Island

People living with a mild or severe TBI may need rehabilitation to improve their lives at home; find a job; manage their healthcare; and stay involved with their family, friends, and community.

General Support
Disability Rights Rhode Island (DRRI)
401-831-3150 or
401-831-5335
https://www.drri.org/

Medical and Financial Support
Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH)
401-462-3421
http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/

Medicaid
Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI)
401-462-8420, choose option 1 to get an application
http://www.dlt.ri.gov/tdi/

References

[1] *Jacobs B, Beems T, Stulemeijer M, et al. Outcome Prediction In Mild Traumatic Brain Injury: Age And Clinical Variables Are Stronger Predictors Than CT Abnormalities. J Neurotrauma. 2010;27(4):655-668. Doi:10.1089/Neu.2009.1059*

[2] *CDC. (2021). Surveillance Report Of Traumatic Brain Injury-Related Hospitalizations And Deaths By Age Group, Sex, And Mechanism Of Injury—United States, 2016 and 2017. https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/pdf/tbi-surveillance-report-2016-2017-508.pdf*

[3] *CDC. 2017 and 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at: www.cdc.gov/YRBS.*