

Teens Talking To Teens

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Video Link: <http://www.brainline.org/content/multimedia.php?id=901>

Narrator: This video is for teens and young adults who are living with a brain injury. You will meet 3 young people who will each share their personal story.

Sabrina: My name is Sabrina, I go to Edward Millen Community School. I am 18, I live in Sioux with my family. When I was 13, September 20th 1995, I was hit over the head with a lead pipe. I was rushed to the hospital with a 10% chance of living and I don't remember anything from the hospital. I couldn't speak, I couldn't walk, I couldn't eat, I remember how to swallow. I couldn't remember how to do anything.

I was really lonely after the accident. I felt that nobody understood what I was going through because they haven't been through what I have been through going through Speech Therapy, seeing a counselor, learning how to talk, eat, even to walk again, couldn't even say popsicle in the hospital.

It was really lonely, frustrating, I would cry every night before bed time. I finally clued in, I said "hey, a lot of more people have gone through it, you're not the only one." So, might as well talk about it and make sure people can understand what you're going through, because if you hold it in you get more lonely, and more depressed and you get nowhere. You just dig yourself a hole and you can't get out.

One thing I was worried about when I went back to school is everybody would treat me different like I was dumb, and most of the people did. They treated me like I was a two year old, that didn't know how to talk or anything. I had teaching assistants with me, and I had trouble talking and walking and stuff but my true friends stuck with me and they said, "hey don't bug her, if you went through what she went through you would understand."

At school when I ask for help it's easier for me, I'll just say, "excuse I am having trouble with this could you please help me," because I don't understand what they are asking. You may feel embarrassed, you get over that, you get used to asking. If you don't ask you won't get help, and you need help.

Physiotherapist: Can you turn on your side? On your right side first?

Sabrina: I can't go out and do stuff like I used to, go mountain biking, go hiking for a long time. Have to go see my Physiotherapist, and he works on my back, cracks it, and he makes sure everything is fine. Can't stay up really late, my body just seizes up.

I think after my brain injury, having a boyfriend it was really hard. Some guys thought, "Hey she has a brain injury, maybe I can get down her pants. She's dumb, maybe she'll go along with it." You have to wait, you'll get one, you just have to wait until the right person comes knocking on your door.

I've lost all my other friends, like ex-friends, who drink and do drugs and stuff, I just ignore them. I've gone out and made new friends. People sent me cards in the hospital that I didn't even know and I'm really close to them now. I have great friendships now because my friends understand what I'm going through, before they didn't. They ask me stuff about my brain injury and my friends understand.

I think it's really important to talk about your brain injury. With me, if people want to know I'll talk about it. It lifts pressure off my shoulders, it makes me feel a little bit better because people know what I've gone through. If you hold it in you'll get really depressed and desperate. If I think about what I've lost, it gets me more depressed and wish I was dead. It's really hard... [sigh] Yeah.

A lot of things have been helpful, especially my mom and my sister. They've been with me ever since the hospital, they've gone through everything and they're still by my side. My mom's everything, if I didn't have my mom I would be stuck.

When I came home from the hospital the first day was October 13th, it was a Friday the 13th and it was a happy day for me. Everybody was worried, my mom was really overprotective, I couldn't go out, and now she's given up a little bit. First day from the hospital everybody was happy but scared, scared so much. It was a relief though being at home in my own bed, it felt like I was in heaven.

Friends: Go B, go B, go go go B. Go B, woo!

Sabrina: Right now I'm proud of myself. I'm so amazed how far I've come from not even being able to say mom, where I can go to the high school for a full day, I've come a long way and I deserve it.

Goals I have, I'll just take them one step at a time after high school. Maybe go back to high school and upgrade and then go to college. Take it one step at a time, that's how I'm going to do it, one step at a time.