



Brain Injury & The Law

Goal of Training:

To enable student/volunteers to provide support and education to persons with a brain injury through the justice system

Funded by:



Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation
Fondation ontarienne de neurotraumatologie

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in volunteering to help support individuals coping with the challenges of an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) within the Criminal Justice System. . This training aims to support participants to understand brain injury and the subsequent challenges faced by individuals living with ABI. Participants of this training will also learn the relationship between ABI and the Criminal Justice System and most importantly, how to advocate for and support individuals with ABI within the Criminal Justice System to access the accommodations and support they need to have fair representation and more positive outcomes.

Project Overview: Brain Injury & The Law - A Functional Support Initiative

Individuals coping with ABI can experience challenges with emotional regulation, cognitive processing, judgement and impulsivity. These challenges can lead to behaviours that bring these individuals into contact with positions of authority within the Criminal Justice System. Without understanding and support, the emotional, cognitive and judgement challenges can lead to further issues for these individuals when they attempt to navigate their way through the court system, resulting in further difficulties and the potential for unjust sentencing.

The Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST) received funding from the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (ONF) to create this ABI & Justice Project in an effort to address this issue and increase access to fair and equitable justice within the Criminal Justice System for individuals living with ABI. The project also aims to educate individuals, their lawyers, and direct support persons on the challenges and the strategies to overcome the challenges involved, for individuals with ABI currently involved with the Criminal Justice System.

Through educational sessions, problem solving, student/volunteer training, and client support, BIST is providing those with cognitive challenges and/or ABI, and their support networks, information and support navigating the justice system.



Brain Injury 101

Did you know?

- Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is the leading cause of death and disability for Canadians under the age of 44¹.
- Approximately 20% of people will develop a problem with substance use after getting a brain injury².
- **Some studies report that approximately 70-80% of adults who are incarcerated reported history of brain injury. This may be as high as 100% for adults who are facing the death penalty in countries where this is implemented. Add references! For youth, the rate is estimated as ranging from 16-72%.³ Generally, the rate for youth is identified as 50-70% and for 30-50% of these, the TBI predates their first incarceration. (Hughes, Williams, et al JHTR 2015)**

¹ Government of Canada, 2020. Injury in review, 2020 edition: Spotlight on traumatic brain injuries across the life course.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/injury-prevention/canadian-hospitals-injury-reporting-prevention-program/injury-reports/2020-spotlight-traumatic-brain-injuries-life-course.html>

²Corrigan, J. D., Rust, E., & Lamb-Hart, G. L. (1995). The nature and extent of substance abuse problems among persons with traumatic brain injuries. *Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation*, 10 (3), 29-45.

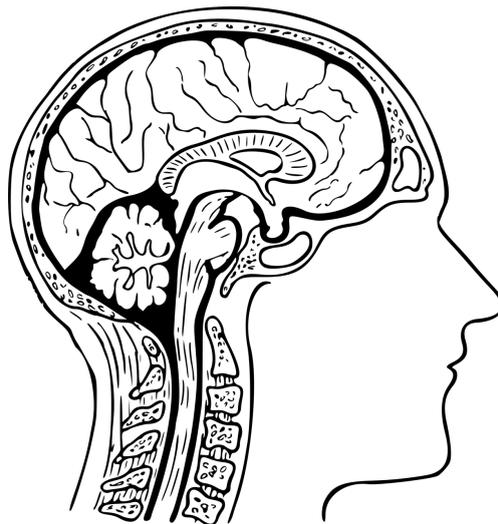
³ Durand, E., Chevignard, M, Ruet, A., Dereix, A., Jourdan, C., & Pradat-Diehl, P. (2017). History of Traumatic brain injury in prison populations: A systemic review. *Annals of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine*, 60(2), 95-101. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877065717300258?via%3Dihub>

- In Ontario, people with brain injuries have been found to be 14 times more likely to incur serious charges and 12 times less likely to achieve discretionary release⁴.
- Having a history of a diagnosed brain injury and/or repeated hits to the head, neck or face increases the risk of recidivism (re offending) by 69%.⁵

What is a Brain Injury?

An Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is an umbrella term that refers to any type of injury to the brain that, occurs after birth. . It is not a result of genetics, or a developmental delay. A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) falls under the umbrella of ABI, however, is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain (Centres for Disease Control). Common causes include a car crash, -, falls, gunshot wounds, assault (including Intimate Partner Violence, or IPV), or sports injuries.. They can be classified as mild, moderate, or severe. Some ABI symptoms may get better over time, and others may not. Some survivors who have had 'mild' TBIs can experience significant , life-altering symptoms.

A stroke, a brain tumour or an infection can cause an ABI. It can also result from external factors, such as near drowning, strangulation, substance use, overdose, or poisoning. As described above, the term Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) includes both traumatic and non traumatic injuries.



⁴ Colantonio, A., Kim, H., Allen, S., Asbridge, A., Petgrave, J., Brochu, S. (2014). Traumatic Brain Injury and Early Life Experiences Among Men and Women in a Prison Population. *J Correct Health Care*, 20(4), 1-9. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25033995/>

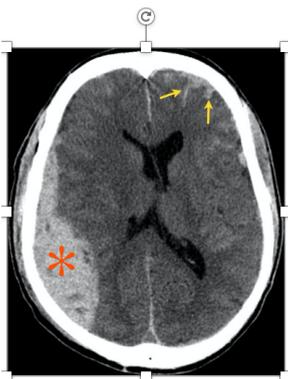
⁵ Ontario Brain Injury Association. (n.d.). Unmasking Brain Injury. Retrieved from <http://obia.ca/brain-injury-awareness-month/unmasking-brain-injury/>

Causes of Brain Injury - Examples

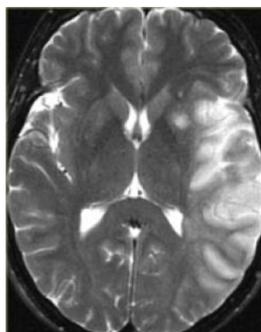
<i>Traumatic Brain Injury</i>	<i>Non-Traumatic Brain Injury</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined as “an alteration in brain function or other evidence of brain pathology caused by an external force” (Menon et al 2010) • Falls • Motor Vehicle Accidents • Assault • Struck By/Against • Industrial Accidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anoxia (lack of oxygen to the brain) • Brain tumours (either cancerous or benign) • Infections such as encephalitis and meningitis • Poisoning (including Carbon Monoxide poisoning) • Drug Overdose • Stroke • Brain Hemorrhage • Aneurysm

BRAIN INJURY

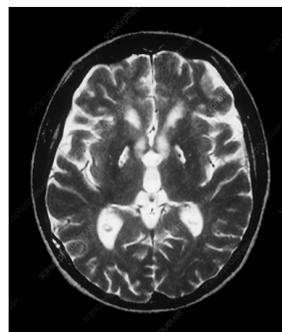
ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY



Traumatic
Brain Injury

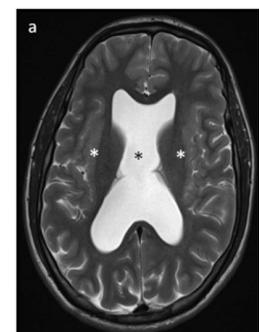


Stroke



Anoxia

DEVELOPMENTAL BRAIN INJURY



FASD

Brain Injury Can Often Be Misdiagnosed

A brain injury often results in an invisible, or hidden, disability. Symptoms can go unrecognized, by the individual living with the effects of the brain injury themselves, and by those around them.

As a result, people living with brain injury may mistakenly be considered as uncooperative when what is really happening is challenges with memory and cognitive processing issues. They may also be perceived as being unmotivated to improve their situation when this might be due to chronic fatigue, pain, and executive dysfunction (inability to initiate); appear as being emotionally 'unstable' due to problems with regulating emotions; or be mistaken as intoxicated due to slurred speech, etc.

In addition, even if an injury is identified as significant, and a person continues to experience side effects, an individual may still consider themselves fully healed because their physical injuries appear to have healed (such as a significant wound). Due to their injury, they may lack the insight to recognize that they have greater issues with judgement, risk taking behaviour or emotional regulation.

Although clients may be aware of their challenges, they may not fully understand how factors within their environments and daily responsibilities can challenge them and increase their symptoms.

With limited publicly funded rehabilitation, treatment, and support options available, it is no wonder why so many individuals with brain injury experience these challenges.

People with ABI, particularly those with moderate-severe injuries, often lose their pre-injury social support network of friends and colleagues, and many go on to experience social isolation and loneliness. Supporting clients to recognize the role their ABI may be playing in their experience of loneliness, isolation, and frustration can be empowering. Throughout the preparation for the court process, there may also be opportunities to support clients by educating and communicating with their family and friends, potentially improving those relationships, increasing their support network, and decreasing their feelings of isolation/loneliness.

A brain injury assessment tool provides questions you can ask your client to determine if they may have had an incident or head injury that may be contributing to any cognitive, emotional regulation, or physical challenges that they are managing.

Sometimes a simple question such as, "Have you been hit on the head?" as opposed to "do you have a brain injury?" may elicit a discussion revealing the type of information you are looking for.

Please note, these questions are meant for educational purposes only. The information within it should not be used to diagnose or treat brain injury in your clients.

Examples from a Brain Injury Assessment Tool

The following has been adapted from HELPS Brain Injury Screening Tool. This tool can be accessed at: <https://abitoolkit.ca/assets/images/HELPS-tool.pdf>

1. Have you ever hit your head or been hit on the head? Yes / No

Note: Prompt clients to think about **all incidents that may have occurred at any age**, even those that did not seem serious at the time, such as motor vehicle collisions, falls, assault, abuse, sports injuries, etc. Screen for domestic violence and child abuse, and also for service related injuries. A TBI can also occur from violent shaking of the head, such as being shaken as a baby or child.

2. Were you ever seen in the emergency room, hospital, or by a doctor because of an injury to your head? Yes / No

Note: There are many systemic barriers that can prevent a person from accessing medical care *and* receiving proper treatment and diagnosis. These include: discrimination on the basis of race, employment as a sex worker, immigration status, addiction issues, being homeless, etc. Others may not think they require medical attention, or are prevented from seeking treatment, if they are in an abusive situation.

3. Did you ever lose consciousness or experience a period of being stunned and /or confused because of an injury to your head?

Yes / No

Note: People with TBI may not lose consciousness but experience an “alteration of consciousness.” This may include feeling dazed, confused, or disoriented at the time of the injury, or being unable to remember the events surrounding the injury.

4. Do you experience any of these problems in your daily life since you hit your head?

Headaches	Yes / No
Writing	Yes / No
Calculating	Yes / No
Dizziness	Yes / No
Anxiety	Yes / No
Depression	Yes / No
Difficulty with problem solving	Yes / No
Difficulty at your job / school	Yes / No
Changes in relationships - including family, friends, spouse	Yes / No
Poor judgement (fired from job, arrest, fights)	Yes / No
Difficulty concentrating	Yes / No
Difficulty remembering	Yes / No

Note: Ask your client if they have experienced any of the following problems, and ask when the problem was present. You are looking for a combination of two or more problems that were not present prior to the injury.

5. Have you had any significant illnesses? Yes / No

Note: An Acquired Brain Injury can be the result of an illness such as West Nile Virus, a tumour (benign or cancerous), a stroke, meningitis, encephalitis, a poisoning or overdose. A person may have survived a significant medical event, but not recognize they have acquired a brain injury as a result.

Potential Outcomes of Acquired Brain Injury

As discussed, a brain injury is often an invisible injury. While an individual may appear to be 'fine' and functioning in their normal fashion, it is important to remember that things are not always as they seem.

Many individuals will experience complex cognition, communication (including comprehension and being able to express themselves clearly) , memory, balance, vision, hearing, pain, fatigue, and emotional regulation issues. Some may become precariously housed and experience chronic **HALT... Hungry, Angry, Lonely and Tired.**

These issues can present themselves in a variety of ways that may not be obvious to an outsider, or even a close family member. This can lead to very isolating life experiences and decreased connection to agents of support.

What you May Observe:

- Non- Compliance
- Defiance
- Disengagement
- Fabrication
- Rudeness
- Poor Motivation
- Fidgeting

What is Likely Happening:

- Trouble identifying social cues
- Difficulty with social communication and/or comprehension
- Overstimulation (lights, sounds, activity), lack of understanding, memory issues
- Reduced affect,
- Overwhelming fatigue
- Processing Difficulties
- Mental Health Challenges
- Anxiety
- Frustration
- Memory Issues
- Attention and Concentration Difficulties
- Physical discomfort requiring posture changes
- Comprehension and processing impairments (lack of understanding)

Take Away:

1. A brain injury can occur due to traumatic injury (hit to the head, motor vehicle collision, gunshot wound etc.) or to an internal event such as overdose, poisoning, suffocation, a stroke etc.
2. Brain injury can be referred to as ABI (Acquired Brain Injury), TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury), BI (Brain Injury), or concussion.
3. Every brain injury is unique. Experiences of brain injury are specific to the individual regardless of similar details in occurrence. Outcomes are also specific to the individual - determinants of outcome are influenced by injury

severity as well as other factors such as income security, support availability, therapeutic intervention, resources, location of injury in the brain, and age, to name a few. Outcomes also varies depending on with individual insight, understanding and pre-injury health and function.

4. A brain injury is often an invisible injury. It is often unrecognized and misdiagnosed for those who intersect with the criminal legal system.
5. Brain injury is a significant life altering event that results in varying levels of challenge within, physical, mental and emotional well being of the individual coping with brain injury.
6. Access and use the brain injury assessment tool referenced above.



Review

Homework

Briefly write the outline plan for your next client contact session, and consider questions you have for your client regarding their individual challenges.

What information may you have to share with your client?

What resources could you recommend? (See resources below)

Read the following:

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/#1601199723467-d93e8bcf-c446>

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/#1604626210981-75641c1e-fab6>

Take Home Points

Take some time to write down at least three strategies or knowledge nuggets that you have learned that you would like to remember or try to implement into your support model.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Resources

http://thebrainfairy.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ubi_families.pdf

<https://bist.ca/brain-injury-101/>

<http://obia.ca/abi-training-courses/>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ibij20/current>

Brain Injury & The Criminal Justice System

Brain Injury & Incarceration

Individuals living with the effects of brain injury are over-represented in the Criminal Justice System. **One Ontario study found that men and women who sustained a brain injury were about 2.5 times more likely to be incarcerated than men and women who had not sustained one⁶.**

Criminalization often occurs because people living with brain injury may engage in behaviours, due to their post injury challenges and symptoms, that can bring them to the attention of police officers. Having poor judgement, impulsivity and reactivity can create and escalate situations of conflict with other members of the community. When conflict occurs due to poor understanding of communication, members of the public can become alarmed. The arrival of a police officer on the scene may escalate this conflict for the same reasons, resulting in the person with a brain injury being charged with an offence and being taken to a police headquarters.

Racialized individuals, people who are homeless or precariously housed and / or members of the LGBTQ2S community may be even more vulnerable in these situations.

Environments such as Police headquarters may further agitate those with brain injury due to the overstimulation that is typically found there. These environments are loud, bright, fast-paced, and crowded. They are filled with individuals of authority in uniforms, which raises fear & anxiety and increases communication and comprehension challenges. This can lead to misunderstanding and less opportunity for release.

Your client's response to their situation may be seen as over-reactive, irrational, rude, non compliant, obstinate, aggressive, provoking, disrespectful, fabricating, and unremorseful. The escalation of frustration and anxiety can induce reactions that lead to charges and incarceration.

To hear from persons with lived experience discuss their challenges and interaction with the justice system watch the video, *Brain Injury and the Criminal Justice System*. on the Brain Injury Society of Toronto's YouTube Channel - ABI Justice Playlist. The video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lj16n4vWli0&t=7s>

⁶ Colantonio, A., Kim, H., Allen, S., Asbridge, A., Petgrave, J., Brochu, S. (2014). Traumatic Brain Injury and Early Life Experiences Among Men and Women in a Prison Population. *J Correct Health Care*, 20(4), 1-9.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25033995/>

Brain Injury: Concurrent, Communication & Social Disorders

Brain Injury & Concurrent Disorders

Mental health disorders are a set of changes in thinking, feelings or behaviours that occur over a period of time and interfere with a person's life. A concurrent disorder is when symptoms of two or more disorders are present in the same person at the same time. With regards to brain injury, the term concurrent disorder is used for situations where a person has a neurological disorder (brain injury) in addition to either a mental illness, substance use disorder or both. **Studies have found that 50 to 60% of all people living with a TBI have a concurrent disorder⁷.**

The most common mental health problems to develop after a brain injury are depression, anxiety and substance use disorders. Survivors of a brain injury will likely experience significant symptoms of depression and/or anxious mood at some point in their recovery. Individuals may experience changes in thinking or physical abilities that have resulted in life changes and feelings of loss. These changes can create stress and may result in changes in their mental health.

Cognitive Communication Disorders & Brain Injury

A cognitive communication disorder is when a person's communication is affected in any way because of cognitive challenges due to their brain injury. Communication refers to listening, understanding, speaking, conversation, reading, writing as well as thinking, as most often people use language to think.

Cognitive-communication disorders for those in the Criminal Justice System may be exacerbated by the following factors:

- 1) Language and Literacy Impairments:** Individuals who come into contact with the Criminal Justice System are more likely to come from marginalized families and communities, putting them at risk for impoverished early language and emergent literacy experiences. Challenges that individuals in the justice system tend to experience include having limited vocabulary, difficulty understanding words or complex sentences, and poor reading and writing skills. Language and literacy impairments put the individual at a distinct disadvantage in navigating the justice system and acting in their own interests.

⁷ West SL. Substance use among persons with Traumatic Brain Injury: a review. *NeuroRehabilitation*. 2011;29(1):1-8.

In addition, it also limits later employment and community integration⁸.

- 2) **Hearing and Auditory Processing Impairments:** Many individuals with brain injuries may also have auditory processing deficits. These are deficits in the brain's ability to make sense of the rapid incoming auditory signals of speech. In addition, due to difficulties with focusing auditory attention, individuals with a brain injury may be unable to block out sounds from the environment. They may also experience hearing loss, especially if they have been hit in the head or face repeatedly.
- 3) **Social Communication, Anger, and Aggression:** Some individuals may have significant challenges with anger management. Their heightened emotion and lack of impulse control can be a reflection of lack of emotional vocabulary and lack of the communication skills needed to express themselves in a more appropriate way.
- 4) **Stress and Self Confidence:** Most individuals who have a brain injury are aware of their challenges in a general sense. They recognize that when they are under stress their ability to communicate is even more compromised. Individuals who have a brain injury are aware of the stigma and labels that are associated with them and worry that others will perceive them as 'stupid'. With proper support, rehabilitation, environmental modifications, and communication intervention and training, those with a brain injury can live successful lives and contribute to their communities.

⁸ <http://en.copian.ca/library/research/police/factsheets/factsheets.pdf>

Cognitive-Communication Disorders And The Criminal Justice System



What are Cognitive-Communication Disorders?

Cognitive-communication disorders are a set of communication difficulties that result from underlying impairments in cognition.

Cognitive Impairments

- Attention
- Reasoning
- Memory
- Executive functions
- Information processing
- Problem solving



Communication Challenges

- Listening
- Writing
- Speaking
- Social communication
- Reading
- Understanding spoken language

Cognitive-Communication Disorders And The Legal System

Communication difficulties can have major negative consequences for individuals with a brain injury at all stages of the criminal justice procedures and beyond.



Communication difficulties can be barriers to understanding legal terms. Social communication challenges can be misinterpreted as non-compliance, rudeness, and carelessness.

Did You Know?

Approximately

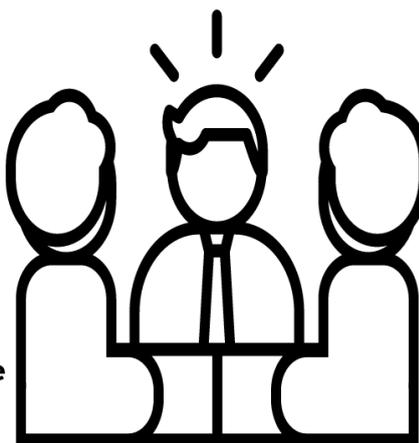
80%

of incarcerated adults have reported a history of TBI. For youth the rate is estimated from

16-72%.

How Can You Help Support Communication?

- Use **short** sentences
- Talk more **slowly**
- Do not ask 'Do you understand?'**. Get the client to tell you what they understand.
- Work with the client in a **quiet** room with limited distractions
- Pause** in between topics or complex sentences
- Let clients know they are in a safe space** and they can ask for repetition or clarification at any time



- Allow the client to **record** conversations
- Repeat** and **summarize** information frequently
- Use **diagrams, draw pictures**

For a full list of support strategies and more information about cognitive-communication disorders scan the barcode!



Social Communication Disorders

Social Communication disorders are a type of cognitive-communication disorder that refers to difficulties with knowing the right thing to say, in the right (socially acceptable) way at the right time. It refers to the ability to adapt one's conversational style, non-verbal communication, and language according to context, and relationship to the speaker. Some challenges that an individual with a social communication disorder may face include:

- Difficulty reading emotions from others' facial expressions, voices, and body language.
- Difficulty "reading the minds" of others to understand others' intentions and actions
- Difficulty adjusting language and behaviour to the context (people, places, events.)
- Knowing the right thing to do, but not recognizing when to do it or when to stop doing the wrong thing.
- Poor impulse control over language and behaviour.

You can watch Behaviour Therapist Stacey Levine discuss communication challenges after brain injury in the video, 'Communication After Brain Injury: For Caregivers' on the Brain Injury Society of Toronto's YouTube Channel. The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWg-uSMUMq4>

Communication Intermediary Support

Communication support can be developed with your client to increase a more positive outcome when they interact with individuals within their friend and family groups, with the general public, and within institutional settings.

Work with your client to develop an understanding of their specific needs. Do they need more processing time? Quieter communication due to overstimulation? Should information be broken into short sentences or written down in order for them to be able to comprehend and reply accordingly? Generally, it's better to communicate in a quiet room face to face than speak louder which may be distorted due to hearing impairment. You can also refer the client for a hearing assessment. Also, ask if one ear is better than the other. Ask THEM what helps.

Creating an information form that reflects all of this information could be key to their success in negotiating and to achieve positive outcomes. The information page can be used for their own use, (remind them of what they need to ask for and how to

respond to demands), it can also be provided to the individuals they will need to be in communication with so those parties can understand that they can best respond if accommodation is provided.

There may be many accommodations available to your client that would not otherwise be offered within day-to-day experiences, and most importantly, within situations which can significantly negatively impact their quality of life if they are misunderstood.

It may be possible for you to join your client within stressful situations to help with communication and to ask for accommodations as they progress through the Criminal Justice System. If not, practice scenarios in which clients verbally request accommodation within sessions to further their success in completing accommodation requests.

Remember to factor in the anxiety that can arise when your client is outside of your 'safe' support session. Strategies to recognize and reduce rising anxiety will also be helpful to their success. (See strategy resources).

Note: Your client may be able to access a designated Communication Intermediary support person should they come in contact with the Criminal Justice Systems. Communication intermediaries assist victims, witnesses and accused individuals who are needing to communicate with police during legal and justice situations.

If funding is available and is permitted, the Communications Disabilities Access of Canada (CDAC) service can provide training and educational resources for communication intermediaries, police, legal and justice professionals. They maintain a national communication intermediary database which can be accessed to find an appropriate support for your client.

For information about communication intermediaries, contact the Manager of Communication Intermediary Program at cimanager.cdac@gmail.com or <https://www.cdacanada.com>

Without support, any one of the above cognitive-communication challenges can lead to detrimental outcomes when individuals with brain injury come into contact with the Criminal Justice System.

You can help your client by debriefing what may have happened and breaking down the cognitive challenges that they faced within the situation.

Challenges to Consider

The following tables depict examples of some of the challenges you will likely face supporting a person with a brain injury, along with accompanying strategies.

Problems With Attention

What you may see:

- Trouble Staying tuned-in
- Looks Bored
- Fidgety
- Seeks Stimulation
- Restless

What you can Do:

- Make it active
- Use notes to focus
- Talk in short sentences - One point at a time
- Allow walking/fidgeting
- Repeat
- Make eye contact
- Break down information
- Rehearse

Problems with Processing

What you may see:

- Only hears part of the message
- Appears passive
- Seems to tire easily
- Loses attention (tunes out)

What you can do:

- Slow it down
- Write notes while you speak
- Present one idea at a time
- Ask for clarification in their own words
- Pause
- Simplify
- Check in

Problems With Memory

What you may see:

- Inconsistent
- Difficulty learning
- Seems to make things up
- Trouble recalling events
- Lack of follow through

How you can help:

- Write stuff down
- Announce topics
- Put notes/reminders in phone
- Repeat and ask for repetition
- Break each task down to smaller parts

Review

Homework

Work with your client to develop coping strategies for their anticipated individual challenges within a courtroom and in the negotiation of their justice within the system.

If your client is going to court, research the available accommodations your court house may have. (See resources below.)

Take Home Points

Write at least three strategies or knowledge nuggets you learned today that you would like to remember or try to implement into your support model.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Resources:

Communication Disabilities Access Canada - Community Intermediary Program
 Email: cimanager.cdac@gmail.com OR <https://www.cdacanada.com>

Ontario Court of Justice - How Do I Request an Accommodation?

<https://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/how-do-i/request-accommodation/>

Educational Resources

Brain Injury Society of Ontario (BIST)

<https://bist.ca/>

Headway

<https://www.headway.org.uk/about-brain-injury/individuals/effects-of-brain-injury/communication-problems/>

My Health Alberta - After A Brain Injury

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/after-brain-injury/changes-after-a-brain-injury/communication-and-language/communication-and-language-changes>



Factors to Consider: Supporting a Client in the Criminal Justice System

When you are supporting a client who has a brain injury within the Criminal Justice System, it is important to consider their cognitive and communication impairments. This will allow you to better help and support them. Below are some factors to consider when working with an individual who has a brain injury in the justice system.

- 1) Memory:** The individual may have difficulties with their short-term or long-term memory. They may have short term memory and not remember anything said or done before that immediate moment. They may also remember things in the wrong order or fill in memory gaps with false information. To support the individual's memory impairment you can repeat instructions frequently, use plain language, slow down, and/or present one idea at a time.
- 2) Transitions:** An individual who has a brain injury may have difficulty moving from one situation or environment to another. For example, if they are incarcerated they may have difficulty moving from their prison cell, to their means of transportation, to the court holding cell, and then to the courtroom. By the time they testify they may be fatigued and agitated. When supporting a client, allow them to take breaks during different transition periods.
- 3) Information Processing and Language:** Processing information and difficulties with language are another factor that an individual with a brain injury may struggle with. They may not understand legal terms and may not correctly interpret written or visual information. Therefore, when supporting a client it is important to speak in short and concise sentences, use simplified language, and to ask the individual to repeat the information back to you in their own words to ensure they understood everything correctly. Use diagrams and flow charts wherever possible to explain what will happen.
- 4) Distractibility:** An individual with a brain injury can become easily distracted by things in their environment which will affect their ability to maintain focus and answer questions. When you are supporting a client, remove as many distractions as possible. Move to a quieter location and be aware of any background noise, such as music.

Advocacy and Justice Building

The role of advocacy for an individual managing ABI challenges within the Criminal Justice System is crucial. Being an advocate, or supporting an individual to be their own self-advocate, is paramount for social justice and for individuals to achieve more positive outcomes.

Where to start:

Advocacy support needs to be provided with patience, respect, and in a way that relates to the client's individual needs.

Often the individuals we work with may not understand the depth of their challenges to attain justice. They also may not have a clear understanding of how their challenges can lead to behaviours (often exacerbated under stress) that can be interpreted as non compliant or defiant leading to further prosecution.

Use initial interviews and support sessions with your client to discuss their experiences from an objective point of view:

- Recognize the individual is the expert of their own experience
- Listen to their story and support them to understand and recognize their strengths and challenges within their experience
- Record the strengths and the challenges
- Examine the current situation (pending court visit) to determine which of the strengths and challenges on the list will need to be considered to ensure a positive outcome

Please review tools and printable forms from the [ABIJustice.org](https://www.abijustice.org) website from client side for resources to support this process:

Tools:

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/criminal-court-proceedings/>

Printable Forms:

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/>

Homework - Consider how the factors below may affect an individual, their cognitive processing, their stamina, their frustration (anxiety), and subsequent behaviours.

- Long wait times within the courthouse
- Bright lights, busy environment
- Fear-of outcome, consequences
- Officers of the law, personnel of authority (feelings of threat or that they have very little power or control of the situation)
- Decisions, comprehension challenges, and time limits, etc.

Accommodations & Preparation

The Courthouse Accessibility Coordinator is the main point of contact for information about courthouse accessibility features, and how to request accommodation of a disability for courthouse services, programs or proceedings.

To contact the Accessibility Coordinator in the courthouse that your client is attending, visit the Ministry of the Attorney General website:

https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/Court_Addresses/

It is important to determine the appropriate accommodations, the ones that you and your client have identified as needed, before speaking to the Accessibility Coordinator.

Example of Accommodation Requirements for a Personal with a Brain Injury:

- Will the courthouse offer a quiet private room with the option to dim lighting and no audience?
- Can information/questions be shared or asked in written format?
- Can the client have extra time to consider questions?
- Can questions be asked in short sentences or repeated with explanation to promote understanding?
- Can your client be moved to the front of the cue to reduce the amount of time they will wait to have their case heard?

Communications Disabilities Access Canada has information and resources to support a person with a cognitive communication disorder involved in the justice system. You can find out more about their supports and services at:

<https://www.cdacanada.com>

Task List:

Consider which challenges may arise on the day of court that may prevent barriers to your client achieving justice. Confirm the following with your client and see where you can provide support. Help them set reminders/alarms as needed.

- **Transportation:** Does your client have confirmed transportation that will allow them to arrive at court on time? (Early arrival may support a more relaxed movement through the administration process and allow them to be in a more relaxed state).

- **Cognitive Prompts:** Is your client's folder of written cues and filled-in forms in their 'court bag' to ensure all items are readily available as needed? Access the Printable Tools section of the website for more information:
<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/>
- **Self Care:** Has your client packed water, snacks and distraction materials appropriate for court and are they easily accessible?
- **Assistive Devices:** Does your client have supportive devices organized for court as needed? (For example, a cane, walker, cushions?)
- **Prepare for an Online Environment:** Virtual support may be needed for your clients appointments. See the section below for tips on how to support your client virtually.
- **Refer to Resources that May Help with Future Police / EMS Interactions:**
 - Ask if your client is interested (and able to afford) a **Medic Alert Bracelet** to help identify their brain injury to EMS personnel and to support interactions of this nature. (Cost is \$60)
<https://www.medicalert.ca/braininjury>
 - Speak with your client about the **Vulnerable Persons Registry** in their area, and how this registry may be beneficial should they come into contact with law enforcement officers in the future. Vulnerable Persons Registries in Ontario are listed here:
<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/services-to-protect-you-when-dealing-with-police-and-ems/>

Information Gathering:

The following questions can guide conversations with **your client** so you can learn what they understand about their current situation.

- What is the nature of your charge(s) as you understand it (them)?
- Do you know the next steps in the process? (For example, upcoming court dates, what documents required) (This is where a flow chart, visualization map is helpful. The court system is complex.
- Do you have, or do you need, a lawyer?
- What challenges are you facing related to your brain injury? (For example, memory, emotional, financial, housing, etc.)
- Do you need referrals to medical practitioners or social service providers?
- Do you need financial support?

- Are they dealing with food insecurity, housing issues or other issues?

When speaking with your **client's lawyer**:

- (With permission) explain your client's brain injury and tell them what is needed to make communication successful
- If necessary, remind them your client has the legal right to accessible communication under the Accessible Canada Act and Ontarions with Disabilities Act.
- Ask them to write down important information for the client
- Ask them to speak slowly, pause before changing ideas or topic
- Ask about the challenges they are experiencing with your client
- Ask them to explain using different words for the client
- Ask what support can you provide to help (i.e. reminders, collecting documents, explaining information)

Go to <https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/> for printable forms and resource aids for use with lawyers

If additional help is needed, ask a local brain injury association if there is a support person you can further connect the client with to talk to or bring with to appointments. (See Resources, Page 45)

Remember: The client can request a Communication Intermediary to be brought into court to help them. This is a qualified speech and language therapist/speech pathologist who has had additional training to help people in the legal system with their communication.(See Resources, Page 45)

Summary of Recommendations:

Again, (we can't stress this enough) listen to your client. They are the expert of their situation and will understand which strategic skills noted above can best help them. Support understanding and use of the strategies. Make sure to script scenarios that may arise within the proceedings. Practice the use of strategies and problem solve anticipated outcomes. Uncertainty and processing challenges can create overwhelming anxiety.

Support the individual to understand what they can control, follow through with personal strategies, and consider the use of calming and coping techniques such as cognitive behaviour practices, breathing exercises, or calming strategies, to manage anxiety and frustration (See Appendix A for resources).

Before communicating with their lawyer or proceeding to the police station, law office or court room, support your client to:

- Review the possible accommodations, community resources and legal supports that may be available and prioritize your client's input in deciding which resources may be best for them to use.
- Support your client to prepare tip sheets to remind them of the strategies they have chosen to use.
- Develop scripts of dialogue to which they can refer to, to answer questions and explain situations which may be discussed within lawyer sessions, the courtroom, or within conversations with police personnel.
- Support your client to develop (if it is their wish to do so) an information sheet they can provide to any new persons assigned to their file which can provide education and insight into their challenges and resulting behaviours.
- Ask if you can be present for discussions when requesting accommodations. Be prepared to support communication if events become overwhelming for your client and you see opportunities for you to de-escalate situations on both sides of the conversation paradigm. Please note:

You MUST discuss this role with your client, and get their consent, beforehand. Be sure your client agrees to:

- The **DETAILS** of what you will discuss - including their personal information
- **HOW** this information will be discussed (written, verbal or both)

Review

Take Home Points – Write down any lightbulb moments / golden nuggets of information you learned this session and want to remember.

Homework - Investigate what accommodations the individuals within the courtroom are willing to provide your client based on their individual needs.

Take Home Points: What I Want to Remember

Take some time to write down at least three strategies or knowledge nuggets that you learned today that you would like to remember or try to implement into your support model.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Resources:

Printable Tools from abijustice.org

For people living with brain injury and their support people:

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/>

<https://bist.ca/brain-injury-101/>

For lawyers:

<https://www.abijustice.org/legal-professionals/resources-printable-tools/printable-tools/#1601515952406-23525a20-2a74>

Mental Health Resources

AbilitiCBT

FREE online support for issues such as anxiety, depression, anxiety related to a pandemic, pain management and insomnia for residents in Ontario.

https://myicbt.com/home?gclid=CjwKCAiAtej9BRAvEiwA0UAWXv_WEQehRPt1YQsXTpodY7SV-RP5_3dzwd6XYPK2TK1P6SrG3N3vMRoCzWlQAvD_BwE

Psychology Tools - Dialectical Behaviour Therapy

<https://www.psychologytools.com/professional/therapies/dialectical-behavior-therapy-dbt/>

Healthline

Breathing exercises for anxiety.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/breathing-exercises-for-anxiety>

www.abijustice.org

Support and soothe tools you can make from low cost items.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-Kyrs-8VXU>

Bench Warrants

A **Bench Warrant** is an order issued by a judge to a police officer for the arrest of a person who has failed to appear, or remain at, a hearing or trial. A bench warrant is a form of arrest warrant.

A **Discretionary Bench Warrant** occurs when a person has failed to appear in court. The court may allow the person to attend the next appearance by issuing a bench warrant 'with discretion' - this process usually requires the person to have a lawyer they are in contact with - and the lawyer has appeared in court or has sent a message on their client's behalf. This process usually only applies to set date appearances, not trial or substantive motions. The matter is moved to another date and, if the person appears at that time, the warrant is cancelled. If the person fails to appear, a bench warrant is issued.

If there is a bench warrant in your client's name, help them find a lawyer with experience in dealing with brain injuries to better assist them.

If your client cannot afford a lawyer (which is often the case) contact **Legal Aid Ontario**. Legal Aid Ontario provides materials for people with disabilities in alternative formats upon request.

Contact Legal Aid Ontario-Legal Aid for Disability at:

<https://www.legalaid.on.ca/accessible-services-for-people-with-disabilities/>

Depending on factors, such as where your client lives and their age, your client may be able to access other community legal resources. Find out more at:

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/where-to-get-help/legal-resources/>

Additional Information:

- It is the job of the accused to **show up** in court. If the client fails to appear, it is advisable to have a criminal defence attorney advocate on their behalf.
- The lawyer may be able to convince the court that only a bench warrant with discretion should be issued. This will allow the client another opportunity to

attend court without an additional criminal charge or being arrested and held in custody until the next appearance or their trial.

- If a bench warrant is issued without discretion, the client risks being arrested in the community or more likely (unless it is a serious charge) arrested the next time they attend court and charged with failure to attend court and breach of their release.

What to do if there is a Bench Warrant in Your Client's Name:

Bench warrants occur when an individual does not comply with a court order. Your client may be in this position if they forgot, could not attend, or were ill for their court date and did not notify anyone of their need to be absent.

A bench warrant is released to the police within days of being issued unless a valid explanation is provided for the person's absence. **Often individuals with a brain injury miss court dates and are issued bench warrants, because of organizational, communication or comprehension challenges rather than a refusal to comply.** Other reasons a person living with brain injury may miss a court date could be due to logistics which may be simple to solve with support, such as not being able to find the courthouse or afford public transit. It is important to note these issues will not be considered a valid reason unless the issues are related to, and explained, as part of their post-brain injury challenges.

If your client is issued a bench warrant, their lawyer or duty counsel may be able to assist in getting the warrant rescinded (cancelled). **Legal advice should be sought in any situation where a bench warrant has been issued.**

With legal help, bench warrants may be rescinded under certain scenarios, including:

- If only a couple of days have passed since a client missed court.
- If there is proof the client experienced an emergency and could not attend the scheduled court date.

If the court does not agree to cancel the warrant, the client may be arrested at the courthouse and held by police until they have a bail hearing. It might be several days until the client is released from jail. This is why it is best to have a lawyer informed and

available to intervene on your client's behalf. Lawyers can negotiate difficult scenarios ahead of time. Otherwise, your client could be at risk of being arrested at the courthouse.

If a lawyer negotiates a surrender to the bench warrant before your client attends at a police station to address the bench warrant, there is a higher likelihood they can be released from the station with a promise to appear in court, rather than be detained in custody for a bail hearing.

Courts are more likely to issue **discretionary bench warrants** if the client's absence has been explained. If your client is unable to go to court on the date scheduled, it is important to have a lawyer attend on their behalf. If the client does not have a lawyer and qualifies financially, a legal aid certificate can be issued to have a lawyer appear on their behalf.

If a person MUST MISS a court date, they should:

- Tell duty counsel (if they qualify financially) or their lawyer
- Have a family member or friend attend on their behalf - this should be used as a **last resort** as it could lead to the client's arrest

Being Released on Bail

Oftentimes, people do not know how to get their belongings back from jail after being released from a bail hearing. Ask if there is a support service onsite for support with bus tickets, clothes, food, medication, or the holding center. Call 211 if assistance is needed.

Review

Take Home Points – Write down any lightbulb moments / golden nuggets of information you learned this session and want to remember.

Homework - Write at least three strategies or knowledge nuggets that you learned today that you would like to remember or try to implement into your support model.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Resources:

Legal Aid for Disability:

<https://www.legalaid.on.ca/accessible-services-for-people-with-disabilities/>

Community Legal Resources :

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/where-to-get-help/legal-resources/>

Questions to Ask Your Client's Lawyer

The following questions are important to ask your client's lawyer in order for you both to provide effective support and legal representation.

- Can you explain the charges against the client?
- What are the consequences the client is facing?
- What documents does the client need to support their case?
- Does the client need witnesses? Do you need their contact information?
- Does the client need character witnesses?
- Does the client qualify for a diversion program, such as the Mental Health Diversion Program ?
- Do you need access to the client's medical file and/or support agencies?
- Does the client need to give you permission to speak to their medical professionals or social service providers?
- What are the steps throughout the process?
- How much will it cost to handle the case?
- Is there anything the client can do to keep the costs lower?
- What are some payment options?
- What is the best way for the client to keep in touch with you?
- How will you get in touch with the client? (Remember to list your preferred methods - for example, ask that items not be mailed to the client, if they forget to collect or open your mail.)
- What is a list of items or documents that the client needs?

Other than the above logistical questions regarding your client's needs, you can take the opportunity while on the phone with the lawyer to ask the following questions:

- Are they experiencing challenges in supporting your client?
- Is there any support you can provide to help? (Such as reminders, collecting documents, explaining information.)
- Do they need referrals to medical practitioners/social service providers?
- Do they need financial support?
- Do they need support with other factors to help stabilize the client within this process - i.e. food security, housing etc.

Resources:

abijustice.org

Court Diversion Programs in Ontario

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/where-to-get-help/court-diversion-program/>



How to Better Support an ABI Survivor: Tips

How to Create an Accessible Office/ Interview Meeting Space

- Beforehand, ask the client if they have any accessibility needs to prepare for the meeting, such as physical, mental or emotional triggers or sensitivities.
- Be aware that fluorescent lighting can be very harsh on eyes and can trigger headaches for persons with brain injury. Allow the individual to wear sunglasses or hat if they have light sensitivity or offer to turn fluorescent lights off.
- If curtains or blinds are open, ask the client if they prefer them closed.
- Ask the client what time of day works best to address their fatigue.
- Limit distractions by turning off your phone, background music, and asking co-workers not to interrupt the meeting.
- Offer water to encourage hydration.
- Have snacks available.

Things to consider during a meeting with an ABI survivor

- Provide a simple summary of what the client should expect at the meeting.
- Keep the meeting brief and focus on pertinent information only.
- Ask the client throughout the meeting if they understand and can repeat back the information to ensure they understand.
- Make the font big and clear on documents.
- Assist in setting up a reminder/calendar prompt for the next scheduled meeting or court date.

How to Participate in a Virtual Meetings with Clients who live with Brain Injury



BEFORE THE MEETING: BE PREPARED

- Ask your client what is the best time of day to schedule a meeting in terms of their energy.
- Ask ahead of time if there is a platform that your client feels more comfortable using. (Examples of virtual platforms include Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp).
- Test all technology; Internet access and the meeting link beforehand to ensure everything runs smoothly.
- Prepare a list of information and documents that you require for the meeting. Give this to your client in advance.
- Prepare an agenda and give this to your client in advance.
- If possible, ask a support person to attend the meeting with your client to help record information. Remember, virtual meetings do not require your client and support worker to be in the same location as each other, they just both need access to technology.
- Find a quiet place to hold the meeting so there will be minimal interruptions.

DURING THE MEETING

- Use headphones to block out any distractions.
- Ask if you can record the meeting to assist with memory and note taking.
- Speak slowly, summarize main points and ensure only one person speaks at a time.
- If your client is unable to look at a screen for an extended time, provide some solutions such as: keeping the volume on and block their screen so they can lie down and put a cold compress on their eyes if it helps.
- Ask if your client needs to take a break.
- Try to make the meetings to be as brief as possible.
- Keep yourself muted to reduce background noise and distractions unless talking. Ask others to mute their backgrounds to avoid distractions.
- Be open to repeating elements for clarity.
- Provide a written summary of the meeting outcomes and email it to your client and/or their support worker. You can also send the recording.

If you need support with any of these items when working with a brain injury survivor, contact BIST or your local Brain Injury Association: <http://obia.ca/abi-associations/>.

www.abijustice.ca

Project Funder



www.bist.ca

Support and Soothe Tools

The following Support and Soothe Tools are useful to keep on hand. If you are supporting the client virtually, review this list and see what they are comfortable carrying these items around with them. If the client wants to take some of these items to court, confirm with the courthouse or police station that the client has permission to have and use these items.

Breath Mints and Hand Lotion

If your client is anxious and needs some grounding tools, try offering a mint. The mint will support the client by allowing them to focus on the taste and coolness. An alternative is hand lotion. Ask if they prefer scented or unscented.

Stress Balls

If you notice your client is fidgeting with their fingers or biting their nails, try offering them a stress ball. Suggest they roll the ball across their arms or squish it between their fingers. Consider getting different kinds of squish balls such as balls that are heavier in weight, different textures, and ones that make noise.

Coil Bracelets and Rubberbands

If you notice that your client is distracted and looking around or zoning out at times, offer them elastic bands or coil bracelets. The coil bracelets and elastic bands are worn on the individual's hand. The snapping of the rubber bands helps to decrease unwanted thoughts, alleviate anxiety, and improves focus.

Cold Water and Ice Packs

If you notice your client is becoming overwhelmed, overheated, or if they express that they are feeling dizzy, lightheaded, irritated, anxious, offer them an ice pack or a cold glass of water. The reason for the cold water or ice pack is that the temperature change brings down emotional stress for the individual.

Preparing for Court

Before the court date, tell the lawyer about any assistive devices or strategies you and your client have identified as needed. Request that the lawyer advise the court of these challenges prior to the court date and request available accommodations before your client attends court.

You may need to help provide medical documentation about the client's need for these devices or services. Contact the hospital that provided any medical service for their injury. Contact their family doctor for copies of noted requests for management of symptoms. Contact any former caregivers for documentation on support needs. Have the client prepare a detailed letter of the injury occurrence and outcomes if this is relevant to their situation.

Your client's needs may include:

- Mobility issues which require assistive devices to help them get around.
- A hidden physical disability which may mean they have trouble standing up or have difficulty sitting still for an extended time.
- Special eyewear or sunglasses to support any issues they may have with light sensitivity (the lighting in courtrooms can be very harsh.)
- Noise cancelling headphones if they have noise sensitivity.
- Any self soothing strategies the client uses.
- If they require an interpreter.
- If they need communication support, talk to the lawyer about a communication intermediary.

Practical Support

Help your client learn how to get to court; going there before the actual court date and doing a travel trial can help. The paperwork will tell you what courtroom the client will be in on their scheduled court date. **Remember to help the client prepare everything the night before, such as:**

- Devices to limit triggers such as sound and lighting (you may need medical documentation to be allowed to do this, advise your client's lawyer ahead of time about any needs the client may have.)
- Any medications needed.
- A court binder and any other documents your client may need.
- The client's accessibility identification card to help explain assistance they may require.

Potential Challenges & Strategies on How to Deal with Them

Challenge #1 - Long wait times - There are many cases scheduled

Strategy: Let the lawyer and/or support person know if your client is leaving the area to take a break .

Challenge #2 - Remand: proceedings are pushed to another day. The court will provide a new date to come back.

Strategy: Write the new date down and/or set an alarm in the client's phone before the new court date.

Challenge #3 - Courtroom Environment: since courtrooms are open to the public, proceedings may be overwhelming or hard to follow due to people walking in and out.

Strategy: Try to help the client pace themselves, ask the lawyer how many times the client can ask for breaks. Use assistive devices such as sunglasses and headphones.

Court Information, Etiquette & Procedures

Courthouses have specific rules, procedures and etiquette to follow. When a person is not familiar with these procedures, they can be very confusing and overwhelming, particularly when a person is dealing with the stress of being in trouble with the law and living with brain injury.

Before entering the courtroom, you may be searched. There will be metal detectors and court security may ask to search your belongings. Make sure there are no sharp objects on you or your client because entrance into the courtroom may be denied. Please see the list of prohibited items below for more information.

Once you have entered, check the daily hearing list for the courtroom number and time of your client's hearing. Make sure to be on time; if the client is late, they may be asked to wait outside of the courtroom until there is a break. This will make a long and stressful day even longer.

Prohibited Items

Any item that can be used as, or considered, as a weapon is prohibited in court. Have the client check their pockets and bags before leaving the house to make sure that they do not have these items on their person.

Examples include:

- Toy guns or imitation firearms
- Any type of knife or scissor
- Hypodermic needles, syringes or auto-injectors unless for personal medical use (needle guard is in place)
- Martial arts equipment
- Animal sprays

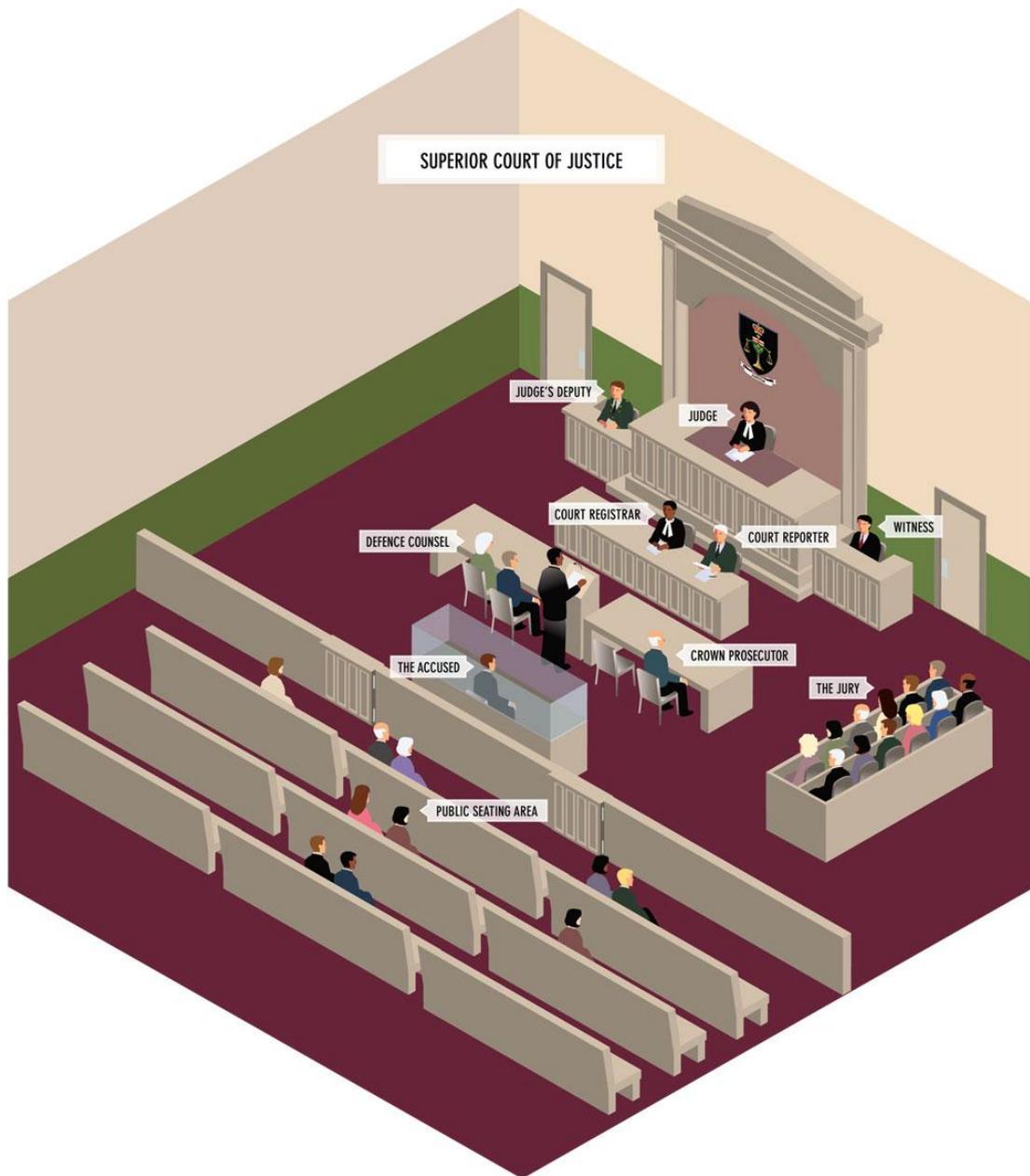
You can see a full list of prohibited items at:

<https://www.cas-satj.gc.ca/en/about/security-screening.shtml#tips>

Sample Court Layout

Before your client goes to court, try to familiarize your client as much as possible with how a courtroom looks. Below is a sample court layout. StepstoJustice.ca has an interactive sample court layout available online:

<https://tools.stepstojustice.ca/criminal-law-ontario-court-of-justice/>



Review

Take some time to write down at least three strategies or knowledge nuggets that you learned today that you would like to remember or try to implement into your support model.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Urban Versus Rural: Resource Comparisons to Consider

✓ More Resources ⚠ Fewer Resources

Urban	Rural
May be difficult to navigate with a Brain Injury: agencies, courthouses and legal supports are spread further apart and commute times are likely more complicated and longer. ⚠	Easier to navigate in smaller cities with a Brain Injury: agencies, courthouses, legal supports ✓
More available legal representatives ✓	Limited legal representatives ⚠
Higher likelihood of vehicle related head injuries ⚠	Lower likelihood of vehicle related head injuries ✓
Employment is more available ✓	Higher unemployment rate ⚠
Very busy, can feel like a client number, rather than someone vital ⚠	More of a community-feel, higher likelihood of feeling needed ✓
More doctors are available for support, including specialists ✓	Fewer family doctors, specialists are more likely to be in urban settings ⚠
Courthouse Accessibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible - More exposure to ABI clients - More funding - Will adapt when needed. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialized lighting - Advocacy - On a case-by-case basis 	Courthouse Accessibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited - Will adapt when needed. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpreters - Dimming lights - Specialized lawyers - Note takers - Larger fonts - Medical documentation needed

Resources:

www.abijustice.org

ABI Justice is the first and currently the only resource in Ontario that aims to decrease common barriers that become present for persons with brain injury when faced with legal matters.

The following links from the website have information on community services and resources you will find useful with supporting a person with a brain injury.

ABI Associations

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/where-to-get-help/brain-injury-as-sociations/>

Court Diversion Programs

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/where-to-get-help/court-diversion-program/>

Community-based Organizations and Programs

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/brain-injury-support-services-in-toronto/>

Printable Resources

<https://www.abijustice.org/brain-injury-community/printable-tools/>

Communication Disabilities Access Canada

Communication Intermediaries

<https://www.cdacanada.com/resources/access-to-justice-communication-intermediaries/about/communication-intermediaries/>