



BrainSTEPS
Strategies Teaching Educators, Parents, & Students
A BRAIN INJURY SCHOOL RE-ENTRY CONSULTING PROGRAM

Best Practices for Implementing Pennsylvania's BrainSTEPS Program

www.brainsteps.net

Structure and Organization of the BrainSTEPS teams

- Team membership will vary according to local structures. All teams should have a parent of a student with a brain injury, a school psychologist, and representation by medical rehabilitation in addition to personnel identified by the Intermediate Unit or school district.
- All BrainSTEPS teams will have at least one team leader.
- All BrainSTEPS teams will hold monthly team meetings.
- All team members will be included in monthly meetings, even if they are unable to attend in person. Options such as teleconferencing and joining meetings by webcasting should be explored.
- An annual BrainSTEPS team plan will be developed by each individual team by June of each year, to determine monthly meetings, goals for the coming year, etc. A copy will be provided to the Program Coordinator by the end of June.
- The Team Leader or designee will send email to all team members when a new student referral is received.
- Teams will include the BrainSTEPS Program Coordinator on email correspondence (eaganbrown@biapa.org) to team members regarding students and/or referrals, so that she will be able to help with effective problem solving.
- Team Leaders, or an appointed team member, will attend monthly team leader teleconferences, facilitated by the BrainSTEPS Program Coordinator.

Minimum Expectations of each BrainSTEPS Team:

- Provide consultation service to all students referred. Consultation and training services vary depending on individual student injuries and educationally based needs.
- Teams will accept referrals for all students who sustain acquired brain injuries occurring at any time during the student's life.
- Teams will respond to student referrals received within 1 week.
- Provide education on brain injury to those in the school working with the child for all referrals to the BrainSTEPS program
 - This can take on many forms: group trainings, individual education with teachers, education provided in the context of meetings.

- Written information is the minimum that should be offered in such a situation.
- Teams will utilize the BrainSTEPS Brain Injury Supports Framework for all concussion referrals, as well as for all students who require informal academic adjustments/accommodations.
- Communication with the parent of every child that is referred.
 - Ideally this would be handled by the parent on the team, but if that is not an option, another team member should be identified to take on this responsibility.
 - Offer education about brain injury and the educational process to parents.
 - Keep parents informed of the activities of the BrainSTEPS team.
 - Connect parents to resources within their community.
- The frequency and intensity of intervention will vary by student.
- For students who need active consultation, the team will discuss students monthly.
- For students who do not need active consultation, the team will check in with relevant school staff and parents annually until graduation.
- In cases where an IEP/504 Service Agreement meeting is necessary, one team member will make every effort to attend.
- BrainSTEPS teams will provide educational presentations about brain injury in their local areas including hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and schools.
- All team members will regularly input student referrals and document all consultation activities on a regular basis into the ORBS (Online Reporting BrainSTEPS) database found at www.brainsteps.net.

Development of Expertise of Team Members

- All team members must have attended the initial BrainSTEPS new team member training.
- All team members must have successfully completed the online official BrainSTEPS: Return to Learn Concussion Management Team Training
- All team members will participate in a 1-2 day Capacity Building training annually.
- Team Leaders will attend biannual Team Leader Workshops in person or send a representative from the team in their absence.
- Team leaders will call in monthly to a conference call held by the Program Coordinator for Program updates.
- Team leaders will participate in a statewide BrainSTEPS listserv for all Team Leaders.