



BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY OF TORONTO



EDUCATION



ADVOCACY



SUPPORT

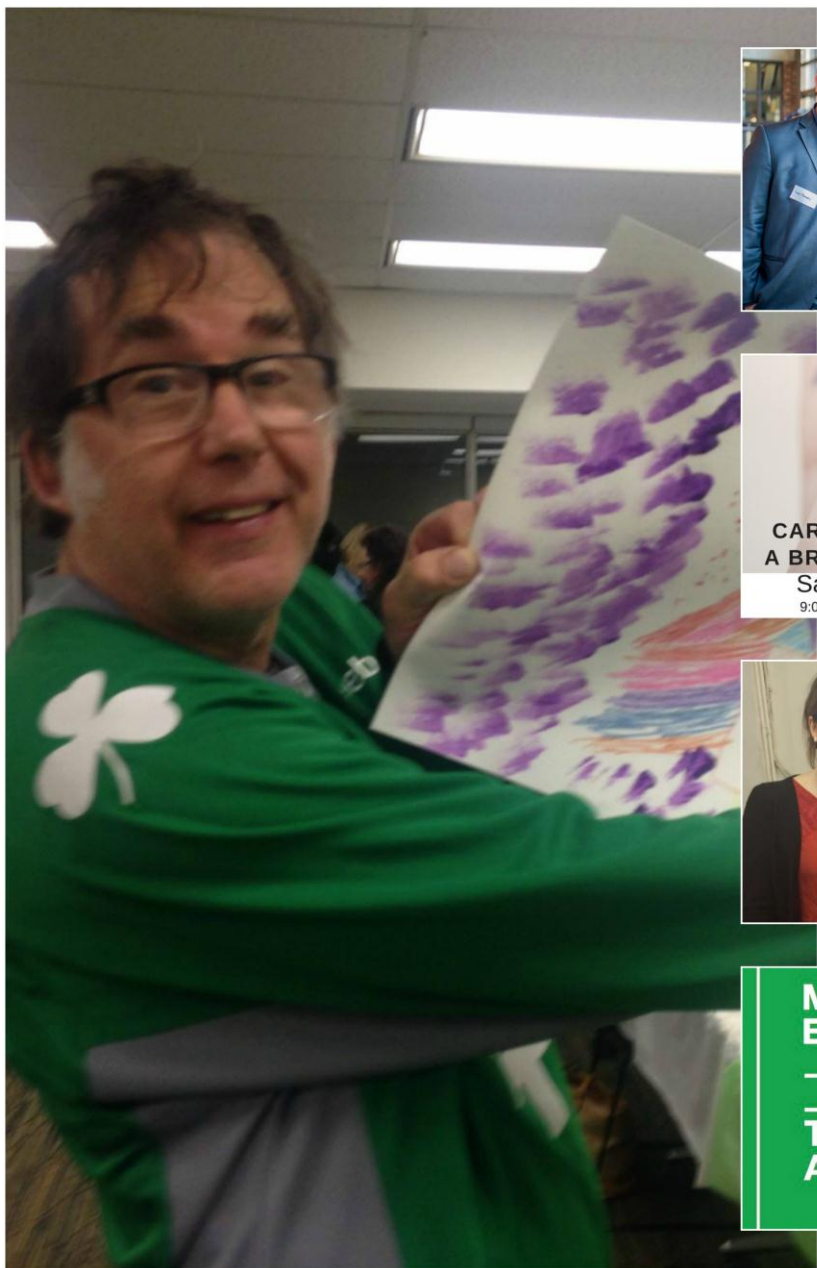


AWARENESS

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

BIST
Brain Injury Society of Toronto





**CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH
A BRAIN INJURY? JOIN US ON**
Saturday March 5th, 2016
9:00 AM TO 12:00 PM | Registration - 8:30 am



**MEN
EXPERIENCE**

**TWICE AS OFTEN
AS WOMEN.**

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to contribute to the Annual Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016. Each year BIST continues to evolve and respond to the needs of its members, by enhancing services, creating new opportunities and bringing in new members, staff and board members to help shape us in keeping with ALL aspects of our Vision and Mission.



The mission of BIST is: to enhance the quality of life for people in the City of Toronto, living with the effects of acquired brain injury through education, awareness, support and advocacy. This is a huge undertaking. The need is limitless, but our small organization has limits on our reach, which is why we are so dependent on our own community to be ambassadors for our cause.

Providing support and running programs continue to be our priority and over the past year we have risen to the challenge and have so much to be proud of in the number of different ways in which we have been able to do this.

BIST offered community meetings, support groups, and workshops this year. For the first time BIST organized a Community Resources Fair that brought together many community providers, beyond the brain injury community, who shared information on the incredible services and supports they offer to all members of the larger GTA community. Some wonderful connections were made.

The BIST Board of Directors is hard at work behind the scenes working on meeting the goals set out in our operating plan. This plan is based on the big picture strategic direction that ensures BIST is achieving our mission. In going through this process we continue to look at ways of reaching new individuals, increasing our membership, improving our programming, and ensuring the sustainability and longevity of BIST.

This year, BIST has seen a number of staffing changes that have at times delayed our progress, but with change comes opportunity for new ideas, new direction, and growth. At the end of 2015 we said goodbye to Michelle McDonald, BIST's first Executive Director, who although moved away with her family, has remained an active member of the BIST Run committee.

During the transition period, we were so grateful to have the support of Kat Powell and Meri Perra, our BIST staff who truly stepped up and went above and beyond to ensure that there was no interruption to services.

BIST continues to enjoy the success of our key fundraising events, the Mix and Mingle and BIST 5 KM Walk, Run, Roll. For the first time in 2015, we held our Birdies for Brain Injury Golf Tournament to great success. Our corporate sponsorship also provides much needed financial support to ensure our programs continue running. These events would not be possible without the volunteer time and effort by so many from our community including rehabilitation providers, lawyers, family members and survivors. We are so grateful for all of your time and effort.

This year our areyouaware.ca campaign went mobile on the TTC. This provided an opportunity for further outreach to those not aware of BIST. We are hoping for continued success and even more opportunity to get the word out.

As Chair of the Board of Directors I want to take a moment to thank the board members leaving us this year – Teresa Korogyi, Susanna Cooke, and Judy Moir.

I want to make special mention to Judy Moir, who has given so much to BIST in her six years on the board, including three years as Chair. Judy has been on a number of committees and led this board through our first strategic planning internal review process. She's been the leading force behind shaping today's existing board. I would also like to thank my fellow board members for your assistance this year, specifically during times of transition when you all stepped up, pitched in, and got the job done!

The success of BIST is a culmination of the strength of all of its parts. From the staff, to the board of directors, to the volunteers, to those benefitting from these services, you all add richness to this organization of which I am so proud to be a member.

Michelle Diamond, Chair—Board of Directors

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES REPORT

Community Meetings

The monthly community meetings held at the Northern District Library continue to be a cornerstone program at BIST. These meetings were created to provide members with a consistent opportunity to meet, participate in leadership opportunities and take part in information sessions provided by a variety of guest speakers.

Within this past year we have heard from professionals and personal experiences on topics such as:

- Finding Happiness
- Technology and Acquired Brain Injury
- Managing Emotions
- Art Therapy
- How to Get Better Sleep and Boost Your Energy

Social/Recreation Events

Social and Recreation events provide great opportunities to bring BIST members together to explore new interests and the community around them.

The monthly Social Drop-In program at the Northern District Library is regularly attended by a core group of members, and also frequently draws in new faces. The mixture of craft activities, group games and board games continues to be popular.

We went on a variety of inner-city trips this year, which members reported were a big success. Trips included Centre Island (in partnership with CHIRS), bowling, Hockey Hall of Fame, movies and the Royal Winter Fair. The variety of excursions meant we had the pleasure of seeing different members come out to trips based on their interest.

Other special social events, which took place this year included the BIST Summer Picnic, Annual Halloween Dance (in partnership with CHIRS) and our Annual Holiday Party. These were all well attended.



Peer Support Mentor Program

BIST continues to offer the Peer Support Mentoring Program in partnership with the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA). Awareness about this program in our community grew this year. Currently, BIST is one of the two leading branches of this program with the number of active matches of both Mentors and Partners. This past year we had 81 peers and 98 mentors involved in the program. A Mentor training for both new mentors and current ones was held in September 2015.

The Peer Support Mentoring Support Program connects an individual who is a “veteran” in living with the effects of Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) with a “partner” who is coping with a similar ABI-related situation and is in need of support from a knowledgeable friend. The program is available to survivors, family members or unpaid providers of care. Mentoring can be done over the telephone, email and/or Skype, making it accessible for people who otherwise would not attend our programs.

As the program is growing there is always a need for new Mentors in all of the categories (ABI survivors, parents and spouses). At the moment, we continue to target recruitments for family members who are spouses and parents.

Family Support Program

The Family Support Program completed its third year successfully with members from both the Young Adult Group and Parental Support Group participants wanting the program to continue.

Since the start of the second year in September, there has been an increase in inquiries about the program and participation in both groups.

The programs are geared towards young adults between the ages of 18 – 26 and their parents. The program consists of two groups that meet concurrently once a month and are facilitated by BIST staff, social workers and a family member.

Young Adult Group

This group is a great way to socialize, improve relationships, learn new skills and get out in our community. The participants work together to identify topics that they would like to learn more about or discuss. During this reporting year’s sessions topics addressed included money management, an introduction to Toast Masters, self-advocacy and social nights. The Young Adult Group started with 9 participants and as of April 2015 we had 21.

Parental Support Group

This group is facilitated by a social worker and a family member who has been living with ABI in their family for years and has valuable experience and knowledge to share. As of April 2015 we had 14 participants in this group.

Are you a young adult living with brain injury who is between the ages of 18 and 26?

THE BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY OF TORONTO

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM



A MONTHLY GROUP FOR YOUTH LIVING WITH BRAIN INJURY WHO ARE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 - 26

- Meet other young adult ABI survivors
- Listen to guest speakers
- Participate in group discussions and social activities
- Group meets on the third Wednesday of the month and runs at the same time as our parental support group



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND/OR TO REGISTER FOR THE PROGRAM
CONTACT KAT POWELL AT
connections@bist.ca OR 647 990-1485

Half-Day Education Workshops

This year BIST continued to offer half-day workshops to survivors, family members and professionals. The workshops were well attended, and participants reported they gained useful information and tools and strategies to implement in their daily lives. Below is a brief summary of the workshops that were offered.

May 21, 2015 – Healthy Relationships Workshop

Jennifer Patterson of Toronto Public Health presented a workshop on healthy relationships, including a discussion of sexual health and negotiating boundaries, how to be respectful in a fight and what to think about when dating. We had 35 members attend this workshop.

Oct 15, 2015 Neuroplasticity & Brain Fitness

Our first Speakers Forum was a huge success. We had 110 participants attend to learn about Neuroplasticity.

Topics and Presenters were:

- Dr. Robin Green, Canada Research Chair & Senior Scientist, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, discussed how to improve long-term outcomes, even in the chronic stages of Traumatic Brain Injury.
- Paul Hymen, President and CEO, Brain Fitness International, gave a presentation on how to strengthen one's mind.
- Dr. Peter Rumney, Physician Director Brain Injury Rehabilitation Team, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, took on the topic of Brain training.
- Anthony Aquan-Assee, Teacher, Author and Motivational Speaker, chronicled his story of despair, recovery and triumph.

The Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST) presents a free speakers forum

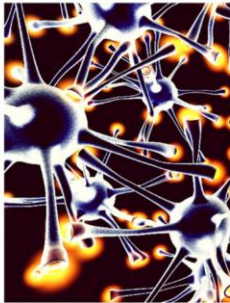
NEUROPLASTICITY & BRAIN FITNESS

Dr. Robin Green
Canada Research Chair (II) traumatic brain injury
Associate professor, University of Toronto
Senior scientist, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute
Clinical Neuropsychologist

Paul Hyman
President & CEO
Brain Fitness International
www.brainfitnessinternational.com

Dr. Peter Rumney
Physician Director
Brain Injury Rehabilitation Team
Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Anthony Aquan-Assee
M.Ed., B.Ed., B.Sc.
Teacher, author and motivational speaker
www.anthonyaquan-assee.com



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15TH

THE ADVOCATE'S SOCIETY | 9 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
250 YONGE ST, SUITE 2700 | REGISTRATION - 8:30 A.M.

Caregiving: Dealing with Emotions



**CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH
A BRAIN INJURY? JOIN US ON**

Saturday March 5th, 2016
9:00 AM TO 12:00 PM | Registration - 8:30 am
Bridgepoint Active Health- 14 St Matthews Rd

March 5, 2016, Caregiving: Dealing with Emotions

This session presented by Valerie Spironello, MSW, RSW from Choose Wellness and Stacey Levine, B. A., Behaviour Therapist, Journey Rehabilitation Therapy, focused on those who care for survivors of brain injury and how to cope with the myriad of emotions they go through. This event was very valuable to the 35 members who attended.

Concussion Series

BIST ran two separate 6-week courses for members who had experienced concussions. This course went over common symptomology after a concussion and education on how to cope and manage these symptoms daily. The series was run from April 7th to May 12th, 2015 and again from September 29 to November 10th, 2015. With this program we were able to assist 44 members dealing with these significant challenges.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

For the first time, BIST, hosted a Community Resource Fair at the Toronto Reference Library for non-profit organizations to share resource information with one another and the community. Although winter weather was in full effect, we still had 81 community participants at the event.

We were also fortunate enough to have Greg Bellamy talk about Nordic Pole Walking, an easy, simple, and low impact exercise that uses 90% of your muscles which all felt was of great value. Faed Hendry, manager at FindHelp Information Services, gave a talk on how community and social services can help you find the support you need.



The Community Organizations that participated in this event were:

- March of Dimes
- Toronto Public Library, Accessible Services
- Community Head Injury Resources Services (CHIRS)
- Bellwoods Centers for Community
- West Park Healthcare Centre
- Findhelp Information Services
- Head Injury Clinic / Concussion Program Trauma Program, St Michael's Hospital
- PACE Independent Living
- COTA
- Nordixx Pole Walking Canada
- Distress Centre of Toronto
- Holland Bloorview
- Toronto Public Health Dental Services
- ABI Network
- Wheel Trans
- Canadian Diabetes
- Volunteer Toronto
- Variety Village
- Meals on Wheels Trans Care Community Health services
- Toronto Public Health - Sexual Health Clinics
- CERA
- Lumacare
- Ethno-Racial People With Disabilities Coalition of Ontario
- Planned Parenthood Toronto
- Trans Care

FINANCIAL REPORT

BIST has had a great year. 2015 was the first year of our Birdies for Brain Injury golf tournament which through the hard-work and dedication of the volunteers and BIST team members resulted in an increase of over 70% to our fundraising income which was reinvested in developing and expanding opportunities, programs and services we are providing to our members. Our Annual Corporate Sponsorships and other events also continued to enhance our ability to reach new members in the community.

During the current year we have restated our March 31, 2015 financial statements to reflect a HST refund applied for the 2012 to 2015 fiscal years, as the HST refund was not recorded as an asset on the previous financial statements. The total refund of \$22,417 was received in June 2016.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, board members, community partners, and sponsors including our new corporate sponsors, OBIA and our dedicated staff for all their work. Without these significant efforts BIST would not be the organization it is today.

Financial Report

CDN \$	Year ended March 31, 2016	Year ended March 31, 2015
Gross revenue	258,345	156,271
Contractors fees	(34,291)	(17,961)
BIST Program expenses	(90,977)	(94,987)
Fundraising Event Expenses	(69,673)	(28,666)
Admin and other expenses	(45,732)	(34,318)
Surplus / (Deficit)	17,672	(19,661)

CDN \$	Year ended March 31, 2016	Year ended March 31, 2015
Cash	33,827	32,167
HST receivable	43,340	22,417
Accounts receivable	4,854	5,801
Prepaid expenses	11,485	7,105
Investments	40,472	60,455
Assets	133,978	127,945
Deferred revenue	21,555	34,018
Accounts payable	18,936	18,112
Retained earnings	93,487	75,815
Liabilities and equity	133,978	127,945

VOLUNTEERS

BIST is fortunate to have so many hard-working and dedicated volunteers. Our volunteers sit on committees, help plan and lead our programs, plan our fundraising and social events and contribute to our blog. Our volunteers are survivors, family members, health care professionals, lawyers and individuals interested in giving back to their community and supporting the mission of BIST.

Our Volunteer Committee works hard to plan a Volunteer Recognition evening in April to celebrate Volunteer Appreciation Month. A sincere thank you to the Committee for doing this important work.

Volunteer of the Year Award

BIST continues to honour one BIST Volunteer each year with the Vetter Volunteer of the Year Award. This award is named for Esther and Alfred Vetter, parents of an adult son who sustained a brain injury many years ago. The Vettters have been instrumental in brain injury awareness over the years, and Esther was the founding Executive Director of the Head Injury Association of Toronto. Congratulations to all of our deserving nominees!

This year's winner was Greg Neinstein!

Greg Neinstein has been a member of BIST for over a decade. His dedication to volunteerism motivated him to contribute by leading the steering committee of the Mix & Mingle, BIST's biggest fundraising event. In addition, Greg is a passionate advocate for survivors of ABI defending their claims in court and raising public awareness. Greg has dedicated a vast number of resources to supporting conferences on ABI and presenting talks about ABI to health care professionals that can directly make a difference in the care of survivors. Greg is greatly inspired by the ABI survivors he meets and passionate about being part of the greater ABI community.



AWARENESS

For the 2015 Brain Injury Awareness Month, the Awareness Committee worked in partnership with the community to raise understanding about the prevalence and effects of brain injury. On June 3rd and 5th, tables were set up at Bloor, Kipling and Sheppard TTC Stations, where patrons were provided with cards detailing head injury statistics, that included the areyouaware.ca logo.

The Awareness Committee, along with BIST volunteers, were available to answer any questions the public had about brain injury. For the four weeks of June, community members were able to enter a weekly draw on the areyouaware.ca website to win one of four iPads.

In addition, at the committee's request, the CN Tower changed its lighting colours to blue and green, the colours of brain injury awareness for the month of June. This was particularly inspiring to those who could see it while enjoying the Mix and Mingle affair at Steam Whistle Brewing.

Social media was used heavily during this month, promoting awareness through Facebook ads and our faces of brain injury campaign. E-blasts chronicling stories and information about brain injury were also sent out to the ABI community including members, caregivers and industry leaders.

For the outstanding work the committee did to advance awareness of brain injury the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA) presented BIST with an Award of Excellence for our Are You Aware Campaign.



SOCIAL MEDIA

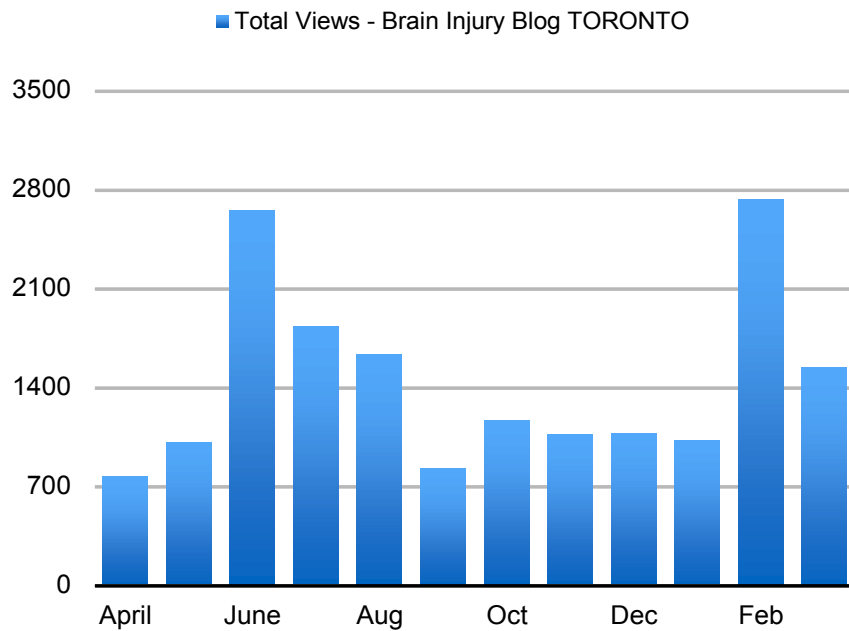
BLOG: Brain Injury Blog TORONTO

Brain Injury Blog Toronto had its most successful year to date. From April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 BIST blog views increased 60%, totaling 17,268 views. This is up from the previous reporting period from April 1, 2014 through to March 31, 2015, where we received 6760 views.

Brain Injury Blog TORONTO - statistics from April 2015- March 2016				
Month	Views	No. of posts	Top Post	Top post - No. of views
April	765	5	Is the Time Right for a Hidden Disability Symbol?	222
May	1007	5	Open Letter to Kathleen Wynne	253
June	2646	6	Can The Brain Repair Itself?	1042
July	1830	4	Can the Brain Repair Itself?	426
August	1626	8	Interview with Gavin James Sibayan	302
Sept	821	4	Can the Brain Repair Itself?	60
Oct	1163	8	Interview with Dr. Peter Rumney	138
Nov	1061	8	Brain Injury in the Family Then and Now	99

Brain Injury Blog TORONTO - statistics from April 2015- March 2016

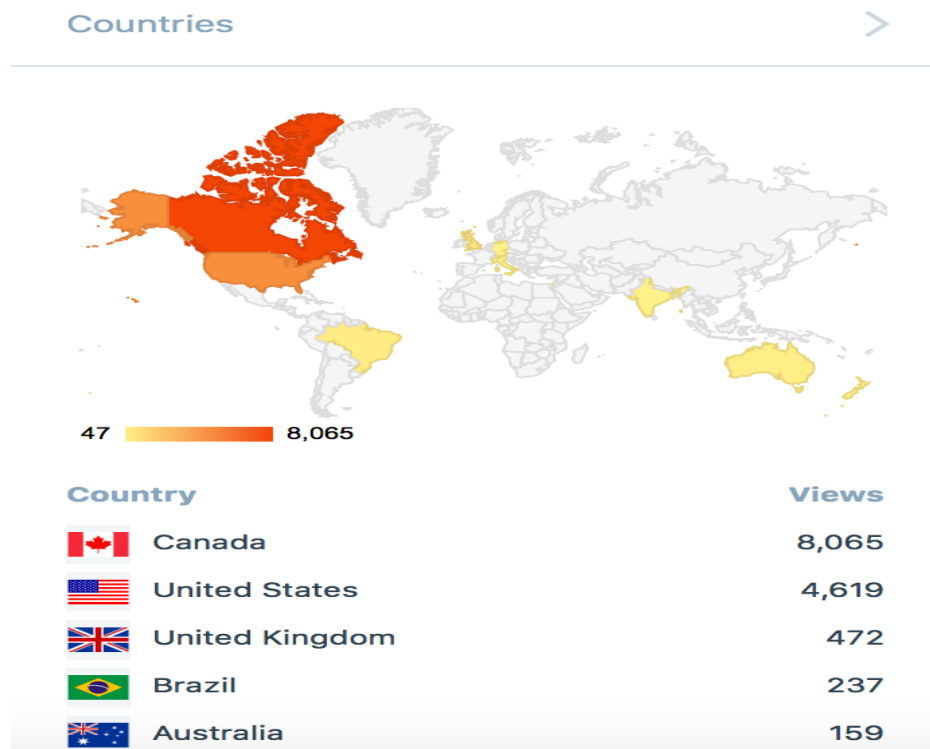
Month	Views	No. of posts	Top Post	Top post - No. of views
Dec	1071	5	How to Have Merry Family Christmas post-ABI	90
Jan	1020	3	Michael Reeves ' job advice	66
Feb	2720	4	How to be a Good Friend to an ABI Survivor	1179
March	1538	3	How to be a Good Friend to an ABI Survivor	217
TOTAL	17,268	63		4094



The most successful post was *Can the Brain Repair Itself?* by Sophia Voumvakis, posted on June 29, 2015, which continued to receive many views throughout the year, and was the most popular post for three months.

During this time, we had 10 volunteer writers contribute articles to the blog, seven of whom identify as brain injury survivors. We had two family members of ABI survivors also contribute to the blog.

As the screen shot from the blog's WordPress dashboard indicates, approximately two thirds of our readers are Canadian, and approximately one third of our readers are American.



TWITTER: @BrainInjuryTO

Our Twitter account continued to gain followers. We began the year with **1341** followers and ended with **1904** followers on March 31, 2016, marking a 42 % increase in followers. Extra social media attention during brain injury awareness month paid off, and June was our most successful month on Twitter.

Month	Daily Impressions	Engagement Rate	Link Clicks	Re-Tweets	Likes	Replies
April 2015	690	1.9%	118	138	62	19
May 2015	755	2%	151	139	66	17
June 2015	1,400	2.3%	279	242	145	29
July 2015	861	2%	150	154	94	20
Aug 2015	1300	1.7%	245	160	106	21
Sept 2015	998	2%	208	134	114	12
Oct 2015	1400	1.9%	240	188	214	21
Nov 2015	1200	1.7%	205	142	125	33
Dec 2015	1000	1.5%	159	126	119	20
Jan 2016	936	1.4%	153	83	82	20
Feb 2016	1200	1.8%	141	123	149	34
March 2016	1400	1.1%	121	117	105	15

Impressions: Times a user is served a Tweet in a timeline or search results.

Link clicks: Clicks on a URL or Card in the Tweet

Re-tweets: Times a user re-tweeted the Tweet

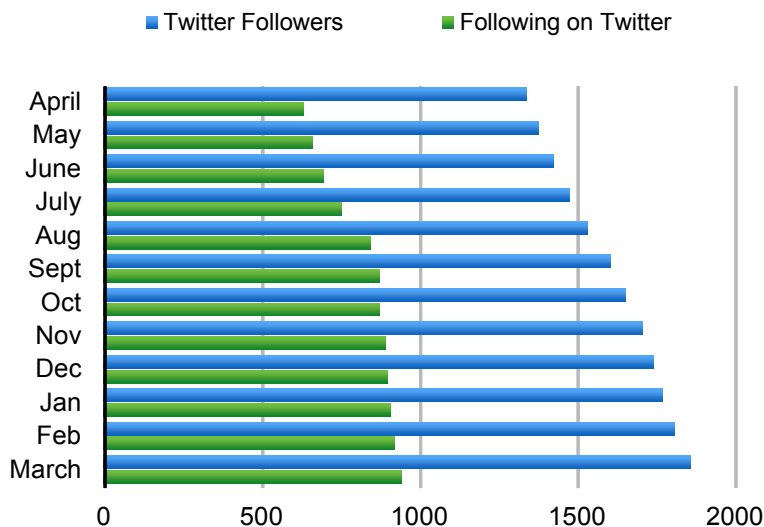
Likes: Times a user likes a Tweet

Engagement rate: Number of engagements divided by impressions



42%

increase in Twitter followers



Facebook: @BrainInjurySocietyTO

<https://www.facebook.com/BrainInjurySocietyTO/>

Facebook continued to perform well. BIST gained 208 likes this year, which is an increase of 59%. June was our most popular month.

Month	Total Posts	Impressions	Clicks	Reactions, Comments, Shares	Total Likes at Month End (New Likes)
April 2015	21	2871	319	358	351 (15)
May 2015	24	3546	285	180	368 (16)
June 2015	24	19,330	3098	928	421 (50)
July 2015	21	4564	334	213	431 (10)
August 2015	24	4740	281	103	444 (14)
Sept 2015	25	3416	264	106	457 (13)
October 2015	25	3775	180	145	472 (15)

Month	Total Posts	Impressions	Clicks	Reactions, Comments, Shares	Total Likes at Month End (New Likes)
Nov 2015	25	4914	375	197	484 (13)
Dec 2015	25	4586	403	213	499 (15)
January 2016	25	3926	226	116	511 (12)
February 2016	22	7054	385	270	526 (14)
March 2016	25	10,552	503	335	559 (33)
TOTAL	286	58,603	3953	2354	559 (208)

Throughout the year, BIST blog posts promoted on our Facebook pages were the most popular posts per month three times. Pictures celebrating BIST events also performed well. (See table on following page.)

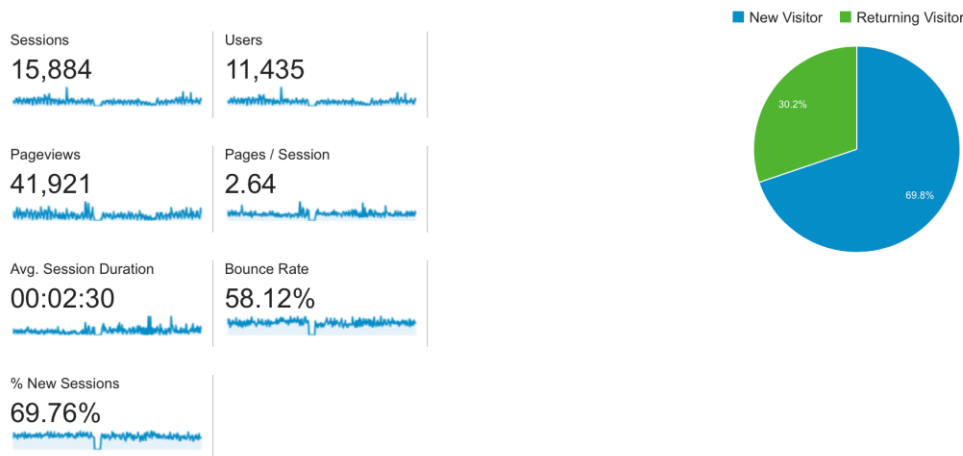
Most Popular Facebook post by Month				
Month	Total Impressions	Total Clicks	Total Reactions	Post Type
April 2015	559	63	41	Picture (BIST Volunteer of the year winner)
May 2015	358	23	15	BIST Blog Post
June 2015	12678	723	713	BIST Blog Post
July 2015	753	66	24	Link
Aug 2015	665	72	9	Video

Most Popular Facebook post by Month				
Month	Total Impressions	Total Clicks	Total Reactions	Post Type
Sept 2015	374	26	7	Link
Oct 2015	645	27	24	Link (BrainLine)
Nov 2015	1001	173	66	Picture (BIST award from OBIA)
Dec 2015	864	48	27	BIST Blog Post
Jan 2016	825	61	42	Link
Feb 2016	1203	70	64	ABI Meme
March 2016	1297	66	23	Link

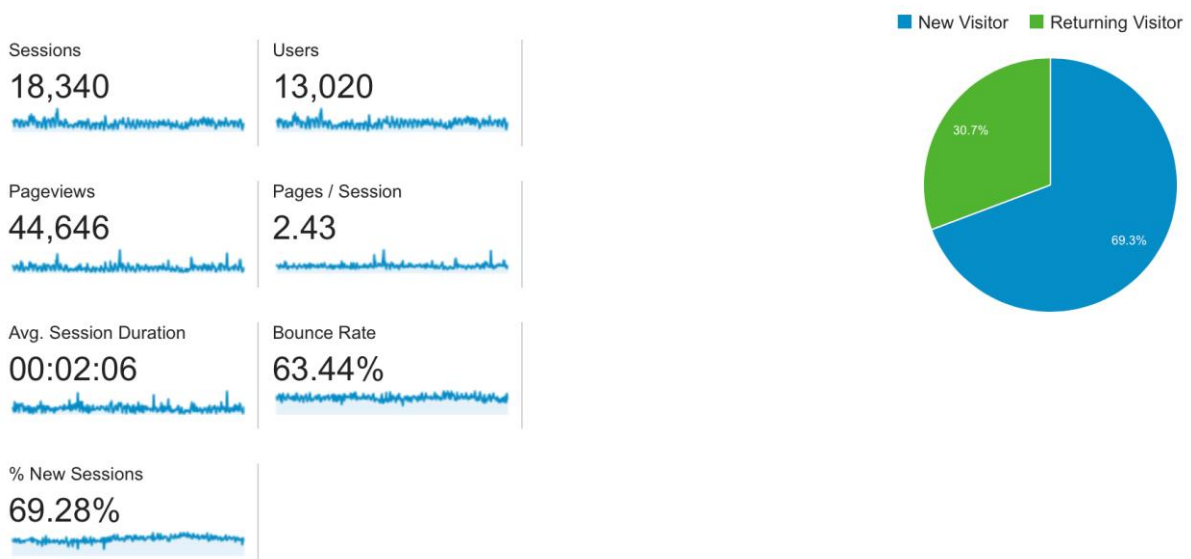
BIST Corporate Website

www.bist.ca

bist.ca and areyouaware.ca are on Google Analytics, which provides different data than the BIST blog. The following screen shot from Google Analytics shows how bist.ca performed throughout **April 1, 2015 - March 31, 2016**.



Results from **April 1, 2014 - March 31, 2015** show that bist.ca had fewer page views and sessions than this year, but had more users and a lower bounce rate. (See the following page for definitions). It should be noted www.bist.ca was hacked in late August, 2015, after which we re-vamped our site and switched to WordPress. During this time, there were periods where our site was offline, and September's analytics are the poorest as a result.



Google Analytics - bist.ca						
Month	Sessions	Users	Page Views	Pages / Session	Average Session Duration	Bounce Rate
April	1460	1172	4358	2.98	2.21	55.82%
May	1615	1289	4096	2.54	2.04	57.21%
June	1705	1405	4259	2.50	1.57	56.66%
July	1566	1286	3400	2.17	1.35	66.67%
Aug	1337	1124	3941	2.95	2.16	64.85%
Sept	674	543	2028	3.01	3.86	51.78%
Oct	1198	927	3134	2.62	2.53	57.35%
Nov	1192	901	3132	2.63	2.28	52.85%
Dec	806	641	2204	2.73	2.59	56.08%
Jan	1149	902	3009	2.62	2.44	55.35%
Feb	1562	1156	4076	2.61	3.01	58.71%
March	1620	1189	4204	2.64	3.12	58.33%

Sessions: What one site visitor views during their visit to the site - during a specific time period (i.e. 30 minutes). So if a visitor visits the site once in the morning, and once in the afternoon, this counts as two sessions.

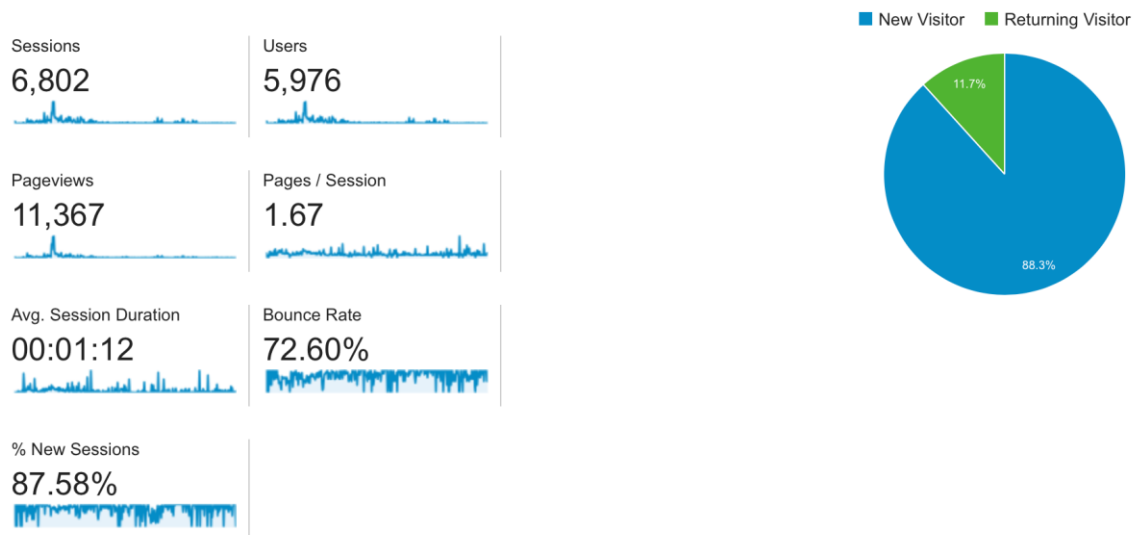
Unique Page Views: If a user visits the same page more than once in a session, this counts as one unique page view.

Bounce Rate: When a visitor leaves the site after going to the landing page without clicking further.

BIST Awareness Site

www.areyouaware.ca

BIST promotes the areyouaware.ca site during Brain Injury Awareness Month in June. In 2015, we promoted areyouaware.ca via social media and through a TTC subway campaign, where we gave our #areyouaware cards directing people to the site on two different days. We encouraged site visits with a weekly iPad give-away contest in June.



Google Analytics - areyouaware.ca						
Month	Sessions	Users	Page Views	Pages / Session	Average Session Duration	Bounce Rate
June	2467	2101	5359	2.17	1.49	60.40%

BIST/OBIA MIX & MINGLE

Over the past 10 years the Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST) and the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA) have co-hosted the BIST/OBIA Mix & Mingle.

This year's fabulous celebration of 10 incredible years of partnerships with our ABI community took place on Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at the Steam Whistle Brewery in Toronto, Ontario.

With over 600 guests in attendance, this year's event was yet another huge success in raising awareness for this important cause, as well as raising funds to support our ongoing programs and services.

A huge thank you to all our Mix & Mingle sponsors for your generous donations and continued support.



2015 Mix and Mingle Sponsors

McKellar

STRUCTURED SETTLEMENTS

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THOMSON ROGERS

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on wheels™

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FIELDING
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Photographer

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 **Collins Barrow**

BIST/OBIA MIX & MINGLE 2015 SILVER SPONSORS

- Access Rehab Inc.
- Advance Physiotherapy
- AGTA Home Health Care
- Aimee Hayes & Associates
- Balance Physiotherapy
- Bartimeaus Rehabilitation Services Inc.
- Baxter Structures
- Beverlee C. Melamed & Associates Inc.
- Bluepoint Valuations
- Carol Bierbrier & Associates
- Centre for Educational Development
- Colangelo Greenhow Inc.
- Community Solutions Lt.
- Desai Law Personal Injury Firm
- Essentially You Inc.
- Functionability Rehabilitation Services Inc.
- Gluckstein Personal Injury Lawyers
- Hanson Duby LLP
- Henderson Structured Settlements Inc.
- Howie Sacks & Henry LLP
- Innovative Case Management
- Jordin Atin, Guardianship Counsel
- Lofranco Corriero Personal Injury Lawyers
- Mazin & Associates
- Morse Shannon LLP
- North Toronto Rehabilitation
- Rehab Results Inc.
- Rehabilitation Management Inc.
- Seekers Pain Centre
- Shekter Dychtenburg
- Social Work Consulting Group
- Torkin Manes LLP
- Total Healthcare Solutions
- Trianta Longo LLP
- Vertex Solutions Corporation
- Wright Rehab

BIST 5KM RUN, WALK & ROLL 2015

We had another successful event!

Almost 400 participants took to the course and although there was a chill in the air, the weather was perfect for a fall run.

Top Male Finishers

- Garvin Moses
- Rick Stewart
- David Wessling

Top Female Finishers

- Kathleen Lawrence
- Caitlin Zammit
- Emma Tse

Almost \$55,000 was raised to support BIST.

We would like to thank our top individual fundraisers:

- Elsa Da Silva
- Ellie Lapowich
- On Truong
- Kate Mazzuco

Our top fundraising teams were:

- Innovative Case Management
- Reybroek Law Firm
- McLeish Orlando
- RTR

In total we raised \$55,000 to support the programs and services at BIST. A huge Thank you to everyone who fundraised!

We are very appreciative of your support.



We would also like to thank our 5K Run, Walk or Roll Sponsors

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is proud to sponsor



BIRDIES FOR BRAIN INJURY

On June 30th, 2015, BIST held its first Birdies for Brain Injury at the Glen Abbey Golf Club in Oakville. Golfers had the opportunity to play 18 holes and listen to Special Guest Speakers include CFL Hall of Famer Terry Evanshen and former NHL player Doug Smith. A great day was had by all, and all proceeds went to support BIST programming.

BIST would like to thank Chris Bogias who is the inspiration for this Birdies for Brain Injuries event

Chris suffered six concussions, finally rendering doctors to insist he could never play contact sports again. He was an honour student and active athlete in many sports through high school. He received the devastating news that would change his life and end his Oakville Rep Soccer career that began when he was 5. He suffered his multiple concussions playing competitive basketball, volleyball, soccer and snowboarding over a four-year period.

After watching her son have difficulties with remembering and concentrating, along with Chris's added frustration and emptiness from not being able to compete and help his teams, his mom Lina thought Chris could stay active and give meaning to his injuries by giving back to the community. Chris decided on a charity golf event that would allow him to promote awareness for the effects that concussions can have on everyday kids and help others in need with the funds raised. Chris' father Nick was able to utilize his contacts and experience in order to help get the idea off the ground for Chris to fulfill his goal. From there, they organized a committee of passionate friends that also shared a common interest in helping with the cause.

BIST is grateful for the passion that Chris, his family and the members of the committee have provided in inspiring members of the community to become involved.



Birdies for Brain Injury - 2015 Sponsors

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- Rehab Results Inc.
- Tigris Services

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michelle Diamond, Chair

Michelle Diamond currently works with Functionability Rehabilitation Services as the Director of Case Management and Client Services. She has worked in the field of Brain Injury for over 12 years. She graduated with her Master's Degree of Social Work, from the University of Toronto, in 2000 and began working at Toronto Rehab on the ABI service in 2001. Michelle was with Toronto Rehab for over 10 years in the capacity of Social worker, Service Coordinator and was seconded for one year to the Toronto ABI Network as Project and Referral Coordinator.

Michelle continues to work directly with clients and families living with the effects of brain injury. Michelle has been involved with BIST for two years as a volunteer on two committees; the BIAM Committee, and was a founding member of the Run Committee.

Ryan Murray, Vice Chair

Ryan is a partner at Oatley, Vigmond Personal Injury Lawyers LLP. Ryan has been representing people with traumatic brain injuries for nearly a decade. That experience has taught Ryan that a brain injury often has a lifelong impact on both the injured person and their family. Raising awareness about brain injury and promoting injury prevention are two of the reasons that Ryan volunteers with BIST.

Ryan holds a Bachelor of Laws degree (LL.B.) and a Master of Laws degree (LL.M. – Civil Litigation and Dispute Resolution) from Osgoode Hall Law School. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from York University. Ryan is a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada, Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, the Advocates Society and the American Association for Justice (formerly American Trial Lawyers Association).

Kerry Maclean, Secretary

Kerry MacLean has been working with adults with Acquired Brain Injury for over 17 years. She is a Service Coordinator at Community Head Injury Resource Services (CHIRS), managing an outreach team that provides home and community support to adults living with ABI. In addition to her role at CHIRS, Kerry is the ABI System

Navigator in the Central LHIN, and a member of the Central ABI Collaborative. In this role, she works to improve system access for individuals with ABI and their families. Kerry has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Welfare and has a background in addictions and mental health.

Outside of her work with ABI, Kerry is a busy mom of two boys, actively involved in her local community and enjoys pursuing her two other passions: painting and running.

Susie Cooke, Treasurer

Susie is a Partner at Deloitte with over nine years of experience in accounting. Originally from the UK, Susie completed her undergraduate degree at Durham University and obtained her accountancy qualification from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales before moving to Toronto in 2008.

Susie's work with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and United Way has led her to want to further expand her work in the community. Although Susie does not work in the field of Acquired Brain Injury she has direct experience supporting family members who have been affected by Brain Injury. In addition to this she has very close links with some of the research that is being undertaken at the University of Toronto in the area of Brain Injury. These two areas of experience and knowledge have resulted in Susie's desire to work further in this area to support and raise awareness of ABI.

Jordan Assaraf

Jordan Assaraf is a lawyer at Gluckstein Personal Injury Lawyers. By being involved in contact sports his entire life, Jordan has seen how traumatic brain injuries can occur and affect not only the person who acquired the injury, but their whole family. This has led Jordan to become the personal injury lawyer he is today, and led him to volunteer his time and raise awareness about brain injuries by joining BIST.

Jordan's other volunteer experience include leading his law firm's team in the annual Wheelchair Relay Race and supporting the charitable organization THREE TO BE in their efforts to assist children with neurological disorders. Jordan is committed to raising public awareness about the effects of brain injuries on victims, their families and the broader public.

Asad Hussain

Asad is a family member of an individual who has an Acquired Brain Injury. He has been a member of BIST for a number of years and has volunteered and spoken at previous BIST Family Retreats and other Brain Injury Conferences.

He is currently employed at the Department of Justice as a Regional Director of Finance and holds an accounting designation (CMA-CPA) and MBA (Schulich School of Business).

Asad is looking forward to bringing both his personal and professional experience to the board and the members of BIST. In his spare time he is the proud father of a two-year-old and an avid sports enthusiast.

Teresa Kyrogyi

Teresa is a Registered nurse and is now working as a Patient Care Manager at Sunnybrook in the Veterans unit where she works closely enhancing the lives of World War II and Korean Veterans.

She has completed several Leadership certificates from Rotman and Schulick, has her BScN-E in Emergency Administration and Care as well as several diplomas in business and specialized nursing.

She continues to pursue her MBA at Athabasca University.

She is interested in improving the quality of life for acquired brain injury patients and families. Professionally and personally she is passionate to develop a stronger community understanding of ABI.

Rick Menassa

Rick brings 27 years of business development experience working for global and Canadian technology companies. He is the President and co-founder of *iCare Home Health* a boutique home health care company serving Halton, Peel and the GTA;

and *iCare Navigator*, which provides patient advocacy and expert opinion regarding standard of care for persons who suffered injury, throughout Ontario. Rick is also the VP, Marketing, Pharmaceutical Innovation Ltd., a start up and creator of the IntelChip, a device that will revolutionize medicine dispensing to patients with accessibility challenges.

Making a difference is an integral part of his DNA, Rick fundraised for several organizations and continues to participate in the annual Heart & Stroke Ride for Heart, the Healing Cycle Ride in support of Palliative care, and the annual Alzheimer Society fundraising campaigns in Halton and Peel. Serving on the BIST Board compliments Rick's passion to empower the injured and aged to live with dignity and maintain the quality of life they deserve.

Celia Missios

Celia Missios is the founder and author of the internationally read lifestyle blog, High Heeled Life. Since 2010 she has been inspiring women worldwide with her journey of surviving what should have been a fatal accident, finding her "joie de vivre" and creating a new life that fits the person she is today.

Celia has been a brain injury survivor for almost nine years, and has volunteered with BIST as Peer Mentor; spoken at community meetings and is a regular editorial contributor to the blog. She is also a regular speaker for Canadian Blood Services Speakers Bureau. Prior to her accident Celia had a successful corporate career as Business and Market Development for a local communications firm. She volunteered her time as Chair of a Fundraising Committee for an East York homeless youth shelter.

Celia believes it's not what happens to you that determines your future, its how you chose to react to it. When she is not volunteering her time in the community and helping others create a healthy lifestyle that fits who they are today she enjoys traveling meditating, afternoon tea, self-care, yoga, writing, gardening, photography and playing with her Yorkies, Dolce & Gabbana.

Judy Moir

Judy is the Manager of Community Support Services at CHIRS, which is a community-based agency that provides support to people to reintegrate to their communities following a brain injury. Judy completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Manitoba and obtained a Masters of Public Administration from Queen's University.

She has been working with people with complex needs (including brain injury) for over 20 years. Through her current and previous roles, Judy has had the opportunity to look at the provision of ABI services at a system level and advocate for change. Much of her current focus is on enhancing capacity for people with brain injury through the development of partnerships with organizations in other sectors (e.g., Addictions and Mental Health).

Judy is also a former Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of BIST and has been an integral part of the growth of the organization.

Colleen Worsley

Colleen is dedicated to raising awareness and building support systems for individuals living with acquired brain injury. (ABI) Colleen is currently working with Delisle Youth Services as a Community Resource Consultant as well as continuing to work on fundraising projects in the ABI community.

She has more than 15 years of experience in the social services field. She graduated from York University with a Specialized Honours Degree in Psychology, has a certificate in Nutrition and training in Behaviour Therapy techniques. Her continuing education involves conferences, seminars, and courses focusing on advances in the understanding and treatment of ABI and spinal cord injury.

STAFF

Michelle McDonald - Executive Director

Michelle started with BIST in November 2010 and works closely with the Board of Directors, Committees and staff to develop new opportunities for the growth and reach of BIST's programs and services. She sits on a number of BIST Committees, including the Awareness, Mix & Mingle and Run Committees. She also sits on the OBIA Advisory Council, the Toronto ABI Network Advisory Committee and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Toronto District School Board.

Since starting with BIST Michelle's says "I am in constant awe of the many volunteers that enable BIST to reach its mission. We would be nowhere without the dedication and commitment of these individuals". In addition to her experience as a Marketing Consultant, Michelle has worked in the non-profit sector for many years, including the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and Toronto Preschool Autism Service.

Michelle McDonald resigned her position of Executive Director as of December 31st, 2015.

Marie DeLuca was Executive Director of BIST from December 22, 2015 and was terminated on March 31st, 2016.

Kat Powell - Programs and Services Coordinator

Kat has been working with BIST since the fall of 2008. Kat joined BIST with 10 years' experience working both here in Canada and overseas in Australia, Asia and East Africa with Non-Profit and Non-Governmental organizations that focus on community inclusion, training of trainers, health promotion and sport for development. Since Kat started working she has always said "I love working and volunteering with organizations that work towards helping people with special needs improve their quality of life and maximize their potential".

Outside of work Kat enjoys volunteering in the winters with Track 3 as a Ski instructor for children/youth with physical and cognitive needs and in the summer with Camp Oochigeaus – a camp for kids with cancer. When she has the time she enjoys participating in musicals and choirs.

Meri Perra - Communications and Support Coordinator

Meri Perra has several years of experience connecting people to resources, through her former position at Find Help Information Services. Since leaving Findhelp, she earned a diploma in journalism, worked as a contributor and assistant editor for an online parenting magazine, and held a position as a news and sports editor for a digital media company.

You can often spot Meri riding around town in her massive cargo bike with her two daughters (wearing helmets of course!). She enjoys volunteering at her kids' school and housing cooperative, and fits in power yoga in her spare time. Her new favourite past time is playing Crazy 8s with her family – a game she (re)-learned at the BIST Social Drop In!



OBIA ADVISORY COUNCIL (OAC)

Award of Excellence presented to

Brain Injury Society of Toronto

*In recognition of their contribution to advancing awareness of brain injury through
their :*

Are You Aware Campaign

**Dated the twelfth day of November,
Two thousand and fifteen.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary-Ellen Thompson", written over a horizontal line.

Mary-Ellen Thompson
Co-Chair, OBIA Advisory Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Charbonneau", written over a horizontal line.

Wendy Charbonneau
Co-Chair, OBIA Advisory Council



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