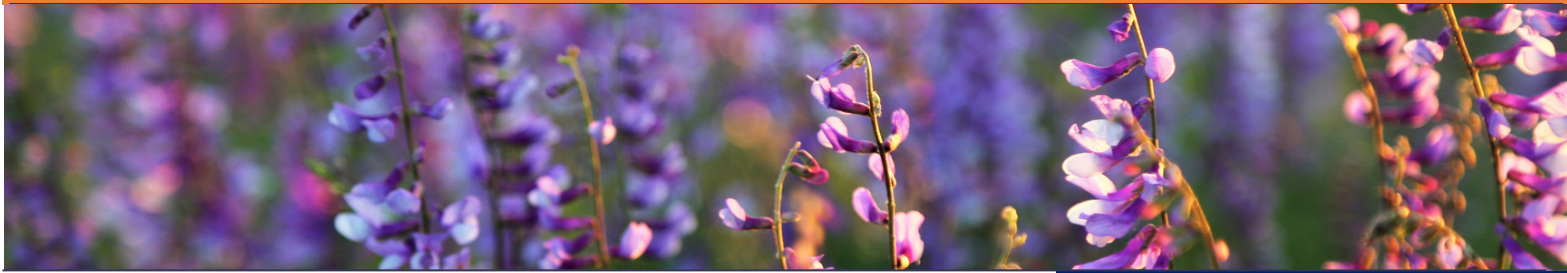




RESEARCH NEWS, HEALTH TIPS, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES FROM THE VIRGINIA TBI MODEL SYSTEM



The Abstract Veteran podcast: Karen Grazionale

by Laura Boylan

Note on Language:

Every TBI is unique and people in the TBI community have a variety of needs. Due to this range of needs, we are using the term “care partner” to describe someone who supports a person who has sustained a TBI.

Karen Grazionale is a care partner for her husband. She also helps people from the TBI community transition from rehabilitation to home. Karen is certified in Brain Injury Fundamentals by the Brain Injury Association of America. She also works with the Sheltering Arms Institute Ambassador program, which connects experienced TBI care partners with new TBI care partners. The program allows new care partners to talk with peers who understand where they are and the barriers they may face.

Karen is a published author who advocates for care partners. She advises our Virginia TBI Model System on research to improve care partner access to resources after discharge.

During a podcast of “The Abstract Veteran,” Karen, shared her experience as a TBI care partner. The podcast episode can be found [here](#). Laura Boylan, a Virginia TBIMS team member, spoke with Karen about the podcast. Below are key takeaways from their discussion:

- Being a care partner is hard. It is important to take micro-breaks throughout the day. These are easy little things you can do to put a smile on your face.
- Being a care partner can feel lonely. Connect with other care partners for support. You will learn things from them that you won’t get elsewhere.
- Becoming a care partner requires advocating for yourself and your loved one. Advocacy requires actively seeking answers then making decisions that improve your life and theirs.

To learn more about Karen’s story, her passion for helping others, and to get updates visit her website, linked [here](#).

Virginia TBI Model System Team

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In our efforts to modernize, we have updated our look and are shifting to an **ONLINE ONLY** distribution of our quarterly newsletter. Make sure you are signed up to our TBIMS Listserv to have the newsletter delivered directly to your inbox. If you would like to continue to receive the physical version of the newsletter, please let us know.

For both the listserv and for physical newsletter requests, please contact Laura.Albert@vcuhealth.org.



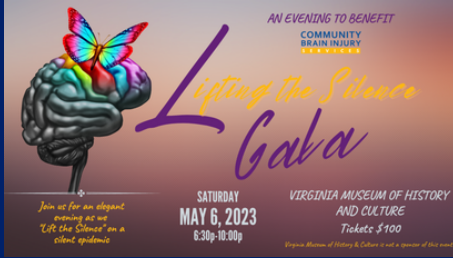
The contents of TBI Today were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DPTB0005). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of TBI Today do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

VISIT OUR WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[TBIMS.VCU.EDU](https://tbims.vcu.edu) | [SAI.REHAB](https://sai.rehab) | [BIAV.NET](https://biav.net) | [MSKTC.ORG](https://msktc.org)



Upcoming CBIS Gala: CBIS Lifting the Silence Gala



When: Saturday, May 6 2023 6:30-10 PM

Where: Virginia Museum of History and Culture, Tickets \$100

Tickets & Information:

<https://communitybraininjury.org/events/>

Clubhouse Programs & Support Groups

Community Brain Injury Services:

Millhouse

7812 Shrader Rd, Richmond VA 23294

Phone: 804-261-7050

Website: communitybraininjury.org

Facebook:

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

Denbigh House

12725 McManus Blvd, Suite 2E,

Newport News, VA 23602

Phone: 757-833-7845

Website: communitybraininjury.org

Facebook:

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

Bridgeline Place

315 Winding River Ln,

Charlottesville VA 22911

Phone: 434-220-4596

Website:

<https://www.thebridgeline.org/clubhouse/>

Facebook:

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

Brain Injury Services of Southwest VA

Brain injury support group meetings at
The Franklin Center

50 Claiborne Ave, Rocky Mount VA 24151

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month, 12-1 PM

Contact: 540-344-1200 or info@bisswva.org

Community Connections: **COMMUNITY BRAIN INJURY SERVICES**

What is a Clubhouse Program?

Clubhouse programs are set up like a work day. During the shift members help in different units, such as working on communication skills or in the kitchen. This helps members practice healthy behaviors and build the skills they need to return to work or gain more independence.

What does Community Brain Injury Services (CBIS) do? How can I learn more?

The CBIS group provides support for persons with TBI and their care partners. CBIS can help with TBI services through case management support, clubhouse programs, and employment services. Their main goal is to support individuals highest level of independence.

The best place to start with CBIS is by visiting their website: communitybraininjury.org. In addition to the website, each clubhouse has their own Facebook page where members stay actively engaged with each other to share support, resources, and upcoming events.

What Clubhouses are in Virginia?

There are currently two active clubhouses run by CBIS in Virginia: The Millhouse (located in Richmond) and the Denbigh House (located in Newport News). CBIS will soon be able to start providing services in Virginia's middle peninsula (Gloucester, Matthews, King and Queen, King William counties) and south of Richmond (Prince George, Dinwiddie and Surrey counties). Currently, they are hiring case managers and building connections in these areas.

What drives YOU to do this work?

Continuing to grow their service area and community footprint is what inspires Director of Operations, Claire Yarbrough. She enjoys the constant opportunities for learning and seeing the positive impact that CBIS has in the Virginia TBI community.

For information about CBIS and their services visit: communitybraininjury.org or call 804-261-7050.



Research Highlight: Using Machine Learning to Examine Suicidal Ideation After TBI

by Dr. Kelli Williams Gary

After a traumatic brain injury (TBI), the risk for a developing medical and mental health concerns increases. One of increased risks is the development of suicidal ideations (SI), or thoughts of ending your own life. Researchers have been trying to better understand what plays a role in this increased risk in order to prevent it from happening.

A group of researchers recently explored machine learning (a combination of different methods that estimates future outcomes) as a new way to study the development of SI behaviors in TBI patients, at least one year out from their injury. The study found common symptoms connected to SI development. These symptoms included:

- Feeling sad and blue (depressed mood)
- Feeling worried over a past action (guilt)
- Problems with social interactions and a decrease in enjoying things (anhedonia)
- Problems with thinking abilities (concentration)
- Slowed or uncontrollable movements (psychomotor agitation)

These findings will allow the TBI community to focus SI prevention and treatment on those at highest risk for developing SI after a TBI. The study highlighted the importance for TBI professionals to look for more than demographic information when assessing for SI in people with a TBI.

Link to full article [HERE](#)

Fisher, L. B., Curtiss, J. E., Klyce, D. W., Perrin, P. B., Juengst, S. B., Gary, K. W., ... & Zafonte, R. D. (2023). Using Machine Learning to Examine Suicidal Ideation After Traumatic Brain Injury: A Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems National Database Study. *American Journal of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation*, 102(2), 137-143.

Brain Games for Fun!

We are changing the way we bring you brain games. Use the QR Code below to access our online portal!



SCAN ME

Website: <https://tbitoday.my.canva.site/>

How to use a QR Code:

Open your smart phone camera and center the QR code. A link should pop up on the camera screen. Click this link to be directed to our puzzle page.

Upcoming Events



Aphasia Support Group

When: 2nd Thursday of the month, 6-7 pm

Where: Wells Coleman office building in Monument Corporate Centre office park, 5004 Monument Ave, Richmond, 23230

Contact: Susan Hapala at (804) 906-3261 or email, rvaaphasiagroup@gmail.com

Virtual Virginia Stroke Survivor and Caregiver Education Group

When: 4th Wednesday of the month, 2-3 pm

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1280347052076823/>

BIAV Online Caregiver Group

A meeting for caregivers no matter where they live in Virginia.

When: 1st Wednesday of the month, 6-7 pm

Contact: Email Debra Holloway at debra@biav.net to register

BIAV Online Support Group for people living with BI and their families

When: 4th Tuesday of the month, 6 PM

Contact: Christine Baggini at christine@biav.net or 804-355-5748 for an invitation to the virtual meetings

Supportive Survivors

When: 2nd, 4th, and 5th Tuesdays, 6-8 pm, Outings planned for the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays

Where: Regency Mall Food Court, 1420 Parham Road, Richmond, 23229

Contact: Ted Taylor at (804) 781-2144 or taylorted58@yahoo.com

Women's Luncheon Group

When: 2nd Tuesday of the month for lunch, 11:30 am

Where: The Mill House, 7812 Shrader Road, Henrico, 23294

Contact: Jennifer Zemke at (804) 386-0925 or jennifer@communitybraininjury.org



visit tbims.vcu.edu to access back issues!