Enhancing lives...
It is estimated that there are 27,000 children with acquired brain injuries in Ontario’s schools.

The OBIA Impact Report 2012: A statistical snapshot of Acquired Brain Injury and its Effects on Survivors and Caregivers

Over 500,000 Ontarians are living with the effects of an acquired brain injury.

40% of caregivers are parents. The average caregiver age is 57 years.

76% of survivors have trouble with depression some or most of the time.

30% of caregivers admit that they do not feel the person with ABI is living in the appropriate environment.
Our Vision
To advance the understanding and eliminate the stigma of acquired brain injury.

Our Mission
To enhance the lives of Ontarians living with the effects of acquired brain injury through education, awareness and support.

Our Core Values & Principles
At OBIA, our values are based on our history and our purpose. While we know that circumstances can change, our values remain constant. They are integral to the services that we provide and to the manner in which we operate:

**Representation** - We will *represent* the needs and rights of people with ABI and empower them through advocacy.

**Support** - We will *support* the people we serve and the organizations we work with through knowledge sharing and innovation.

**Collaboration** - We will foster a spirit of *collaboration* within our organization and the ABI community in Ontario.

**Leadership** - We will demonstrate and provide *leadership* to the ABI community.

**Inclusion** - All people with ABI are recognised and respected as valued and contributing members of society.
The process for gathering the information that formed our new strategic direction included collaboration sessions, SWOT analysis, online surveys and interactive workshops. An external consultant led the organization through a comprehensive planning process.

OBIA Board of Director’s

It is my great pleasure to introduce OBIA’s Strategic Plan 2013-2018. The strategic planning process began in November 2011 when OBIA engaged an external consultant to lead us through a process that would ultimately define the future direction of OBIA.

OBIA’s strategic plan was devised using an approach that focused on obtaining feedback, information, insight and guidance from individuals living with ABI, caregivers and professionals, as well as current and former board members, staff, volunteers, donors and funders.

The process for gathering the information that formed our new strategic direction included collaboration sessions, SWOT analysis, online surveys and interactive workshops.

The resulting strategic plan contained within this document, represents the collective and collaborative vision and aspirations of the Board of Directors, the OBIA team, led by Ruth Wilcock, Executive Director, as well as many of our stakeholders. It comes at a pivotal time; a time when the Province of Ontario is making efforts to raise awareness of disability issues through the implementation of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA); a time when a multi ministry strategy to build awareness of concussion and concussion prevention is being developed and a time when numerous committees and groups are hard at work to address issues critical to the provision of services and supports for people living with the effects of acquired brain injury (ABI) (e.g. the recently released second edition of the Guidelines for Concussion/Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI) and Persistent Symptoms). OBIA has been and will remain actively involved in these efforts.

OBIA has a long history of breaking new ground and creatively meeting challenges with commitment, passion and SUCCESS! Moving forward, this strategic Plan is intended to distinguish and solidify OBIA’s place as a leader in the ABI community. Most importantly however, is that OBIA’s continued mission of “Enhancing the lives of Ontarians living with the effects of ABI through education, awareness and support” will drive this change.

Thank you to the individuals living with acquired brain injury, their families, our community partners, Board members, staff, volunteers and so many others who participated in the development of OBIA’s plan for growth and continued excellence.

Barbara Claiman, M.A., RRP, MCVP
Chairperson
OBIA Board of Directors
Where We Have Come From and Where We Are Going

The journey of OBIA began in 1986 when several determined families whose loved ones lives had been devastated by acquired brain injuries (ABI) came together to form what is now the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA). At that time there were little supports in Ontario for those whose lives had been impacted by brain injury and even fewer supports for family members. Our founders experienced personally, the great gap that was in our health care and community and social services system and set out to bring this to the attention of the powers that be. One of their main goals was to create a sense of awareness in the public and within the government of the need to ensure timely and appropriate services for those who have sustained a brain injury. That purpose remains at the heart of OBIA’s mission today.

The mission of OBIA is to enhance the lives of Ontarians living with the effects of acquired brain injury through education, awareness and support.

| Education |

Over the past quarter-century, OBIA has been a leader in providing education to professionals working in home and community-based rehabilitation programs. This includes the collaboration with Brock University to offer six university-level courses taken by over 6,000 professionals to date. In 2006, the popular Brain Basics course was added and designed for healthcare workers and caregivers. In only six years, over 2,600 people have taken this course. An exciting venture took place in 2013, when the Online Brain Basics Program was launched. The Online Brain Basics Program enables even more people to gain the necessary knowledge and tools to best support people living with the effects of brain injury. In addition to our ABI training programs, OBIA also partners with our local affiliated community associations to host the biennial ABI provincial conferences. Our most recent conference was highly successful attracting over 600 people – making it the largest ABI conference in Canada.

| Awareness |

Public policy has been an area of strong interest for OBIA for years. This was best exemplified when OBIA held public hearings on Bill 59 and published a widely disseminated report titled ‘Adding Insult to Injury.’ This proved to be a landmark achievement in getting ABI to the forefront of legislative discussion. 2012 saw the much-anticipated release of The OBIA Impact Report, a 136-page Statistical Snapshot of Acquired Brain Injury in Ontario and its effects on survivors and caregivers. The Impact Report is a culmination of a comprehensive survey and combines detailed facts and fascinating information about what it is like to live with an ABI.

| Support |

At the core of OBIA’s work is supporting people living with the effects of acquired brain injury and their families. Our support services department, along with a 1-800 toll free helpline, has been in operation since OBIA’s inception. The organization has been a leader in providing advocacy for individuals and families on matters related to income support programs, discharge from hospitals and finding appropriate residential placements for those with ABI. OBIA also delivers a province-wide Peer Support Program which continues to grow and provide rich opportunities for ongoing support for many people in Ontario living with the effects of ABI. The program is coordinated in collaboration with local affiliated community associations. OBIA’s ability to support people provincially is due to the strength that lies within our province-wide network of 20 affiliated community associations who support and provide direct assistance to persons living with the effects of acquired brain injury in their respective communities.

The Ontario Brain Injury Association continues to evolve in response to the needs of persons living with ABI. The environment in which OBIA operates is a dynamic one where a growing public awareness of brain injury and changes in the healthcare delivery system continually present new opportunities and challenges for the people we serve.

Therefore, we have identified the following areas of strategic direction to guide our work over the next five years: capacity building, heightened awareness, organizational sustainability and systemic advocacy.

In closing, I want to thank our clients, members, funders, volunteers, partners and staff for their participation in this strategic planning process. Your time and input was invaluable! We look forward with anticipation and excitement to our path ahead as we continue to support persons living with the effects of acquired brain injury.

Ruth Wilcock, Executive Director

OBIA
Organizational Foundations and Guiding Principles

In 1986, OBIA was founded by two families of children who sustained brain injuries. These families banded together for mutual support and to collectively advocate for people living with the effects of acquired brain injury in Ontario. Since 1986, the core principles of education, awareness and support for people living with the effects of acquired brain injury have been the focus of OBIA’s efforts.

In 2005, the Board of Directors identified seven goals for OBIA. These goals have served as the foundation and guiding principles of the organization throughout this time. In the spirit of renewing and updating the strategic vision of the organization, the original seven goals continue to be recognized as guiding principles that reflect OBIA’s past and future direction.

1. to promote and/or provide educational and human resources and supports across the province for the community of individuals living with the effects of ABI.
2. to develop a strong provincial network of community groups who support people with ABI and family members of those living with an acquired brain injury.
3. to develop and maintain the financial resources to fulfill the mission statements of OBIA.
4. to develop and maintain public awareness and understanding of acquired brain injury in the province of Ontario.
5. to advocate on behalf of the community of individuals living with the effects of ABI with government and other organizations.
6. to review and monitor the efficacy of the governance structure of OBIA.
7. to be involved in and encourage research initiatives as they relate to acquired brain injury issues.
OBIA recognizes that a continuous commitment to capacity building through the empowerment of and collaboration with our affiliates and the acquired brain injury (ABI) community will advance the capabilities of the greater community and lead to an improved quality of life for those living with ABI.

1 Maximize education, awareness and support services.

Strategies:
- Develop a strong provincial ABI network
- Leverage our relationships to increase service capacity
- Deliver leading edge ABI training throughout Ontario

2 Increase the scope and reach of services delivered.

Strategies:
- Diversify delivery methods for our education programs
- Expand existing outreach of current services
- Expand support services through new programs and methods of service delivery
Priority: Heightened Awareness

OBIA recognizes that increasing the awareness of both our organization and our cause will advance the understanding of this invisible disability and reduce the stigma associated with acquired brain injury (ABI).

1. **Heighten awareness and understanding of ABI within the broader public.**

   **Strategies:**
   - Coordinate provincial ABI Initiatives
   - Expand public education programs
   - Broaden the scope of the organization’s research program

2. **Develop strategies that increase the public profile and recognition of OBIA throughout the province of Ontario.**

   **Strategies:**
   - Expand OBIA’s online engagement community for people living and working with ABI
   - Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan
   - Expand research dissemination
   - Strengthen existing and cultivate new partnerships and collaborative opportunities
OBIA recognizes that innovation and excellence in strategic fund development, financial stewardship, leadership and service delivery will enhance our ability to serve Ontarians living with acquired brain injury (ABI).

1. Be a financially stable organization.
   - Diversify and increase our sources of revenue
   - Optimize operational efficiencies

2. Maximize organizational efficacy.
   - Ensure excellence in organizational governance, management and service delivery
   - Commit to ongoing professional development of staff and volunteers
OBIA recognizes that strong leadership will help to establish a unified provincial voice to advocate for and represent the best interests of the over 500,000 people in Ontario living with the effects of acquired brain injury (ABI).

1 Be a recognized provincial voice for advocacy on behalf of the ABI community in Ontario.

Strategies:
- Collaborate with diverse groups and organizations to facilitate knowledge sharing
- Foster and facilitate community engagement on ABI related issues

2 Represent the best interest of those living with the effects of ABI with respect to public policy.

Strategies:
- Establish and maintain strong stakeholder relationships
- Proactively monitor trends and proposed policy development and changes
- Actively participate in provincial public policy proceedings
Making a Difference

OBIA is committed to improving the quality of life for persons living with acquired brain injury in Ontario. Over the next five years our strategic plan will be the foundation on which decisions are made, resources are allocated and efforts are focused. To assist us in moving seamlessly in our strategic direction, we will use the balanced scorecard methodology. Our balanced scorecard will drive OBIA’s strategic efforts through the provision of concrete actionable activities, reliable success indicators and ongoing feedback about our performance.

We are excited and energized by the implementation of our strategic priorities and eager to make an even greater difference in the lives of individuals and families who have been impacted by acquired brain injury.
The organizational changes that are occurring at OBIA are resulting in streamlined activities and processes while at the same time enhancing the services that we provide. As a member of the OBIA team, I am so fortunate to be a part of the process. As a survivor of brain injury, I can see firsthand the value of these changes, not only for myself, but for my caregiver.

Steve Noyes
IT Consultant, OBIA
ABI Survivor