K-STATE Research and Extension

Making a Difference

2012–2013

Learn about Options for Traumatic Brain Injury

The Situation

Approximately 1.7 million people annually sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Kansas ranks above the national rate for TBI hospitalizations. The injury can occur at any age, but young children, teens, and older adults are more commonly affected than others. Military personnel may also experience traumatic brain injury.

Research shows that survivors of traumatic brain injury and their caregivers want to raise public awareness of TBI to improve acceptance and become integrated members of the community.

What We Did

A USDA grant allowed us to develop an educational program, "TBI*options*: Promoting Knowledge," to raise awareness of traumatic brain injury and the need for support for survivors and family members in local communities. Program content includes the effects and consequences of TBI, the importance of individual and community support, and an introduction to an online directory of community resources. Participants learn through short lectures, videos, application of reflective questions, and print materials to reinforce key messages. Trained leaders in local communities and an online version brought the program to more than 220 people.

Outcomes

- 95% of respondents indicated they learned something new after participating in the program.
- 83% of respondents indicated they planned to take action or change something in their own lives.
- General ratings of self-reported knowledge on five content items increased by more than one rating level from pre- to post-assessment.

Success Story

Participants provided written comments that they learned:

- "… how attitudes of others affect survivors."
- "… to recognize how serious any injury to the brain can be."
- "Effects of TBI aren't always visible."
- "A person with a TBI can set and achieve goals."
- "Community support may be lacking but is very important to survivors and their families."
- "We, as individuals or as a community, can help those affected by TBI."
- "Everyone can make a difference."
- "… how I can make a difference."

Participants said they planned to:

- "… share what I learned with family and friends and encourage them to attend the program."
- "… see if my daughter might need attention."
- "… locate resources for a friend recently diagnosed with TBI."
- "… not judge anyone."
- "… reach out to those with TBI."
- "… be more open to talking with these families in my community."

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