

## Think Ahead: March is Brain Injury Awareness Month

**More than 10,000 Minnesotans sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) each year.** A TBI is caused by a blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain — it can cause problems with thinking, emotions, balance and mood. Some changes may be subtle but have a major impact on the way a person lives his or her life. In general, the more serious the injury, the more significant and permanent changes are likely to be. Leading causes of TBI (by age group) include:

- Ages 0–4: Falls/assaults
- Ages 15–29: Motor vehicle traffic/sports and recreation
- Ages 65+: Unintentional falls

### To reduce the chances of suffering a TBI:

- Wear a helmet for sports and recreational activities, such as biking, ATV riding and skiing.
- Always wear a seat belt and buckle children in the correct [child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt](#) for their age and size.
- Install window guards, use safety gates to block stairs, and check that playgrounds have safe, shock-absorbing surfacing under equipment.
- For older adults, [decrease fall risk](#) through regular physical activities and tai chi exercise that strengthen legs and improve balance.

Now is a good time to educate yourself and others on the [common signs and symptoms](#) of a traumatic brain injury. Visit the CDC's [HEADS UP](#) website for information on how to recognize, respond to, and minimize the risk of sports-related concussions or other serious brain injury. If you, a co-worker or family member are looking for local TBI resources, the Minnesota Department of Health has a list of [services and agencies](#) that can help.

## HOME/work

Find more off-the-job safety resources through our *HOME/work* program, developed with input from our members. It provides ideas, materials and tools you can use to promote off-the-job safety in your workplace.

**Log in** to Members Only at [minnesotasafetycouncil.org/mo](http://minnesotasafetycouncil.org/mo) and click the "HOME/work" link near the bottom of the page.

**Questions?** Contact Erin Petersen, Coordinator of Family Safety Programs at 651-228-7314/800-444-9150; [erin.petersen@minnesotasafetycouncil.org](mailto:erin.petersen@minnesotasafetycouncil.org).



# Memo

A PUBLICATION OF THE MINNESOTA SAFETY COUNCIL  
TO MEMBERS

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**EDITOR**  
Ann Kulenkamp

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT**  
Kristy Zack

**DESIGNER**  
Melissa Litecky



MINNESOTA  
SAFETY  
COUNCIL

*Making Minnesota A Safer Place To Live*  
Chapter of the National Safety Council

474 Concordia Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55103  
Phone: 651-291-9150/  
800-444-9150  
Fax: 651-291-7584