

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Family Violence



- Working with Women with TBIs
- TBIs and PTSD

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When a woman is experiencing *difficulty with attention and concentration*:

- Minimise distractions while having detailed conversations.
- Meet individually in quiet locations, with minimum bright lights, and keep meeting times limited.
- Incorporate short breaks.

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When a woman is experiencing *difficulty with memory*:

- Write information down. Provide a calendar or notebook to help her remember dates, phone numbers.
- Encourage the use of a diary, journal or log.
- Discuss strategies for remembering important appointments and dates
- Provide repetition of information.
- Develop checklists.

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When a woman is experiencing *difficulty in executive functioning*:

- Assist in prioritising goals and break them down into smaller, tangible steps.
- Reduce distractions and allow time when completing tasks.
- Write out steps to a planning or problem-solving task.

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When a woman is experiencing *difficulty in processing information*:

- Focus on one task at a time. Break down messages or conversations in to smaller pieces.
- Talk slowly and on point, repeat information if necessary.
- Encourage her to take breaks if needed and ask for information to be repeated or rephrased.
- Provide information in factual formats, rather than abstract concepts.
- Double-check to ensure she has understood information.

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Additional suggestions include:

- Provide reassurance, education, and structure to minimise anxiety.
- Help her fill out forms and make important phone calls.
- Assist her in communicating with others.
- Avoid open-ended questions by using a yes/no format.
- Identify supports, both social and medical, and constantly encourage as much self-determination as possible.

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Additional suggestions also include:

- Always ensure that she is a participant in the process of developing plans and in discussions.
- Offer information in writing or electronic recording.
- Provide respectful feedback to potential or obvious problem areas.
- Be supportive and continuously identify strengths.

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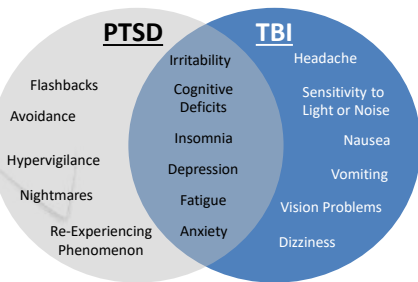
A woman who enters the criminal justice system may face additional challenges. She may appear:

- Disorganised
- Aggressive
- Temperamental
- Confused.

If her behaviours are misunderstood or misdiagnosed as indicating a mental health disability, she may have difficulty obtaining custody or being credited as a victim or reliable witness.

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