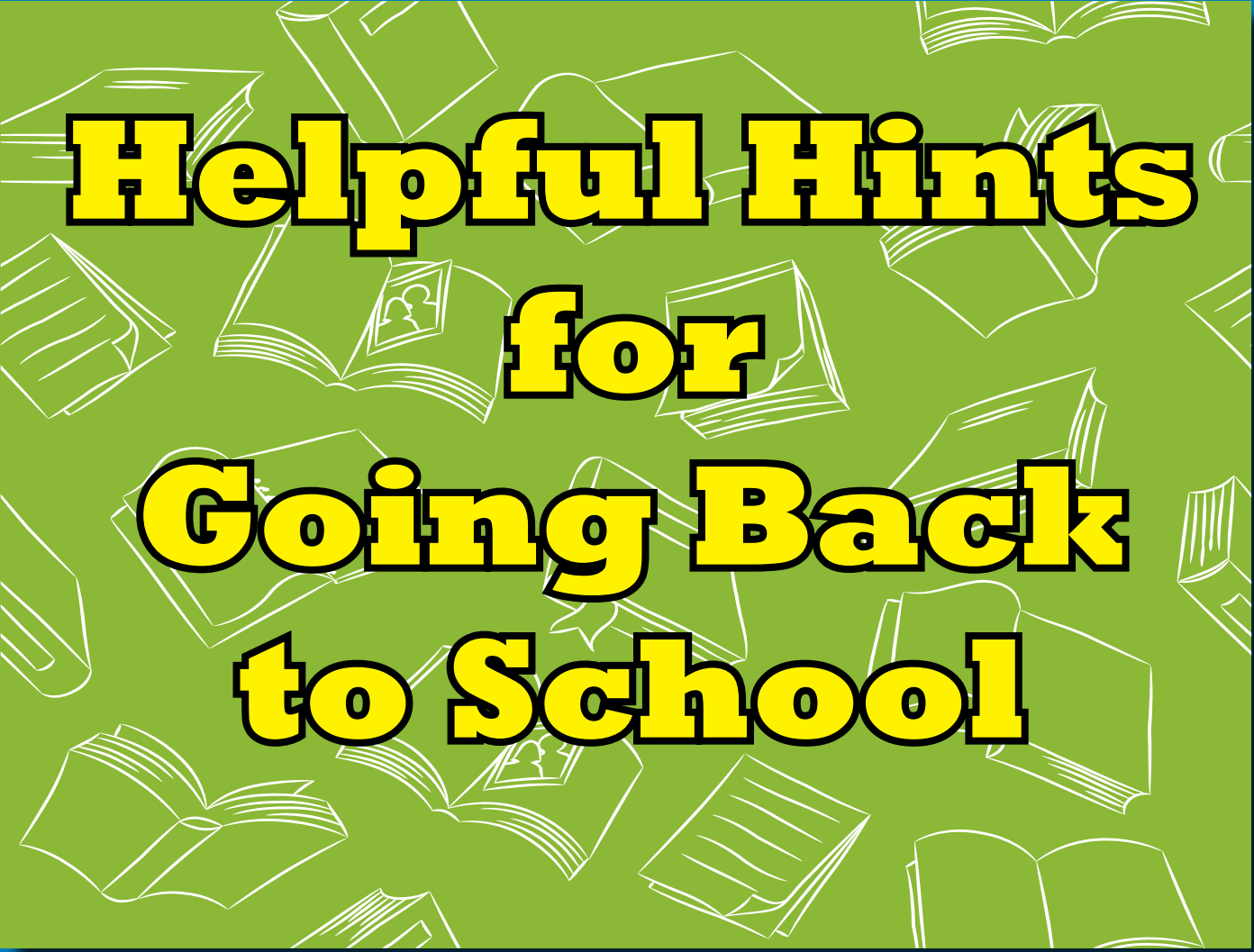




Brain Injury Alliance of Kentucky

The background of the central section is a light green field filled with white line-art illustrations of various school supplies, including open books, closed books, and sheets of paper. The text is overlaid on this background.

**Helpful Hints
for
Going Back
to School**

The Brain

You think you have a hard head, but only on the outside. The brain is very much like a soft boiled egg. The hard covering, the skull, protects the inside, the brain itself. It is soft and mushy, made up of membrane, fluid and bone. A brain injury is damage to the brain that is caused when the head strikes an object, something strikes the head or when the head is forcefully thrown about such as during a blast injury, a concussion, a fall or other accident. Other ways a brain may be injured are caused by illnesses such as stroke or tumors. After an injury there may be no effects at all or there may be local or widespread damage depending on the type of injury and where in the brain the injury has occurred.

Most schools have departments dedicated to supporting students who have learning challenges. They are staffed by trained professionals. Before enrolling, contact the support center and sign up. The centers offer tutoring, one-on-one support, counseling, help with time management and test preparation and assistance with writing papers.

Understanding your injury will be helpful as you think about returning to school. Circle the items that effect you. If you are aware of these difficulties, you and the people who support and assist you, will be able to come up with ways to accommodate the effects.

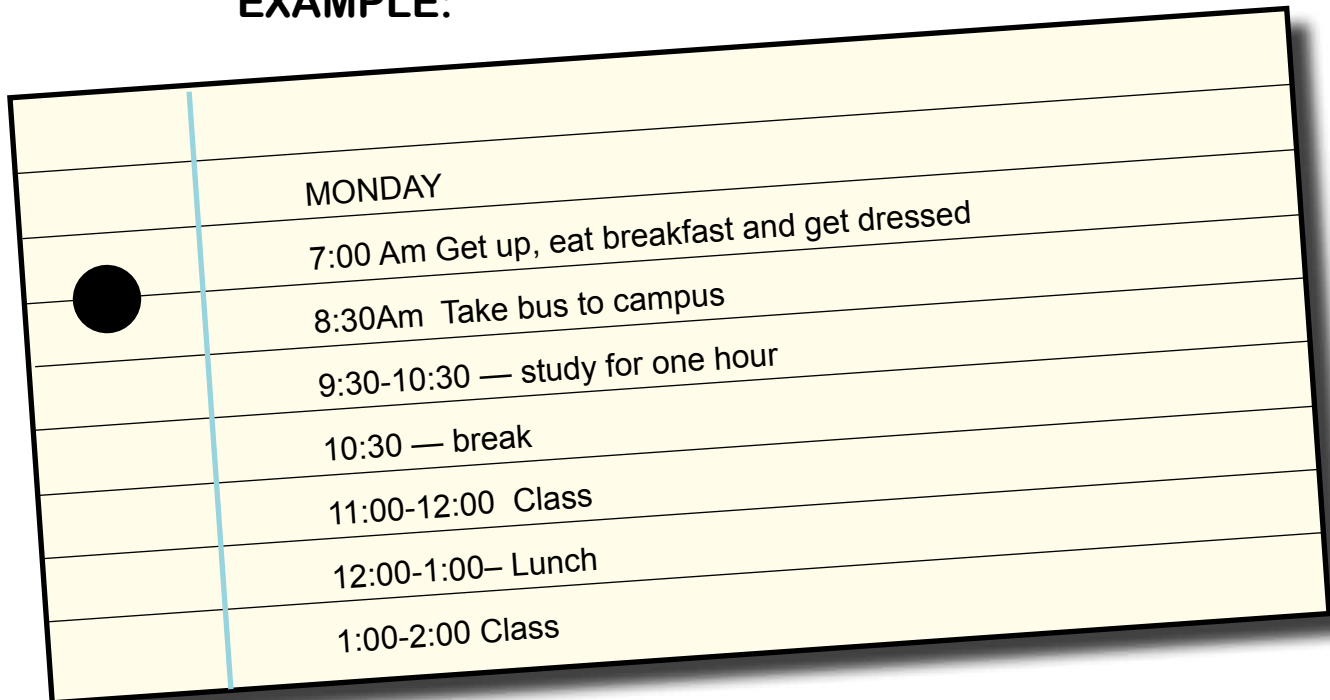
<u>PHYSICAL</u>	<u>COGNITIVE</u>	<u>EMOTIONAL</u>	<u>COMMUNICATION</u>
Fatigue	Confused	Frustrated	Difficulty Thinking Of The Right Word
Slow	Forgetful	Bored	Argumentative
Balance Problems	Lose Train of Thought	Restless	Egocentric
Headache	Think Slowly	Impatient	Uncomfortable Around Others
Drop Things	Indecisions	Sad	Slow
Weak	Poor Concentration	Lonely	Trouble Understanding Conversation
Trouble Falling Asleep	Can't Remember	Complainer	Make Spelling Errors
Dizziness	Easily Distracted	Difficulty Getting Started	Difficulty Making Conversation
Muscle Twinges Or Twitch	Forget Names	Misunderstood	Difficulty Writing

Be Aware and Be Prepared

1. GET ORGANIZED

- Structure your day into small chunks and keep routines as similar as possible.
- Prioritize your goals.
- Don't take on too much. Try to limit the number of tasks in each day.
- Create a written time line for each day.

EXAMPLE:



MONDAY

7:00 Am Get up, eat breakfast and get dressed

8:30Am Take bus to campus

9:30-10:30 — study for one hour

10:30 — break

11:00-12:00 Class

12:00-1:00— Lunch

1:00-2:00 Class

- Stay caught up with class work.
- Things that will help you
 - PDA
 - Alarm clock/watch
 - Notebooks
 - Folders
 - Tutors

2. RETAINING INFORMATION

- Get organized.
- Be well rested.
- Get yourself ready to go to class, to study or to take a test.
 - Calm yourself down
 - Meditate
- Break things down into small tasks or chunks.
 - EX: Read the chapter a section at a time and take notes or outline immediately after reading.
- Start early. If you were able to cram before your brain injury, you probably are not able to do it now. It is likely to take you more time (and energy) to study or write a paper.
- Use association
 - EX: if you must remember names or dates, associate something familiar to each name or date.
- Get a notebook or day planner — write everything down immediately
- Make a to do list and then modify it to include only 5 or 6 things
- Decide how you are going to take notes.
 - Ask for help with note taking
 - Use a tape recorder
 - Get the teachers outline
 - Get a copy of another students notes
 - Work with your tutor
 - Work with a student study group
 - Use flash cards
- Try to read the text before you go to a lecture class.
- After the lecture, write the answers to the following questions:
 - What were the main ideas?
 - What were the important details?
 - How does this relate to what I read in the text book?
 - What don't I understand about this?
- Arrange with the student support office to take untimed tests and to take your test in a quiet place.
- At the end of each chapter or lecture write down the information that was most important on flash cards.
- Things that will help you
 - Highlighters
 - Notebooks
 - Tape recorder
 - Friends/tutors

3. TAKING TESTS

- Stay up to date on assignments.
- Make sure you understand the information as you learn it. If you do not, ask for help right away.
- Review your flash cards.
- Go over past tests with your professor or your tutor.
- Ask the instructor about the test — what kind of information will be stressed; what types of questions will be asked.
- Break study sessions into manageable chunks.
- Form a study group.
- Go to the student support center for help.
- During the test
 - Get there in plenty of time and be prepared with pencils, etc.
 - Read the directions carefully and ask questions if you don't understand them
 - Answer the easiest questions first
 - If questions are multiple choice, look for the central idea and the main point. Supply your own answer first and then the answer from the list that matches your answer.
 - When you answer essay questions, outline the answer before you write and then proofread what you have written

4. HANDLING STRESS

- Don't over commit. Start out slowly.
- Keep your work area clean and organized.
- Understand the source of the stress. Try to get a clear understanding of the situation and how it affects you.
- Start early to prepare. Remember, you are probably not able to cram.
- Find out as much as you can about the paper or exam. Take advantage of practice tests.
- Get plenty of rest , exercise and good food.
- Try other techniques
 - Slow breathing
 - Muscle relaxing
 - Meditation
 - Yoga
 - Massage

My Class schedule:

My daily schedule:

Student Support Center:

Address: _____

Hours: _____

Name of my Tutor: _____

Phone number: _____

E-mail: _____

Study Group Members and contact information:

Notes:



This booklet is made available to you by the Brain Injury Alliance of Kentucky with funding assistance from the Kentucky Department of Veteran's Affairs. For additional information, please call BIAK and speak to the Military Outreach Coordinator at 1-800-592-1117.

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