

SCHOOL GUIDE

POST CONCUSSION INC TOOL KITS



MY STORY

By *BELLA PAIGE*

As a 10+ concussion survivor I went through high school and university with post-concussion syndrome and I want to help you succeed like I was able to.

My high school experience was very different than most. I came up with a system to go to one or two classes a day and rotate throughout the week. I was suffering from daily headaches, and the school environment increased my symptoms. Things like bright lights and noise are the obvious reasons. But others may not think about the reading, the lack of ability to process and remember information creating symptoms as well. I did graduate on time, and the tools in this tool kit will hopefully allow you or your child to do the same,

University was different as I had the benefit of not needing to go to class with having access to most lecture slides online. I had an easier time getting accommodations but the work was harder, more things to memorize, and more stress creating more symptoms. I graduated and believe that you can too!

IN THIS TOOL KIT

**TIPS FOR
STUDENTS**

**TIPS FOR
PARENTS &
GUARDIANS**

**LETTER TO
GIVE TO
TEACHERS**

For Students

Accommodations

If you are beginning to struggle in school and are worried about completing work, consider getting accommodations. Remember that accommodations are not giving you a competitive advantage compared to other students but allow you to be successful. If you are in university/college, most schools have a Student Accessibility Center or something similar where you can organize getting proper accommodations. In high school, you often need to speak to a guidance counsellor. Getting accommodations require a medical note or a physician to fill out paperwork, so make sure to talk with your current physician and take a moment to discuss what accommodations would allow you to succeed.

Examples of Accommodations

For Class

Flexible attendance.

Permission to record class and/or have a note taker.

Time extensions for assignments.

Reduced assignment load.

Permission to wear a hat, tinted glasses, and/or ear plugs to help with over stimulation.

For Tests/Exams

Extra time. (30 minutes/hour)

Permission to reschedule due to fluctuating medical condition.

Breaks as required.

Distraction reduced environment.

(Separate from classroom)

Pre-approved memory aid. (Word sheet, diagrams, notes)

DISCLAIMER

Post Concussion Inc is strictly an information website/podcast about concussions and post-concussion syndrome. It does not provide medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Always seek the advice of your physician or another qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read on this website/toolkit.



PRESSURE OF GRADUATION

The pressure to graduate on time is something that all students face. When suffering from a concussion/brain injury, the pressure can feel daunting. The first thing to remember is there is absolutely no shame in taking your time and graduating from school at your own pace; just don't give up! Second, consider spreading your courses out to help you succeed. For example, in high school, ask if you can take a summer booklet or online course to help add to your credits. In university/college, take spring and summer courses to help reduce your course load throughout the year.

When they don't believe you

Getting accommodations is not always a simple task. In high school, it was extremely difficult as my school had nothing in place for survivors. If they don't believe your memory problems get a neurological test done. If one physician says no, find another. Do not give up; you need to be your own advocate.

Quick Tips

Print work on different coloured paper. (Yellow/Green)

Highlight words on your screen with your mouse as you read.

Turn "night mode/light" on all devices 24/7.

Believe in yourself.

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Success is not an activity, but a process.

WHAT DO YOU TELL YOUR FRIENDS?

You are getting accommodations that your friends aren't. It is your choice whether you take the time to explain your situation or not. Remember, what you're experiencing is invisible, so they may not see the troubles you're facing. Do not be ashamed by needing extra time on tests or needing someone to take notes for you. You are creating an equal learning environment for yourself. Try to pick one friend to talk to so you have peer support in school.

FOR CAREGIVERS



Being a caregiver/parent of an individual suffering from long-term concussion/brain injury symptoms is no easy task. When it comes to school, there are three important things that you must do. The first is to provide support. Student's grades may drop, they may become frustrated being unable to do something that seemed so simple in the past. So staying supportive and not dismissing what they're going through despite that you can't see it is important. The next essential thing is to believe them. I would not have graduated from high school or university if my parents did not believe me when I said I couldn't. They believed me when I wanted to leave school early or not go at all. They believed me when I said I was struggling and needed help. The final important step is to help. Help them set up accommodations. My Mom had to come to meetings with me in high school because they didn't believe what I was going through despite doctor notes. My Mom sat there late at night while I cried, not being able to read. If you do all three of these things support, believe, and help, your student has a much bigger chance of succeeding. Concussion recovery is extremely lonely and knowing that people around you are there for you is so important.



SUPPORT



BELIEVE



HELP

Letter Example



Dear:

I am giving you this letter to explain my current situation. I am a recent concussion survivor, which means I recently injured my brain. I am one of the few individuals who have not recovered in a short time; therefore, I am dealing with prolonged symptoms. My symptoms may affect my ability to contribute and participate in class. Though what I am going through is invisible, I will do my best to succeed in your class, but I wanted you to be aware of my situation. Many of my symptoms affect my ability to think like extreme headaches. Other symptoms like eye sensitivity and memory make reading more of a challenge. My sensitivity to light makes being on screens a challenge as well. I have some noise sensitivity, so I may be wearing noise-reducing earplugs to prevent me from being overwhelmed in the classroom. I will be speaking with the school to arrange specific accommodations to help me succeed. A reminder that I may be smiling in the class and being friendly, but I have extreme cognitive fatigue and will often need to recover after. The difficulty with this injury is it is invisible, so I will do my best, to be honest and open about how I am doing despite how I may look.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions, and I will do my best to answer as I continue to learn about my new situation.

Thank you for your support,

If you have any questions about post-concussion life please check out postconcussioninc.com for more information.