



800 Jefferson Street, Suite 620
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Newsletter created by members of the Heads Up Program (King County chapter)

Discussion Group Notes

Dear Heads Up Abby

My son has just been in a terrible accident and doesn't think as well as he used to. What advice can you offer?

- He might have physical, cognitive or emotional challenges. Ask him and his doctor what helps him best.
- If he is confused, slow down. Keep it simple.
- Keep calm, give time-outs if either of you are frustrated.
- Find a good doctor — write down questions for the doctor.
- Offer your son a tape recorder or journal to help remember his thoughts.
- Make sure you both get times to cry about the losses and celebrate the gains.
- Give extra time and chances to practice. He will get better.
- Encourage your son to do things with other people who have had brain injury and have FUN!

Inside: More Dear Heads Up Abby

Happy, hope, health, helpful

Effort, encouragement, evolving, entertaining

Attitude, awesome, adorable, appreciative

Determined, delightful, dedicated, different

Social, service, sympathetic, sustaining

Understanding, underdog, uplifting, united

Purpose, pleasure, positive, practicing

Janie builds her strength and endurance using free weights in a Heads Up exercise group.



“People always say I can't do anything but I proved them wrong – with one hand!”
— David

The thought process when I rise each morning is valid: A new day, perhaps, a new way – today!
— Gerald

At Heads Up, you don't have to hear “sympathetic” remarks cuz other b-i's know how much *work* and struggle it takes.
— Judy



On Election Day, Ronald raises his arms high in an exercise group.



From left: staffer Katherine joins HUP participants Bill and Kaare with a Microsoft volunteer on United Way's Day of Caring.

Heads Up Program Celebrates 6th Anniversary... AND Starts a Second Program!

— Marti Spicer, M.S., OT/L, Heads Up Program Coordinator

ElderHealth Northwest's Heads Up Program is an innovative adult day health offering which has been serving younger adults with acquired brain injury for six years.

At this year's Head's Up anniversary party, each client was spotlighted for their unique contributions to the group and their hard-won gains. Then, after the toasts and mini-speeches, we had a ribbon cutting and demonstration of the new Nintendo Wii sports system, which had been donated to the program by a participant's supportive family.

We look forward to adding variety to our day with the Wii's gross motor sports; it's another fun way to help interact and build balance, coordination, and attention span.

Our adult day health program now has a sibling in Snohomish County! In 2008, the staff at the original Heads Up location in Seattle helped with training and materials for a second program in Marysville. They have been thriving since May, and we are thinking we will soon start letter and art exchanges!

Also, professionals from the Veterans Administration and other programs in Oregon and Washington visited Heads Up to see our services with the goal of creating more vitally needed services for younger adults with brain injury. We are happy to share and further develop quality programs.

Doyal arrived at Heads Up in 2004 wheelchair-bound. Now he celebrates his walker independence.



In 2008, we started a second Heads Up in Marysville, serving all of Snohomish County.

Discussion Group Notes Dear Heads Up Abby

My niece has a head injury and we would like suggestions to help her have fun at our upcoming family reunion.

- Ask her and her closest family members about her current strengths and challenges. Help build on her strengths.
- Use name tags to help with memory.
- Family scrapbooks and storytelling of the “good old days” will help her memory and keep her in the conversation.
- She might get tired, moody or sharp — build in a nap or quiet time.
- She may do best in smaller, calmer groups.
- Find out if she needs help cutting her food or doing stairs. She might need more time to do things.
- Remember to include her in the laughter!

Haiku

Trying memories
Faith there is always tomorrow
Happy to be alive

– HUP poetry group



Sarah and Kai share a laugh during putt putt golf.

TBI: A Disability

Ah, a traumatic brain injury,
Nobody seems to understand what I am not, of my life before.
Yesterday, ah, remembering yesterday . . .
what did I do yesterday? What about ten minutes ago?
Now I realize I am not a machine,
used to be mean, used to be nice, now I think twice.
I can't do anything for myself . . .
there must be something better.
Painting and coloring,
they bring on a nice, relaxed, and mellow feeling.
Washing together reds, yellows and blues.
Creating, understanding like purple makes me feel alive.

Andrew Sussman's poem appears in *Collected Whispers*
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