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Living with your parents after an ABI

Most people love and hate their parents - all at the same time! They can drive you completely mad but you love them very much.

Just think, your parents have looked after you all through your childhood and have seen you develop and grow to be the person you are. They love you very much and just want you to be well and happy.

Going up from a child to a teenager can be tough as you learn who you really are and what you are about. Part of this can be to try and break away from your parents. Some people call this 'rebellious' although it is often about finding your own space and getting some independence.

When you hurt your head you would have been very sick. There may have been a chance of you dying and your parents would have been aware of this. It would have been very difficult for them to hear that you were so ill.

Most parents panic and spend every minute that they can with you in hospital. They see you very sick in intensive care and worry about everything that happens to you. A lot of parents can unintentionally give the doctors and nurses a hard time because they want to know every last thing about what is going wrong with you and if you are getting better. Even something like a change in your blood pressure would have worried and upset your parents an awful lot.

When you start to get better, your parents were very relieved. They can be so pleased that you are not going to die that they want to protect you from every bad thing that can happen to you. Some people use the term 'wrapping you up in cotton wool'. Although overprotective parents have good intentions, they can be really difficult to live with. Some people like being overprotected by their parents because they may get what they want and get to do whatever they like.

Overprotective parents can be a problem to live with because you can find it hard to break away, find your own independence, and do the normal things that children and teenagers do.

This section will give you some tips on what to do.





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Aaarggh! My parents are driving me nuts!

Spend a few moments thinking about the sorts of things that are really annoying you. Here are some common ones that most teenagers think:

- “They don’t let me do anything!”
- “They treat me like a baby.”
- “They are really embarrassing in public.”
- “They think they understand how I feel.”
- “They never let me finish a sentence.”
- “They don’t practice what they preach.”
- “They let my brothers and sisters do everything.”
- “They don’t let me do what I want to.”

OK, with all of these reasons for your parents to drive you nuts, it is not surprising you are feeling upset about it all.

After your ABI you can feel completely misunderstood by your parents. We don’t have any quick fix solutions but can give you some tips!

Tips on dealing with nutty parents!

Talking: Talking is a great way to express how you feel. Some people are better at putting their point across than others. Some people get very emotional when they talk about how they feel and when others talk and they can come across as cold and a bit blunt. Talking can be difficult, especially if we talk about things that make us feel sad, like the ABI.

Talking can also be a problem with a brain injury because you may not be able to find the words to say how you feel. Some emotions can be hard to put into words anyway. Maybe your nurses, teachers or friends could help you write a letter to tell your parents how you feel.

Tips on talking: Try to sit down with your parents and say how you feel. Maybe you have a keyworker who works with you who may be able to help you if you can’t express yourself.

Get some time to yourself: Emotions can be much easier to deal with when you have time to yourself because you have time to think and put your thoughts into some sort of order. Sometimes thinking about why you feel the way you do can help you to think of ways to feel better.





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Lots of teenagers need time to themselves and you need time too! Ask your parents for quiet time, or maybe come up with a rule that if your bedroom door is closed you don't want to be disturbed. Maybe your keyworker can help you come up with some ways to get time to yourself.

Make some rules: If you are finding it hard to talk about how you feel maybe you will find it easier to talk about what you would like. You could then make up some rules with your parents so that you can start to take control on what you do. For example, if you go out in the evenings work out a time you all agree that you will be home by. This can be a tricky as you all have to agree on the same thing but once you have worked these problems out it can make life easier.

Remember, you are not alone. You are still in the rehabilitation phase and it will take a while for you to regain your independence. All the people you are surrounded by can help you in many ways and one of those can be to help you live with your parents.

