



## Thank you for your commitment to coordinate a Go Blue! for Brain Injury site!

In this manual we provide tips, how-to's and ideas to make your Go Blue! event a success! Inside you'll find:

- Step - by - step instructions for planning your Go Blue! campaign
- Ideas to make your campaign fun and engaging
- Resources for additional information and ideas

**Don't forget that BIANYS staff are here to help you.** Each workplace is different and unique - what works for one may not work for all. Want to bounce ideas off of someone or have questions? Please reach out to us because we are here to help!

### Key Contacts:

Eileen Reardon  
Executive Director  
ereardon@bianys.org

Allison Barna  
Membership Coordinator  
abarna@bianys.org

### About the Brain Injury Association of New York State

The Brain Injury Association of New York State (BIANYS) is a statewide non-profit membership organization that advocates on behalf of brain injury survivors and their families and promotes brain injury prevention. Established in 1982, BIANYS supports, educates and advocates for the brain injury community, and provides support services that lead to the improved outcomes for children and adults with brain injuries.



## Brain Injury Facts

- An estimated 13.5 million Americans are affected by stroke and TBI, making brain injury the second most prevalent injury and disability in the United States.
- 5.3 million Americans live with a long-term disability as a result of a traumatic brain injury.
- Every 11.26 seconds an American sustains a traumatic brain injury.
- 2.8 million Americans sustain traumatic brain injuries each year.
- More than 53,000 people die every year as a result of traumatic brain injury.
- According to a study by Finkelstein and colleagues, the annual costs of brain injury, both medical costs and lost productivity for people with TBI, are an estimated \$76.5 billion.

## Steps to a successful campaign

### **1. Recruit a strong team to lead your Go Blue! for Brain Injury campaign.**

Make sure you have the right people in place. The size of the campaign team will depend on the size and structure of your business or organization. The key is determining how many volunteers you need to easily communicate with employees in a way that makes sense. Once you establish who should be on your team, set-up a regular meeting to discuss roles and responsibilities, monitor progress and evaluate your campaign efforts for the future. For example:

**Do you have 6 people in your office?** If yes, you probably only need one or two people to help manage your Go Blue! campaign. The larger the office, the more help you're going to need.

**Do you have 50 or more people in your office, with multiple departments and functions within your business?** If yes, then you probably want to establish a committee with a representative from each of the major departments to create a Go Blue! campaign committee.

### **2. Make a plan.**

**Determine the best day (or days) for your Go Blue! for Brain Injury employee event.** Talk about what makes sense for your office workplace. Deciding on a date (or dates) will help guide your activities leading up to the event, including kick-off messages and reminder messages.

**Set goals.** Set a healthy and attainable fundraising goal. You want your workplace to be able to celebrate and feel like they accomplished something.

**Create a campaign timeline and activities.** Once you have a team, a goal and dates, it's time to decide how you'll shape your campaign to make it fun and engaging. The scope and activity level surrounding your campaign is determined by your fundraising goal, what you can take on as the coordinator, and what your team is willing to help you accomplish. Don't forget the personality of your workplace- what might work for one office, might not work for yours. Some

questions to ask: What do your co-workers like to do for fun? How do they prefer to receive information?

### **3. Inspire: share the BIANYS story with staff.**

Decide on the best way to share important info about Go Blue! at your office, including instructions on how staff can participate. Do you have marketing/communications staff that can help? Do you have an intranet where you can post information? Can your CEO send an email to all staff inviting them to participate in your Go Blue! event? Is there a communal space to post flyers and announcements like a breakroom or kitchen?

**You'll want to make sure that the information people need to know reaches them, including:**

- March is Brain Injury Awareness Month
- Information about BIANYS and facts about Brain Injury in United States\*
- Dates for your Go Blue! event/activity
- Deadline to turn in donations
- Who to turn donations in to
- How donations directly support brain injury survivors in your community\*

\*BIANYS can supply you with the materials you need, just send a request!

### **4. Ask everyone to give!**

Tools you can use to get the word out:

- A kick-off email at the beginning of your Go Blue! campaign to announce support for BIANYS
- A follow up email midway through your campaign with an update and reminder
- An end-of-campaign message right before the close of your campaign
- Use posters and other signs
- Logos and images for emails or for print on demand
- Social media posts on personal and company social networks

**IMPORTANT:** The key to any successful campaign is follow-up! Don't assume one email will reach everyone. Create a schedule to send multiple messages to keep your donors engaged throughout the campaign and remind them of your donation deadline.

**Do you have a larger campaign and want to get fancy?** Make a list of past donors and send one message to them thanking and acknowledging past support. Recognizing past support can help renew gifts that were made by staff during the prior year's campaign. Send a different email to new/prospective donors asking for their participation in the campaign.

## **5. THANK EVERYONE FOR GIVING.**

Saying thank you is the most important part of any fundraising campaign. Generous donors are more likely to give next year if they know how much you appreciate them!

## **6. Campaign wrap-up.**

So you've finished your campaign - Congrats! Please contact us to let us know your Go Blue! campaign is complete. Make sure you turn in all donations and donor information and account for all of your Go Blue! campaign contributions by filling out the campaign spreadsheet provided by BIANYS. If you utilized online giving, let BIANYS know your campaign total so that you can be recognized.

Contact:

Eileen Reardon, Executive Director, [ereardib@bianys.org](mailto:ereardib@bianys.org) or 518-459-7911

Allison Barna, Membership Coordinator, [abarna@bianys.org](mailto:abarna@bianys.org) or 518-459-7911

**Please turn in your Go Blue! for Brain Injury contributions no later than April 30, 2020.**

Turning in your campaign funds allows us to deposit checks and process donations in a timely manner.

Partial campaign drop-offs can also be a good idea if your campaign runs for a longer period of time or generates a lot of cash and checks. Donors appreciate their checks being cashed, and cash laying around is never a good idea!

## **7. Share your campaign & be recognized!**

**We want to hear about your campaign and would love to see it as well!** Remember to snap pictures of any great moments at your office. Send them to BIANYS so we can share on our outlets.

## Tips for making your Go Blue! campaign a success

Tailor your event to your workplace. What will work for you? Here are some ideas from past participants.

### East Greenbush Library – East Greenbush, NY

Coordinator Lisa Warner left flyers and materials at the circulation desk throughout the month of March and collected donations!

**“We participate because all survivors deserve a voice. Helping to raise awareness gives us a voice!”**



### Northeast Center – Lake Katrine, NY

Coordinator Christine Lawlor organized a walk around the grounds with residents in blue jeans and collected donations. BIANYS FACTS Coordinator Laleene Ali did a Lunch & Learn presentation.



### Happiness House – Geneva, NY

Dozens of staff and participants from all Happiness House locations paid \$2 and wore jeans and posed for a photo. In addition, Happiness House hosted brain injury awareness events and activities throughout the month of March.

**“As a service provider, we see the impact brain injury has on the individuals we serve and their families. We hope, by raising awareness, we can help reduce the incidents of injury and improve the outlook for those in recovery.”**



### Compassionate Care – Endicott, NY

Team Leader Cindy Solomita organized an awareness event on a Wednesday night to provide information and resources to the community.

**“We had an amazing turnout last year by our participants, families and community in helping to spread brain injury awareness. A fun time was had by all and we had the opportunity to meet some amazing people!”**



## **More tips!**

### **If you still need inspiration, some more ideas from past events include:**

A bake sale hosted by a student on Long Island – she sold blue cupcakes!

A hospital on Long Island hosted a raffle of donated gift baskets from local businesses.

A law office collected donations from employees to wear blue every Friday in March.

### **Matching Programs**

Does your company have a matching program? Often, companies will match donations made by employees, find out if yours does!

### **Incentives**

Incentives can be very helpful and a super way to get people involved in the Go Blue! campaign. These can include incentives to attend meetings, participate in the activity you are organizing, or to give. They can be raffles, giveaways, early bird contributions, or competitions between departments, just to name a few!

### **Donation Percentages**

Do you work in retail or a sales environment? See if your company will donate a portion of its daily, weekly or monthly sales to the Go Blue! campaign. Advertise to encourage sales throughout the time period.

### **Sales**

Do you bake, sew, draw, etc.? Set up your own bake sale or craft sale. Have other staff contribute and donate the proceeds from your sales. In the past, people have sold cupcakes, stickers, bracelets and photographs, just to name a few!

### **Raffles**

Is there a local business that people in your office love? See if your local bakery will donate a basket of cookies, your local salon will donate a facial, or your local restaurant will donate a gift certificate. Raffle these off and donate the proceeds - everyone goes home with something special!

**The possibilities are endless – get creative! And remember, we are here to help. Let us know your ideas and we can help tailor your event to meet your needs.**