

FOR RELEASE

*March is Brain Injury Awareness Month*

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**Anatomy of a Brain Injury**

*What the first recorded traumatic brain injury patient taught us about the brain's relationship to behavior.*

YPSILANTI, Mich., March 1, 2008 — The Centers for Disease Control report that in the United States today, 1.4 million people sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) each year.

But in the United States in the nineteenth century, there was little or no documented information regarding brain injury or how damage to the brain impacted an individual. Phineas Gage, a railroad worker who lived in 1848, is one of the first documented cases.

Gage incurred a TBI while using explosives to break up and remove rocks in order to lay railroad tracks. When an explosive ignited prematurely, the tampering iron Gage used to pack the explosives and sand into the hole was thrust through his skull, entering behind his left cheekbone, passing through the frontal lobes and exiting out the top.

Remarkably, Gage resumed consciousness after the blast and was even alert enough to sign out on his time sheet. Although he returned to work following his injury, the doctor who treated him reported that his personality was markedly altered. Formerly a polite businessman who was well liked by his co-workers, he soon became belligerent and vulgar and was unable to follow a task through to completion.

His case was one of the first demonstrating a relationship between the frontal lobes of the brain and personality. Today, medical researchers have linked damage to the frontal lobes of the brain to a host of problems including paralysis, problems concentrating, mood and personality changes, and difficulty problem-solving.

Phineas Gage's story and more are featured in RainbowVisions magazine, a quarterly publication of Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers Inc. that covers all aspects of brain injury from clinical news, current technology, rehabilitation techniques, behavioral information and medical articles for industry professionals, TBI survivors and families. To download a copy, log on to [www.rainbowrehab.com](http://www.rainbowrehab.com). For additional resources about brain injury, visit the Brain Injury Association of America's Web site at [www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org) or the Brain Injury Association of Michigan's Web site at [www.biami.org](http://www.biami.org).

**About Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers Inc.**

Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers Inc. headquartered in Ypsilanti, Michigan has been a provider of rehabilitation services for children, teens and adults with brain injuries since 1983. With more than 30 residential locations, two treatment centers, a NeuroRehab Campus and a vocational center, our organization offers services that span nearly every aspect of brain injury recovery and rehabilitation. Our residential settings include adult homes, child and adolescent homes, townhouses and semi-independent living apartments. Day treatment and outpatient services are also available.