



ABI patient goes back to school to help others

Jay Dukeshire, known by his medical care team as miracle boy, has made a remarkable recovery. In 2009, Jay was involved in a motorcycle accident, hitting his head off the curb and splitting his helmet down the middle. He suffered from extensive physical injuries, but the most severe was his [acquired brain injury](#) (ABI).

Jay spent two and a half months at [Hamilton General Hospital](#) (HGH), before starting [physiotherapy](#) and cognitive therapy to restore brain function. It took him time to come to terms with his injury. I had the mentality of a one-year-old child, says Jay. I didn't recognize my parents, friends, couldn't tell who or where I was, forgot how to eat, and would forget everything after 60 seconds. Not knowing or understanding my injury was the toughest part of my journey.

Early on in his recovery, Jay started meeting with Dina Vandenberg, an advanced rehabilitation therapist with ABI Community Services at Hamilton Health Sciences. Twice a week, they would connect to discuss how he was feeling, set goals, and sometimes go on a small outing in the community.

By going to both quiet and busy environments, Dina was able to observe Jay's reaction in different situations and implement new and personalized compensatory strategies to cope, as every ABI is different.

I'll never forget the time Dina asked me to pick out a birthday card for my nephew. I stood there staring at all the cards, the amount of cards, shapes, colours, and sizes

overloading my brain and I bailed, explains Jay. We discussed that particular time, how I felt, what I saw, what was going on in my head and developed a plan to deal with the situation.

Jay has been a guitar player for years, so Dina suggested that he devise a way to cope in challenging situations by thinking