

Medico-Legal Evaluation of Head-Injured Children

Education Issues

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Educational assessment addresses:

1. Effects on pre-injury
educational/employment potential
2. School placement and provision
3. Education as rehabilitation – needs and
resources

1. Effects on pre-injury potential

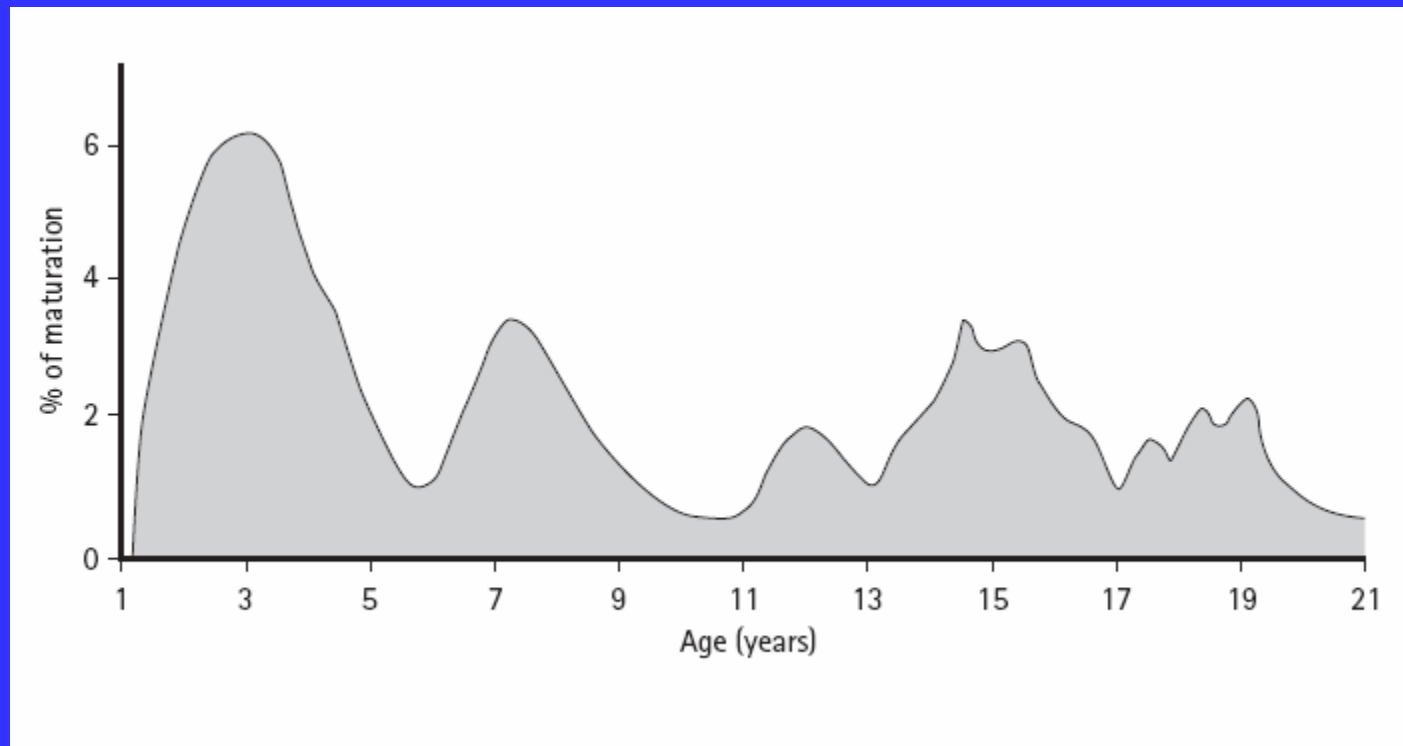
- Actual pre-injury achievement must be established
- Any pre-existing difficulties must be identified and carefully described

- Post-injury achievement must be recorded and interpreted
- Current functioning must be accurately assessed using formal and informal test measures
- The comments/opinions/predictions of others must be carefully considered and interpreted
- Progress must be monitored

The importance of continued monitoring

The significance of age at injury....

Brain maturation periods



The importance of continued monitoring

The significance of age at injury

- Key times for emergence of ‘new’ problem
- Links with school/National Curriculum stages

Children with ABI cannot be compared with adults

Documentation to aid assessment

- School reports for parents
- Internal school records
- SATs results
- Examination results
- Results of any other school assessment
- Statement of special educational needs **plus** appendices

Educational assessment

- Direct information from school staff and parents
- Formal and functional assessment
- Class observation if appropriate

2. School placement and provision

- There are no UK schools specifically for students with ABI
- Young people with ABI do not 'fit' within usual categories of provision

3. Education as rehabilitation

- Schools and families are the major rehabilitation providers for children with ABI
- Appropriate provision can significantly affect outcome

The impact of an acquired brain injury on a child does not occur merely at a point in time, but rather as a lifelong experience. It can affect the way the student thinks, feels, behaves, moves, learns, and participates in the world. Adults often think of children as wonderfully resilient beings who can adapt to severe injuries or over-whelming circumstances, but a child's brain is a brain that is still developing. In reality, children are just as vulnerable as adults, only it often takes longer for the effects of a brain injury to become clear.

Savage & Wolcott, 1994.