



STATE OF VERMONT  
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Traumatic Brain Injury Conference to be Held in Killington; “Central Park Jogger”/TBI Survivor to Address 400 Conference Participants on October 12**

Waterbury, Vt. –The 18th Annual Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Conference, *Healing to Wholeness*, begins October 11 in Killington. The conference is designed to provide education and support to over 400 survivors, families, and professionals with a focus on meeting challenges associated with rebuilding life following TBI.

On October 12, Governor Jim Douglas will address conference participants and Trisha Meili, author of the best-selling memoir, *I Am the Central Park Jogger: A Story of Hope and Possibility*, will provide the Keynote Address. Meili will speak not on the brutality of the crime but on the road back to recovery; not just of survival but of overcoming and exceeding all expectations.

Brain injury is the leading cause of death for children in Vermont, and annually there are over 3,000 emergency room visits due to TBI. Over 6,000 Vermonters are living with brain injury. In 2004, over 400 Vermonters require hospitalization due to brain injury, and drugs and alcohol were involved in 63 percent of the injuries.

Prior to the development of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living’s TBI Pilot Project in 1991, individuals with brain injuries were placed in expensive out of state facilities, often there for years, with little hope of returning to their home communities. Since implementation of the TBI Program, statistics indicate: 99 percent of Vermonters with traumatic brain injury are treated in Vermont; the TBI Program serves approximately 75 survivors every year; of these individuals, many graduate off services and become competitively employed; and, all individuals improved their quality of life and level of functioning. Serving Vermonters with brain injury in our state using community programs saves Vermont over \$3 million annually.

Conference participants will also address the challenges faced by Veterans with TBI returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan. The State of Vermont and the Brain Injury Association of Vermont are working closely with the Military and Community Family Network in order to provide training, assistance, and support to returning Veterans and their families. Detailed information can be found at

[http://www.dad.state.vt.us/tbi/2006\\_Conf/2006\\_TBI\\_Annual\\_Conference\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.dad.state.vt.us/tbi/2006_Conf/2006_TBI_Annual_Conference_Brochure.pdf)

#### **Thursday, October 12, 2006**

Event: 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Traumatic Brain Injury Conference

Time: 9:00 to 10:15 a.m. – welcoming remarks by Governor Douglas and Keynote Address  
10:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. – conference continues

Location: Killington Grand Resort and Conference Center, 228 East Mountain Road, Killington, VT

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