|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **For Immediate Release** | **Press Contact** |
| February 26, 2020 | Dianna Fahel |
|  | 703-761-0750 ext. 630 |
|  | dfahel@biausa.org  |
|  |  |

**Teens injured in 'skull-breaker' challenge; BIAA urges parents to intervene**

*Vienna, Va.* – The “skull-breaker challenge,” a viral prank gaining popularity on the social media platform Tik Tok, has led to concussions and other serious injuries in children and teens across the nation.

The challenge involves three people standing alongside each other, seemingly ready to jump into the air at the same time. When the unsuspecting person in the middle jumps, the other two kick that person’s legs in an attempt to trip him or her. The prank results in forceful trauma to the head and neck area when the individual falls to the ground. Injuries – including concussions and broken bones – have been reported in at least half a dozen states so far.

A concussion, or mild traumatic brain injury, is an alteration in brain function caused by an external force. “You don’t have to break your skull to sustain a serious, life-changing brain injury,” remarks Susan Connors, Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) president and chief executive officer. “Falls are the leading cause of traumatic brain injury in the country, and even a minor fall can have major consequences. This speaks to the dire need for increased education for parents, teachers, and students.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 5.3 million Americans live with permanent brain injury-related disabilities. While there is risk of sustaining a brain injury among all age groups, the risk is highest among adolescents and adults over 75 years old. “A brain injury is not an event or an outcome,” offered Brent Masel, M.D, BIAA’s medical director. “It is the start of a misunderstood neurological disease. Parents should be aware that all brain injuries – including concussions – may lead to long-term health problems.”

This March, join BIAA in recognizing Brain Injury Awareness Month through its Change Your Mind campaign. The campaign provides a platform for changing common misconceptions about brain injury, raising awareness about the incidence of the injury and the needs of individuals who are injured. Information about Brain Injury Awareness Month, including educational materials and downloadable collateral, is available at [biausa.org/changeyourmind](http://www.biausa.org/changeyourmind).

###

*About the Brain Injury Association of America:*

The Brain Injury Association of America is the country’s oldest and largest nationwide brain injury advocacy organization. Our mission is to advance awareness, research, treatment, and education and to improve the quality of life for all people affected by brain injury. We are dedicated to increasing access to quality health care and raising awareness and understanding of brain injury.