



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Brain injury awareness makes its way to markets for National Brain Injury Awareness Month in March

HONOLULU – During National Brain Injury Awareness Month in March, the Hawai'i Department of Health Neurotrauma Supports program is teaming with the FarmLovers Farmers' Markets, Hawai'i/Pacific Area Health Education Center, and the Hawaii Disability Right's Center (HDRC) to sponsor interactive and fun activities for adults and keiki at:

- Pearlridge Farmer's Market on Saturday, March 9 from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., and
- Kaka'ako Farmer's Market on Saturday, March 16 from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Hands-on activities will focus on how the brain works, preventing brain injuries, and the symptoms experienced by survivors of brain injury. Dr. Sheri Hiroi DuBay, a neuroscientist and research specialist for the Hawai'i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, and her team of volunteers will work with keiki and adults to help them build a brain, test their taste buds to discover if they are a "super taster," and allow them to handle a real brain. [HDRC](#) will provide those attending on March 16 with information and resources on the civil and legal rights of individuals with disabilities.

Across the nation, March is recognized as Brain Injury Awareness Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2013, 2.8 million Americans sought treatment for or died from a traumatic brain injury as the result of a car crash, fall, sporting or recreational injury, an assault or other contributing factor. According to the Hawai'i Department of Health, between 2012 - 2016, 11,798 visits to Hawai'i emergency departments were related to a head injury with medical services totaling \$38.9 million. Traumatic brain injuries cause problems with cognition, emotions, language, physical mobility, and sensory perception affecting how a person lives, works and participates in everyday life.

Collaborating with the Hawai'i Department of Health, FarmLovers Farmers' Markets are affirming their commitment to the community to make Hawai'i one of the best and healthiest places to live. As farm advocates, the proprietors of FarmLovers Farmers' Markets are committed to creating and utilizing more sustainable agricultural land to benefit the local economy island wide.

The Hawai'i Department of Health Neurotrauma Supports program cultivates and shares resources to address the needs of individuals and their families affected by neurotrauma injury. The program encourages people to learn about brain injuries and how to prevent them. Simple prevention techniques to avoid traumatic brain injuries include:

- Proper use of helmets and other protective equipment, and safe playing techniques in sports and recreational activities;
- Proper installation and use of infant and child car seats and seatbelts;
- Elimination of trip hazards at home for our kupuna through regular medication reviews and annual eye exams. Regular exercise is highly recommended to help older adults maintain and improve their balance and coordination.

For additional information on resources for individuals with traumatic brain injury, please call the Neurotrauma Helpline at (808) 733-2155 or visit the Neurotrauma Supports website at <http://health.hawaii.gov/nt/>.

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