



THE
MAC PARKMAN
F O U N D A T I O N
— **We Should Have Known** —

THEORY OF CHANGE

Vision:

A world where young-athletes and veterans can achieve optimal mental health and well-being, free from the long-term impacts of brain trauma, including aggression, self-harm, and suicide.

We envision a world where the prevention of brain injuries is integrated into every aspect of sports and military training, ensuring that these individuals and their families are equipped to make informed decisions about their health and safety. And at times when injuries cannot be prevented, that the education and innovative treatments are available to recover from brain trauma and thrive.

Through strategic partnerships with medical researchers, educators, sports leagues, and military organizations, we aim to advance breakthrough treatments, establish safer practices, and deliver comprehensive support for those impacted by head trauma.

Problem Statement:

Repeated head impacts (RHI) in contact sports and blast exposure (RBE) in military service are linked to serious long-term mental health issues, such as depression, aggression, and cognitive decline, which often go undiagnosed or untreated. This contributes to a significant mental health crisis among young athletes and veterans, leading to elevated suicide rates and reduced quality of life.

Inputs:

1. Educational resources on brain health for parents, coaches, and athletes.
2. Collaborations with research institutions (e.g., Boston University CTE) and medical professionals.
3. Funding for innovative brain health recovery treatments not covered by traditional insurance.
4. Brain Health Programs led by the Foundation and our partners.



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5. Wrap-around services for veterans including financial, housing, and job readiness support.
 6. Podcast & Media Outreach (e.g., *Broken Brains* podcast) to raise awareness.
 7. Advocacy for policy changes and increased public awareness of brain injuries' impact on mental health, better return to play and return to school protocols, and better support for veterans' brain health recovery.
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Activities:

1. Education Initiatives:

- Deliver brain health education to parents, coaches, and young athletes through workshops, webinars, and app-based resources.
- Provide training programs for coaches on the signs of brain trauma and safer play strategies.

2. Research and Advocacy:

- Fund and collaborate on cutting-edge research into brain injuries and their connection to mental health issues.
- Advocate for policy changes to implement best practices in youth sports and military care (e.g., stricter return-to-play/return-to-school protocols and veteran healthcare improvements).

3. Direct Support Programs:

- Provide veterans and young athletes with access to innovative brain health treatments (e.g., cognitive rehabilitation, neurofeedback) that improve brain function and reduce mental health symptoms.
- Offer wrap-around services through our partners, such as housing, job readiness, and financial literacy support for veterans as they undergo brain health recovery.

4. Awareness Campaigns:

- Use the *Broken Brains* podcast, our book (*Broken Brains & Youth Sports*), our app, and other media to educate the public about the long-term effects of RHI and RBE, share personal stories, and promote mental health advocacy.



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Outputs:

1. Increased participation in brain health programs and app usage by parents, athletes, and veterans.
 2. Creation and dissemination of educational materials (e.g., safety protocols, training guides).
 3. Delivery of brain health treatments to veterans and athletes.
 4. Expanded media coverage on the podcast and increased awareness via social media.
 5. Increased partnerships with schools, sports leagues, and veteran organizations to promote brain health safety.
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Short-Term Outcomes:

1. Increased awareness of the risks of brain injuries among parents, coaches, athletes, and veterans.
 2. Improved access to brain health treatments for veterans and young athletes.
 3. Increased advocacy for better policies related to brain health in youth sports and military veteran care.
 4. Reduced stigma surrounding mental health challenges linked to brain injuries.
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Long-Term Outcomes:

1. Improved brain health and mental well-being among student-athletes and veterans, leading to reduced rates of aggression, self-harm, and suicide.
 2. Widespread adoption of best practices in sports safety and veteran care, resulting in fewer incidents of brain trauma.
 3. Inclusion of innovative brain health treatments in traditional healthcare and insurance coverage.
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Impact:

By addressing both the symptoms and underlying causes of brain trauma, The Mac Parkman Foundation plays a pivotal role in reducing mental health challenges such as depression, aggression, and suicide that are often linked to Repeated Head Impacts (RHI) and Repeated Blast Exposure (RBE). Our efforts help veterans and athletes lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Grounded in research that connects brain trauma to adverse mental health outcomes, our Theory of Change drives targeted interventions. By focusing on both prevention through education and awareness, and recovery via treatment and comprehensive support services, we aim to create lasting, meaningful change in the community.

Conclusion:

By clearly mapping the connections between activities and outcomes, and integrating educational, research, and treatment-based initiatives, our Foundation ensures that every program is mission-driven, measurable, and impactful. Our Theory of Change serves as both a strategic roadmap and a flexible tool—defining our long-term goals, strategies, and guiding assumptions, while remaining adaptable to new insights, feedback, or changing conditions that emerge.