

A Spinal Cord Injury Affects The Entire Family

FacingDisability.com: The Changing Face of Spinal Cord Injury Education and Support

Faculty

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facingdisability.com

for families facing spinal cord injuries



Disclosures

Commercial Support was not received for this activity.

Sara J. Klaas, MSW, C-ASWCM

has no financial interest to disclose.

Thea Flaum

has no financial interest to disclose.



Today's Learning Objectives

- Discuss the importance of education and peer support for those affected by SCI
- Describe a new intervention that may assist in achieving the goal of delivering excellence through state-of-the-art healthcare via support and education online
- Offer an important resource for people with SCI, their family, friends, and healthcare providers on the rehab team



Background...

Spinal cord injury is sudden and life changing

Life is turned upside down

- Entire Family
- Friends
- Community

Coping with the injury

- Physical
- Psychological
- Social
- Financial



Trauma, Hospitalization, & Rehab

Balancing Physical and Psychological Needs

- Level of injury
- Immediate medical concerns
- Treatment, meds, rehab
- Complications – pain, spasticity, UTI's, blood clots, pressure ulcers, autonomic dysreflexia

Emotional Shock

- This can't be happening to me

Denial vs. Hope

- This is only temporary



Trauma, Hospitalization, & Rehab

Initial Goals

- Impart knowledge of new injury
- Enhance level of independence
- Prepare for rejoining pre-injury activities including work or education
- Return to the community as soon as possible

Focus is, primarily, on the injured individual

- Shorter lengths of stay



Disability: A Family Affair

Disability is truly a family affair as it changes the balance in the family system

All family members are impacted in unique and diverse ways

The initial post-disability period is often a time of crisis but also represents a time of opportunity



The Goal of Rehabilitation

It's all about community: re-integrating back into the community and returning to family and friends!!



What Those with SCI Tell Us...

- Develop a support network
- Keep up to date... get on every mailing list you can
- Talk, talk, talk... with each other
- Use technology to keep you connected – social networking, emails, care pages, etc.



FacingDisability.com

- Cutting edge, internet-based project
- Decreased isolation, educate, & support
- Connect with experts, peers & family members
- Instantly available



After an SCI, the Family Often Has a Sense of Isolation

- 10,000-12,000 U.S. spinal cord injuries per year
- Half aged 16-30 at time of injury
- 80 percent male
- Half result in quadriplegia/tetraplegia
- 270,000 people now living with SCI



After only...

- 11 hospital days
- 36 rehab days

8 out of 10 people
with SCI return home



Now what???





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for families facing spinal cord injuries

VIDEO 1: INTRO

Collecting Life Experiences In Coping With SCI

- What do family members need to know right away?
- What are the most important questions?





Search Facing Disability



T+ T+

Watch Videos

Resources

Forums

Peer Counseling

About

Blog

Donate

Spinal Cord Injury Topics And Questions

Categories

- First Days After SCI
- SCI Rehabilitation
- SCI Financial Issues
- Going Home After SCI
- SCI Caregiving
- Education After SCI
- Adaptive Sports
- Employment After SCI
- Relationships After SCI
- Social Life & Sex After SCI
- Marriage & Children After SCI
- Feelings After SCI
- Life After SCI



Click on a question in the list below, or select a category on the left to filter your search.

First Days After SCI

- [What was the hardest part of the first days in the hospital?](#)
- [How did you develop an understanding of the injury?](#)
- [What was your greatest fear at first?](#)
- [How did family members respond to the news?](#)
- [What personal support was most helpful to you?](#)
- [How did you deal with stress at first?](#)
- [What do you wish you had known at the beginning?](#)

SCI Rehabilitation

- [What were the important milestones in rehabilitation?](#)
- [What was the hardest part of rehabilitation?](#)

Employment After SCI

- [What kind of work do you do?](#)
- [How did you handle going back to work?](#)

Relationships After SCI

- [How have your family relationships changed?](#)
- [How has your relationship with your son or daughter changed?](#)
- [How have your friendships changed?](#)
- [What's important for parents to understand?](#)
- [What's important for family and friends to understand?](#)
- [What's the hardest part about having a disabled family member?](#)

Spinal Cord Injury Questions & Answers | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-questions-answers

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for families facing spinal cord injuries

Watch Videos Resources

Spinal Cord Injury Topics

Categories

- First Days After SCI
- SCI Rehabilitation
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- Employment After SCI
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- Social Life & Sex After SCI
- Marriage & Children After SCI
- Feelings After SCI
- Life After SCI

Click on a question

First Days After SCI
[What was the hardest part of hospital?](#)
[How did you develop your independence?](#)
[What was your greatest challenge?](#)
[How did family members help?](#)
[What personal support did you receive?](#)
[How did you deal with the initial shock?](#)
[What do you wish you had known?](#)

SCI Rehabilitation
[What were the important milestones in rehabilitation?](#)
[What was the hardest part of rehabilitation?](#)

SCI Rehabilitation
[What's important for parents to understand?](#)
[What's important for family and friends to understand?](#)
[What's the hardest part about having a disabled family member?](#)

Donate

laughing

Close-Ups are Powerful



Look Who's Talking

More than 100 people: mothers, fathers, siblings, spouses, children and people with SCI themselves

Recommendations from SCI professionals

- Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago
- Shriners Childrens Hospital – Chicago
- Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital – Chicago
- Magee Rehabilitation Hospital – Philadelphia
- Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital – Chicago



Keep It Short

The internet is an impatient medium

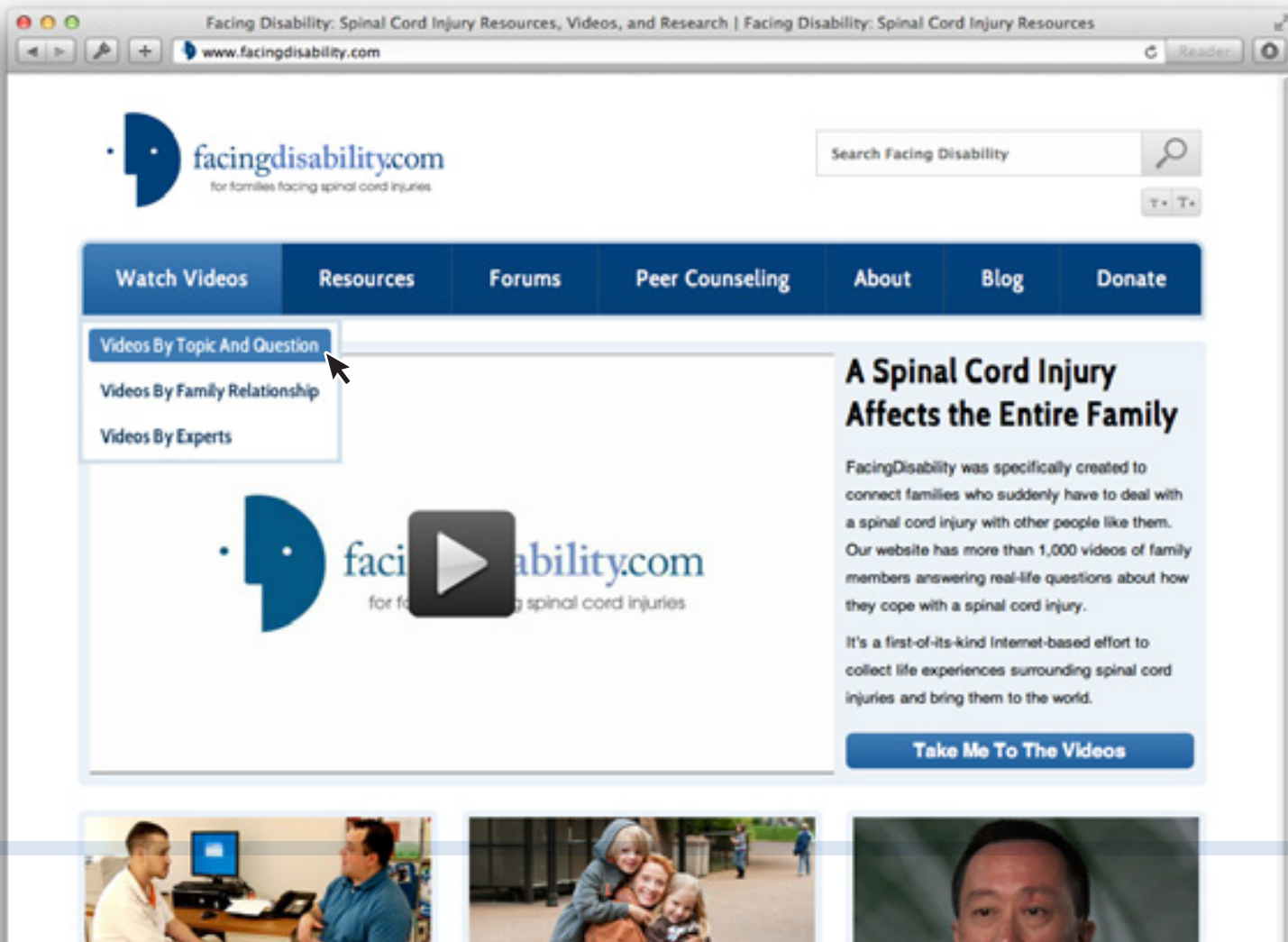
1350 videos today...

90 percent of them are

LESS THAN ONE MINUTE LONG



How to Find What You're Looking For



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.facingdisability.com. The page features a navigation bar with links: Watch Videos, Resources, Forums, Peer Counseling, About, Blog, and Donate. A dropdown menu under 'Watch Videos' is open, showing options: Videos By Topic And Question (highlighted with a mouse cursor), Videos By Family Relationship, and Videos By Experts. The main content area includes a large video player placeholder with the Facing Disability logo and a play button. To the right, there is a featured article titled 'A Spinal Cord Injury Affects the Entire Family' with a 'Take Me To The Videos' button. At the bottom, there are three small thumbnail images: two men in an office, a family outdoors, and a close-up of a man's face.

Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources, Videos, and Research | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com

Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Videos By Topic And Question
Videos By Family Relationship
Videos By Experts

A Spinal Cord Injury Affects the Entire Family

FacingDisability was specifically created to connect families who suddenly have to deal with a spinal cord injury with other people like them. Our website has more than 1,000 videos of family members answering real-life questions about how they cope with a spinal cord injury.

It's a first-of-its-kind Internet-based effort to collect life experiences surrounding spinal cord injuries and bring them to the world.

Take Me To The Videos

How to Find What You're Looking For



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-videos". The page title is "Spinal Cord Injury Questions & Answers | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources". The website logo "facingdisability.com" is in the top left, with the tagline "for families facing spinal cord injuries". A search bar labeled "Search Facing Disability" is in the top right. A navigation menu below the logo includes links for "Watch Videos", "Resources", "Forums", "Peer Counseling", "About", "Blog", and "Donate". The main heading is "Spinal Cord Injury Topics And Questions". On the left, a "Categories" sidebar lists topics such as "First Days After SCI", "SCI Rehabilitation", "SCI Financial Issues", "Going Home After SCI", "SCI Caregiving", "Education After SCI", "Adaptive Sports", "Employment After SCI", "Relationships After SCI", "Social Life & Sex After SCI", "Marriage & Children After SCI", "Feelings After SCI", and "Life After SCI". The main content area features three photographs of people in wheelchairs. Below the photos, a text prompt says "Click on a question in the list below, or select a category on the left to filter your search." The content is organized into three columns. The first column, "First Days After SCI", includes questions like "What was the hardest part of the first days in the hospital?", "How did you develop an understanding of the injury?", "What was your greatest fear at first?", "How did family members respond to the news?", "What personal support was most helpful to you?", and "How did you deal with stress at first?". The second column, "Employment After SCI", includes "What kind of work do you do?" and "How did you handle going back to work?". The third column, "Relationships After SCI", includes "How have your family relationships changed?" and "How has your relationship with your son or daughter changed?".

Spinal Cord Injury Questions & Answers | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-videos

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Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Spinal Cord Injury Topics And Questions

Categories

- First Days After SCI
- SCI Rehabilitation
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- [What personal support was most helpful to you?](#)
- [How did you deal with stress at first?](#)

Employment After SCI

- [What kind of work do you do?](#)
- [How did you handle going back to work?](#)

Relationships After SCI

- [How have your family relationships changed?](#)
- [How has your relationship with your son or daughter changed?](#)

How to Find What You're Looking For



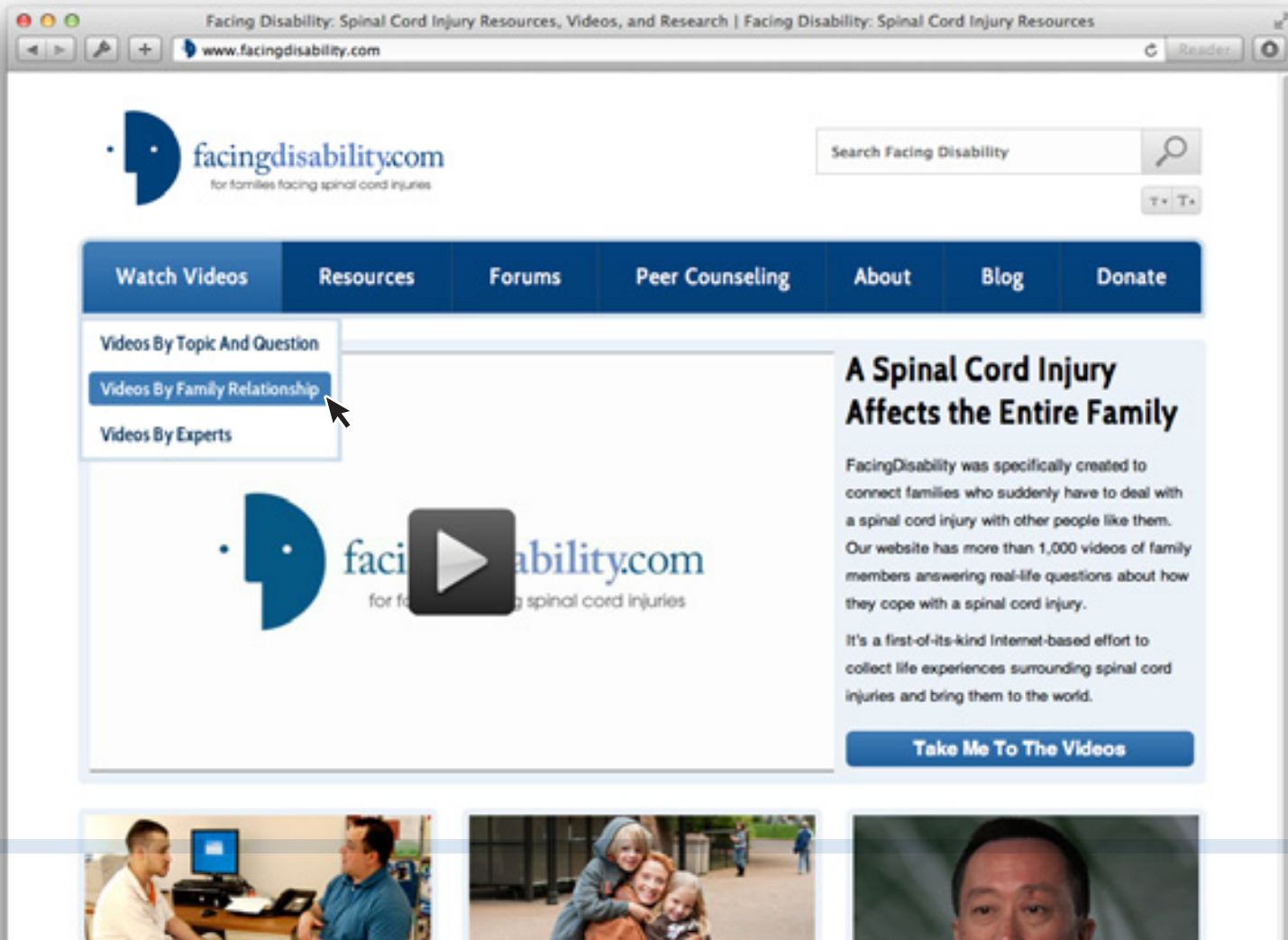


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VIDEO 2: TOPICS & QUESTIONS

How to Find Who You're Looking For



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Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Videos By Topic And Question
Videos By Family Relationship
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A Spinal Cord Injury Affects the Entire Family

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It's a first-of-its-kind Internet-based effort to collect life experiences surrounding spinal cord injuries and bring them to the world.

Take Me To The Videos

How to Find Who You're Looking For



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-stories. The page features the Facing Disability logo and a navigation bar with links: Watch Videos, Resources, Forums, Peer Counseling, About, Blog, and Donate. A search bar is located in the top right corner.

Videos By Relationship To Spinal Cord Injury

Relationship

People with SCI
Individuals

Family
Parent
Spouse or Partner
Sibling
Child

Level of Injury
Paraplegic
Quadriplegic

Gender of Person Injured
Male
Female

We interviewed more than 100 people with spinal cord injuries in their families, and asked them all the same important questions.
Click on the filters on the left to focus your search.

Relationship	Level of Injury	Gender	Name	Age at Injury	Condition
Parent	Quadriplegic	Male	Jorge	11	Paraplegic
Parent	Quadriplegic	Female	Sue	10	Quadriplegic
Parent	Quadriplegic	Male	Joey	13	Quadriplegic
Parent	Paraplegic	Female	Monserat	16	Paraplegic
Parent	Paraplegic	Male	Bill	8 months	Paraplegic
Parent	Quadriplegic	Male	Darren	20	Quadriplegic

How to Find Who You're Looking For



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-stories. The page title is "Spinal Cord Injury Questions & Answers from Real People | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources". The website logo is "facingdisability.com for families facing spinal cord injuries". Navigation buttons include "Watch Videos" and "Resources". A search bar is in the top right. A sidebar on the left contains filters for "Relationship", "Level of Injury", and "Gender of Person Injured". A large modal window is open over the "Relationship" filter, showing a list of options: "People with SCI", "Individuals", "Family", "Parent", "Spouse or Partner", "Sibling", and "Child". The main content area is titled "Videos By Relationship" and includes a section "We interviewed n questions. Click on the fil". Below this, there are four video thumbnails with captions: "Joey" (Injured in 2005 at age 13, Quadriplegic), "Monserat" (Injured in 2008 at age 16, Paraplegic), "Bill" (Injured in 1970 at age 8 months, Paraplegic), and "Darren" (Injured in 1993 at age 20, Quadriplegic).

Spinal Cord Injury Questions & Answers from Real People | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-stories

facingdisability.com
for families facing spinal cord injuries

Watch Videos Resources

Videos By Relationship

Relationship

- People with SCI
- Individuals
- Family
- Parent
- Spouse or Partner
- Sibling
- Child

We interviewed n questions. Click on the fil

Joey
Injured in 2005 at age 13, Quadriplegic

Monserat
Injured in 2008 at age 16, Paraplegic

Bill
Injured in 1970 at age 8 months, Paraplegic

Darren
Injured in 1993 at age 20, Quadriplegic

How to Find Who You're Looking For

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-stories. The page features a sidebar with filters and a main content area with story cards. A large white box highlights the filter options for 'Level of Injury' and 'Gender of Person Injured'.

facingdisability.com
for families facing spinal cord injuries

[Watch Videos](#) [Resources](#)

Videos By Relationship

Relationship

- People with SCI
Individuals
- Family
 - Parent
 - Spouse or Partner
 - Sibling
 - Child

Level of Injury

- Paraplegic
- Quadriplegic

Gender of Person Injured

- Male
- Female

We interviewed [questions](#).
Click on the filter

Joey
Injured in 2005 at age 13,
Quadriplegic

Monserat
Injured in 2008 at age 16,
Paraplegic

Bill
Injured in 1970 at age 8
months, Paraplegic

Darren
Injured in 1993 at age 20,
Quadriplegic

How to Find Who You're Looking For

The screenshot shows the website www.facingdisability.com with the title "Spinal Cord Injury Questions & Answers from Real People | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources". The page features a sidebar with filters and a main content area with a grid of video thumbnails.

Filters:

- Relationship:** People with SCI, Individuals, Family, Parent, Spouse or Partner, Sibling, Child.
- Level of Injury:** Paraplegic, Quadriplegic.
- Gender of Person Injured:** Male, Female.

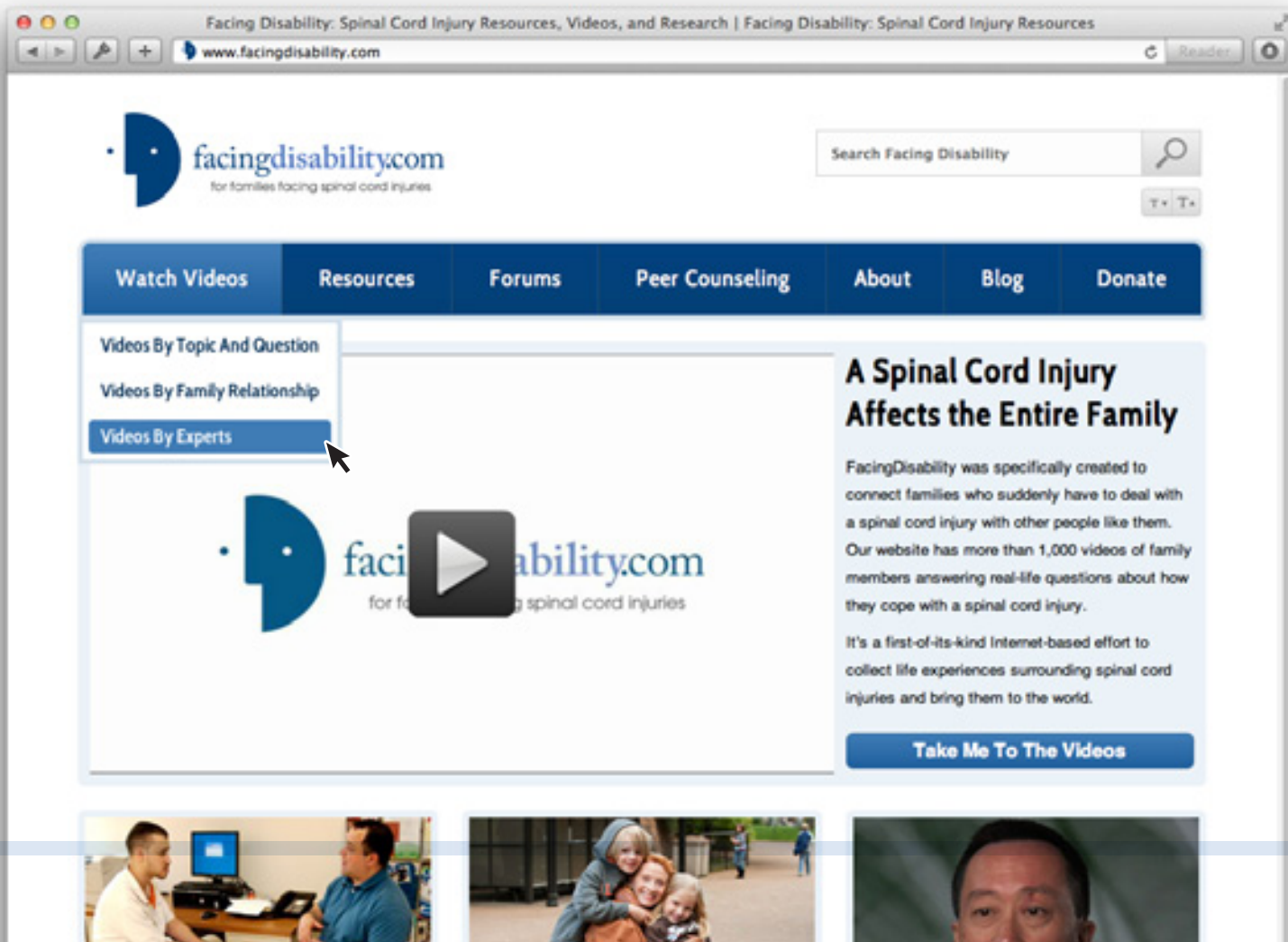
Age at Injury (Highlighted):

- 0-12
- 13-18
- 19-24
- 25-35
- 36+

Video Thumbnails (Examples):

- Jorge:** Injured in 1978 at age 11, Paraplegic.
- Sue:** Son injured in 2004 at age 10, Quadriplegic.
- Joey:** Injured in 2005 at age 13, Quadriplegic.
- Monserat:** Injured in 2008 at age 16, Paraplegic.
- Bill:** Injured in 1970 at age 8 months, Paraplegic.
- Darren:** Injured in 1993 at age 20, Quadriplegic.

How to Find an Expert



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Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources, Videos, and Research | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com

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for families facing spinal cord injuries

Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Videos By Topic And Question
Videos By Family Relationship
Videos By Experts

A Spinal Cord Injury Affects the Entire Family

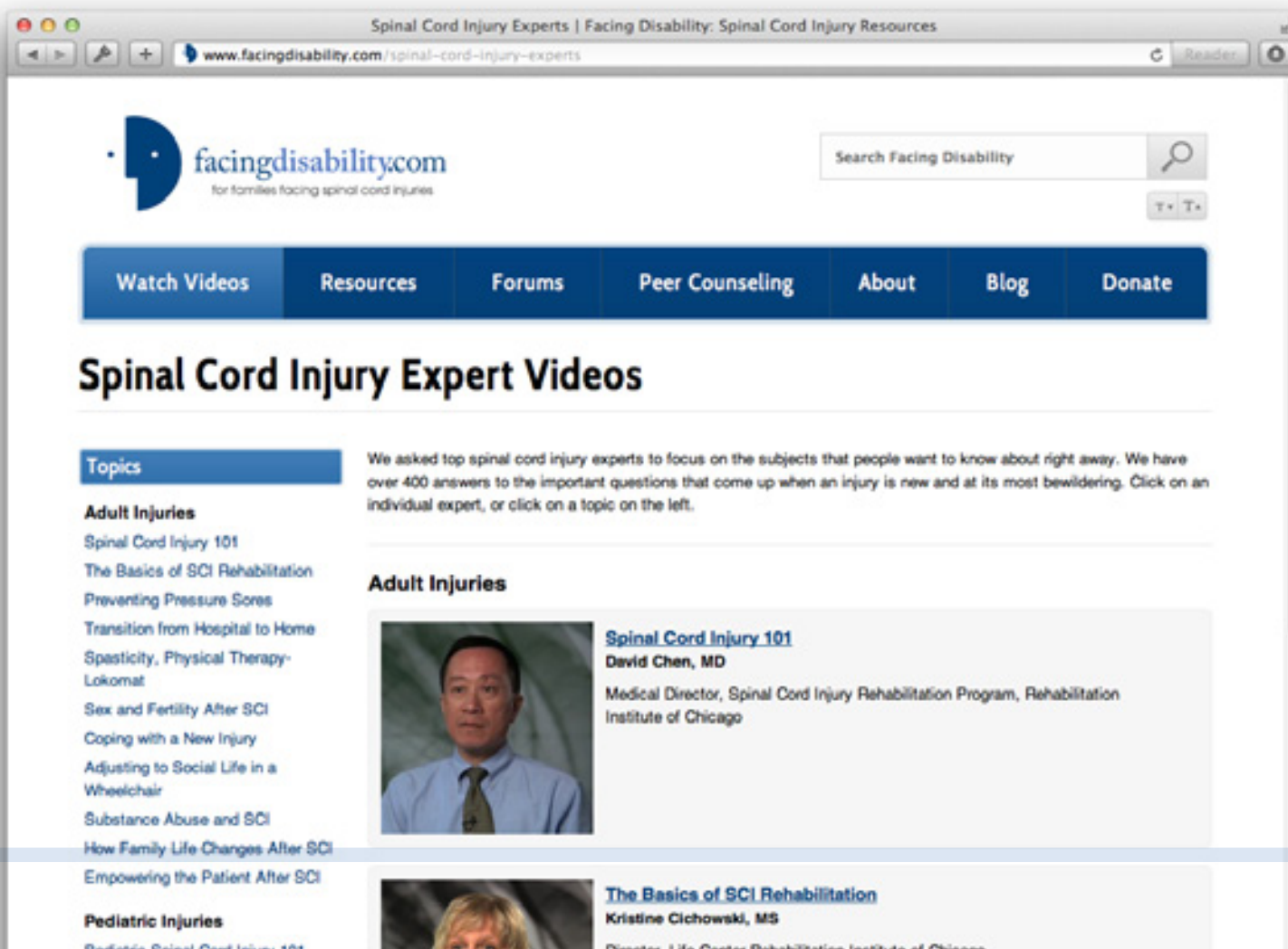
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Take Me To The Videos

Two men in an office setting, one in a white shirt and one in a blue shirt, are engaged in a conversation. A family of four, including a mother, father, and two young children, are smiling and posing outdoors. A close-up portrait of a man with dark hair, looking directly at the camera.

How to Find an Expert



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-experts". The page title is "Spinal Cord Injury Experts | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources". The website logo is "facingdisability.com for families facing spinal cord injuries". A search bar is labeled "Search Facing Disability". A navigation menu includes "Watch Videos", "Resources", "Forums", "Peer Counseling", "About", "Blog", and "Donate". The main heading is "Spinal Cord Injury Expert Videos". A "Topics" sidebar lists "Adult Injuries" and "Pediatric Injuries". The "Adult Injuries" section includes a list of topics: "Spinal Cord Injury 101", "The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation", "Preventing Pressure Sores", "Transition from Hospital to Home", "Spasticity, Physical Therapy-Lokomat", "Sex and Fertility After SCI", "Coping with a New Injury", "Adjusting to Social Life in a Wheelchair", "Substance Abuse and SCI", "How Family Life Changes After SCI", and "Empowering the Patient After SCI". The main content area features a video of David Chen, MD, titled "Spinal Cord Injury 101", and a video of Kristine Cichowski, MS, titled "The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation".

Spinal Cord Injury Experts | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-experts

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Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Spinal Cord Injury Expert Videos

Topics

Adult Injuries

- Spinal Cord Injury 101
- The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation
- Preventing Pressure Sores
- Transition from Hospital to Home
- Spasticity, Physical Therapy-Lokomat
- Sex and Fertility After SCI
- Coping with a New Injury
- Adjusting to Social Life in a Wheelchair
- Substance Abuse and SCI
- How Family Life Changes After SCI
- Empowering the Patient After SCI

Pediatric Injuries

We asked top spinal cord injury experts to focus on the subjects that people want to know about right away. We have over 400 answers to the important questions that come up when an injury is new and at its most bewildering. Click on an individual expert, or click on a topic on the left.

Adult Injuries

Spinal Cord Injury 101
David Chen, MD
Medical Director, Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation
Kristine Cichowski, MS
Director, Life Center Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

How to Find an Expert

Spinal Cord Injury
www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury



Watch Videos

Resources

Spinal Cord Injury Experts

Topics

Adult Injuries

Spinal Cord Injury 101

The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation

Preventing Pressure Sores

Transition from Hospital to Home

Spasticity, Physical Therapy-Lokomat

Sex and Fertility After SCI

Coping with a New Injury

Adjusting to Social Life in a Wheelchair

Substance Abuse and SCI

How Family Life Changes After SCI

Empowering the Patient After SCI

Pediatric Injuries

Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury 101

We asked top spinal cord injury experts over 400 answers from individual experts

Adult Injuries



Topics

Adult Injuries

Spinal Cord Injury 101

The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation

Preventing Pressure Sores

Transition from Hospital to Home

Spasticity, Physical Therapy-Lokomat

Sex and Fertility After SCI

Coping with a New Injury

Adjusting to Social Life in a Wheelchair

Substance Abuse and SCI

How Family Life Changes After SCI

Empowering the Patient After SCI

Kristine Cichowski, MS

Director, Life Center Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

Reader



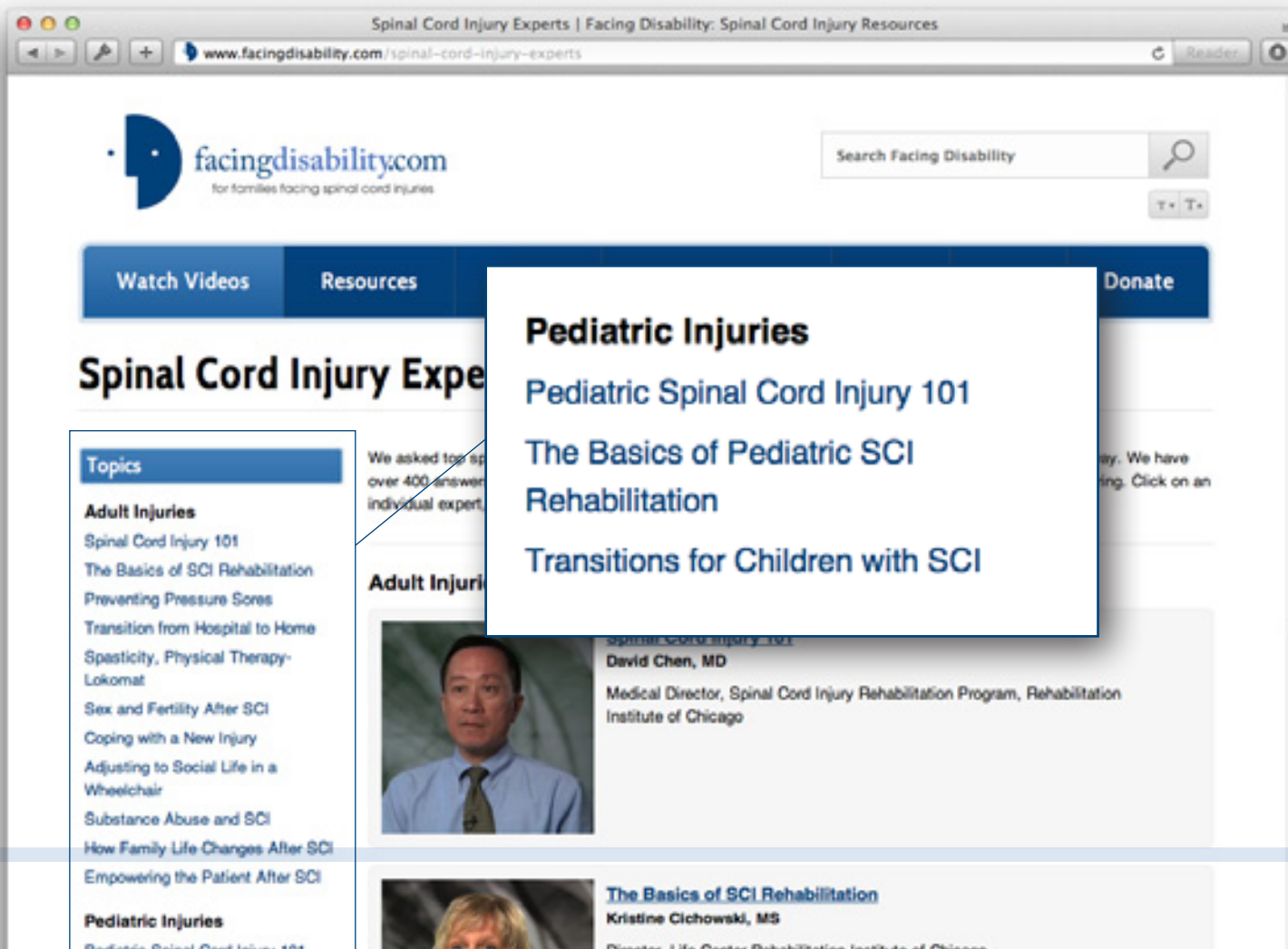
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How to Find an Expert



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-experts. The page features the Facing Disability logo, a search bar, and navigation links for Watch Videos, Resources, and Donate. A list of topics is provided, including Adult Injuries and Pediatric Injuries. A white box highlights the Pediatric Injuries section, which includes links to Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury 101, The Basics of Pediatric SCI Rehabilitation, and Transitions for Children with SCI. Below the topics, a profile for David Chen, MD, is displayed, along with a link to The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation by Kristine Cichowski, MS.

Spinal Cord Injury Experts | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

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Spinal Cord Injury Experts

Topics

Adult Injuries

- Spinal Cord Injury 101
- The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation
- Preventing Pressure Sores
- Transition from Hospital to Home
- Spasticity, Physical Therapy-Lokomat
- Sex and Fertility After SCI
- Coping with a New Injury
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Pediatric Injuries

- Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury 101

Pediatric Injuries

- Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury 101
- The Basics of Pediatric SCI Rehabilitation
- Transitions for Children with SCI

We asked top specialists over 400 answers individual expert

Adult Injuries

David Chen, MD
Medical Director, Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

The Basics of SCI Rehabilitation
Kristine Cichowski, MS
Director, Life Center Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago



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for families facing spinal cord injuries

VIDEO 3: EXPERTS

How to Find Resources



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-resources. The page features a navigation bar with links: Watch Videos, Resources, Forums, Peer Counseling, About, Blog, and Donate. The main heading is "Resources". On the left, a "Categories" sidebar lists: Short List, Government Programs, Family and Caregiver Support, Financial Help, Active Lifestyle, Advocacy, Employment and Education, Adaptive Technology, Recent Medical Research, Good Things to Read, SCI Facts and Figures, Model System Rehab Hospitals, and Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury. The main content area includes a large image of a couple at a table, a smaller image of a woman at a computer, and a text block stating: "We selected more than 300 of the best spinal cord injury resources on the web. We designed it to help you find what you need quickly; the descriptions are written in plain English; every listing tells you 'Where to Start.'" Below this, there are two sections: "Short List" and "Adaptive Technology".

Spinal Cord Injury Resources | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-resources

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Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Resources

Categories

- Short List
- Government Programs
- Family and Caregiver Support
- Financial Help
- Active Lifestyle
- Advocacy
- Employment and Education
- Adaptive Technology
- Recent Medical Research
- Good Things to Read
- SCI Facts and Figures
- Model System Rehab Hospitals
- Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury



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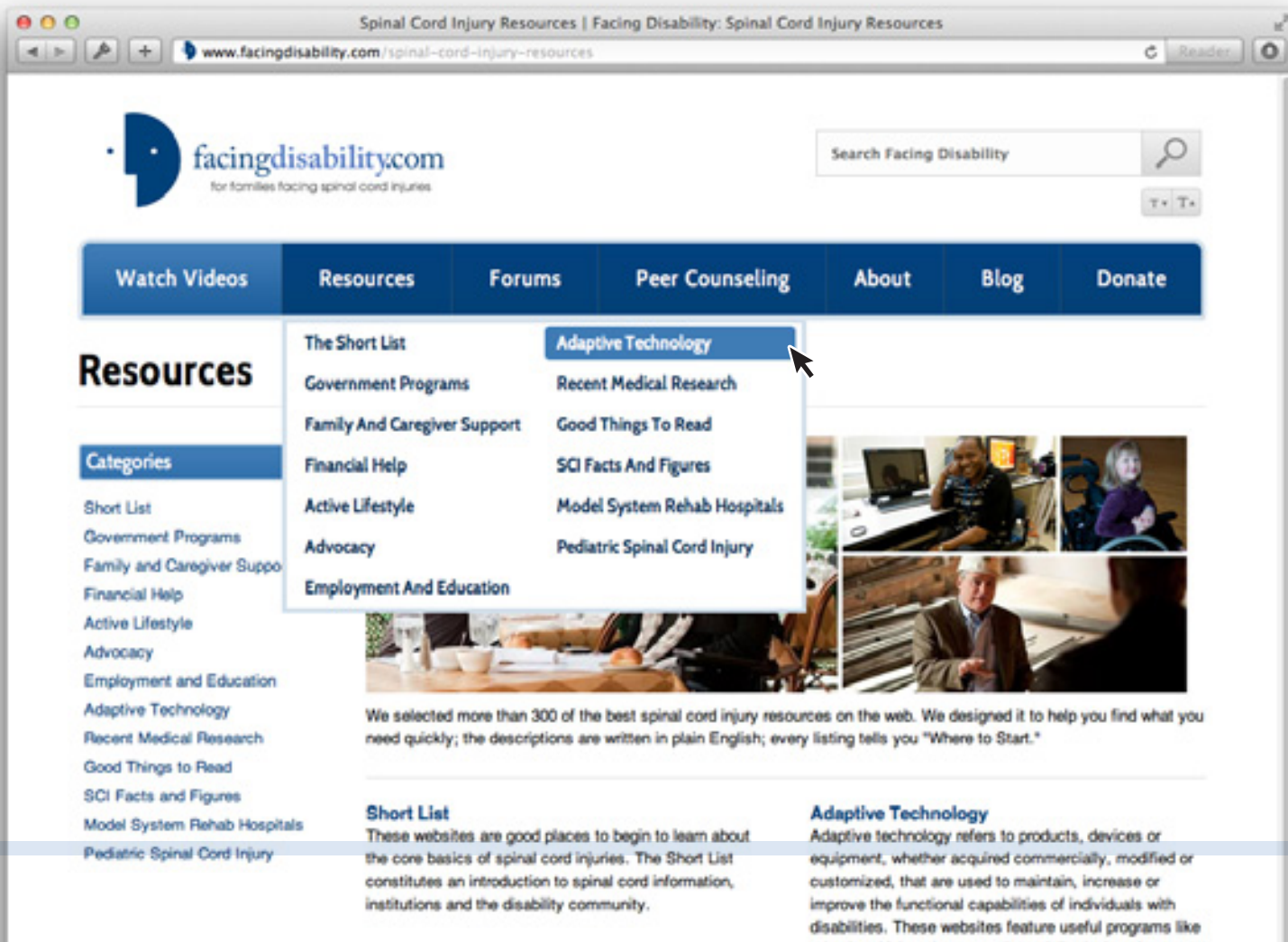
Short List

These websites are good places to begin to learn about the core basics of spinal cord injuries. The Short List constitutes an introduction to spinal cord information, institutions and the disability community.

Adaptive Technology

Adaptive technology refers to products, devices or equipment, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that are used to maintain, increase or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. These websites feature useful programs like

How to Find Resources



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Spinal Cord Injury Resources | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-resources

Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Resources

Categories

- Short List
- Government Programs
- Family And Caregiver Support
- Financial Help
- Active Lifestyle
- Advocacy
- Employment and Education
- Adaptive Technology
- Recent Medical Research
- Good Things to Read
- SCI Facts and Figures
- Model System Rehab Hospitals
- Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury

The Short List

Government Programs

Family And Caregiver Support

Financial Help

Active Lifestyle

Advocacy

Employment And Education

Adaptive Technology

Recent Medical Research

Good Things To Read

SCI Facts And Figures

Model System Rehab Hospitals

Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury

We selected more than 300 of the best spinal cord injury resources on the web. We designed it to help you find what you need quickly; the descriptions are written in plain English; every listing tells you "Where to Start."

Short List

These websites are good places to begin to learn about the core basics of spinal cord injuries. The Short List constitutes an introduction to spinal cord information, institutions and the disability community.

Adaptive Technology

Adaptive technology refers to products, devices or equipment, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that are used to maintain, increase or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. These websites feature useful programs like

Forums



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-forums". The page features the "facingdisability.com" logo with the tagline "for families facing spinal cord injuries". A search bar labeled "Search Facing Disability" is located in the top right. Below the logo is a navigation menu with buttons for "Watch Videos", "Resources", "Forums", "Peer Counseling", "About", "Blog", and "Donate". The main heading is "Spinal Cord Injury Forums". To the left of the text is a photograph of a man in a dark shirt and trousers walking alongside a woman in a white shirt who is seated in a motorized wheelchair. They are walking on a sidewalk next to a modern building with large glass windows. To the right of the photo, there is a paragraph of text explaining the purpose of the forums, a disclaimer, and a registration notice. At the bottom of this text block is a blue button with white text that reads "I Understand, Please Take Me To The Forums". A mouse cursor is pointing at this button.

Spinal Cord Injury Forums | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources


www.facingdisability.com/spinal-cord-injury-forums

facingdisability.com
for families facing spinal cord injuries

Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Spinal Cord Injury Forums



Our forums offer an opportunity for people with spinal cord injuries, their family members, friends and professionals in the field to exchange ideas and information, share their experiences and get a variety of answers to common questions. Sign up to join the conversation today.

All posts reflect the views of the author. FacingDisability.com is not responsible for the content of any messages or information posted. Any and all advice they offer is based on the writer's own life and experiences and should not be viewed as professional advice of any sort. By registering on this forum, you are agreeing to be held responsible for the information you add to the forum and affirming that you accept and understand the forum rules.

We reserve the right to edit posts and/or take other action in accordance with the purpose and principles of FacingDisability.com. Derogatory remarks are not allowed. Advertising a product or service is not allowed. Please report objectionable posts to info@facingdisability.com. We keep information private and confidential. For more information please visit our [Privacy Statement](#).

I Understand, Please Take Me To The Forums

Peer Counseling



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "www.facingdisability.com/peer_counseling/info/overview". The page features the Facing Disability logo, a search bar, and a navigation menu with links to Watch Videos, Resources, Forums, Peer Counseling, About, Blog, and Donate. The main heading is "Peer Counseling Overview". On the left, a sidebar lists links for Overview, Sign up, How the Match-Ups Work, Starting the Conversation, Tips for Success, and Volunteer to be a Peer Counselor, with a "Sign in" button below. The main content area includes a photo of two men in a discussion, one in a wheelchair. Text explains that a peer counselor is someone with lived experience, that communication is via private messages, and that the service is free. It also states that peer counselors are unpaid volunteers who offer emotional support and practical help. A final paragraph expresses the goal of connecting users with someone who understands their experience. A large blue button at the bottom encourages signing up or calling 312-284-2525. The footer contains links for Home, Videos by Topic and Question, and Blog.

Peer Counseling for People With Spinal Chord Injuries | Facing Disability: Spinal Cord Injury Resources

www.facingdisability.com/peer_counseling/info/overview

facingdisability.com
for families facing spinal cord injuries

Search Facing Disability

Watch Videos Resources Forums Peer Counseling About Blog Donate

Peer Counseling Overview

Peer Counseling

- Overview
- Sign up
- How the Match-Ups Work
- Starting the Conversation
- Tips for Success
- Volunteer to be a Peer Counselor

Sign in



A "peer counselor" is someone who has "been there, done that" and who has had several years of real-life experience in dealing with a spinal cord injury similar to yours.

The communication between you is through written messages in a private conversation on the FacingDisability website. The people on both sides are anonymous. The service is free.

Our peer counselors are not trained professionals. They are people like you who have encountered the same issues and problems that you are now facing. They are unpaid volunteers who have agreed to use their knowledge and experience to offer emotional support and practical help.

We want to connect you with someone who is as much like you as possible. Another mother, father, wife, husband, sister, brother, or person with a spinal cord injury whose profile is similar to yours. Nobody understands what you're going through the way someone who has actually been there.

Click Here To Sign Up Or Call 312-284-2525

A spinal cord injury affects the entire family

[Home](#)
[Videos by Topic and Question](#)
[Blog](#)
[About Us](#)

Is It Working?

Google Analytics (12-month statistics)

1,200 unique visitors per week

60,000 per year

250,000 page views



Is It Working?

Online Survey (123 Responses)

What sentence describes you best?

I am a person with SCI: 48%

I am a family member of a person with SCI: 19%

I am a healthcare professional: 16%

How old are you?

51 and up: 36%

35-50: 30%

25-34: 22%

How easy was it to navigate our website?

Extremely Easy: 26%

Very Easy: 46%



Is It Working?

Online Survey (123 Responses)

How helpful were videos by spinal cord injury experts?

Extremely Helpful or Very Helpful: 71%

Most helpful expert topics:

Spinal Cord Injury 101

Sex and Fertility

Adjusting to Social Life in a Wheelchair

Basics of SCI Rehabilitation



Is It Working?

Online Survey (123 Responses)

How helpful were personal experience videos?

Extremely Helpful or Very Helpful: 70%

Most helpful personal experience topics:

Life After SCI

Relationships After SCI

Feelings After SCI

SCI Rehabilitation



Is It Working?

Online Survey (123 Responses)

How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the website?

Extremely Effective: 28%

Very Effective: 36%

Moderately Effective: 27%

How likely are you to recommend our website to a friend or co-worker?

Extremely Likely: 40%

Very Likely: 31%

Moderately Likely: 15%



What's Next?

A new mobile app that will enable users to make their own videos and send them to us



A Spinal Cord Injury Affects The Entire Family



Shriners Hospitals
for Children™

facingdisability.com

for families facing spinal cord injuries

