

CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2018

HELPING CHILDREN AND TEENS UNDERSTAND DEMENTIA

Dementia is not a normal part of aging, and, for families going through the process of the disease, it becomes a challenging ordeal that affects the lives of all the individuals involved. It is important that family members take the time to explain and use this as a learning experience for children so they are informed and can understand what is happening. The impact it has on the child or teen depends on how they are related to the loved one, how close their relationship is with them, and whether they live with them or in a residential care facility, out of state, etc.

Children and Teens May Feel:

- Sad about changes in a loved one's personality and behavior
- Curious about how people get the disease
- Afraid or confused about why the person doesn't recognize them or acts differently
- Angry or frustrated by the need to repeat activities or questions
- Guilty for getting angry or being short tempered with the person
- Worried that the disease is contagious and that they might get it
- Worried that their parents might develop the disease
- Afraid or embarrassed of the different ways a person may act strangely in front of friends or visitors
- Jealous and resentful of the increased amount of time and attention that is given to the individual
- Unsure of how to act around the person

How Children and Teens May Respond:

- Withdraw from or lose patience with the person
- Perform poorly in school
- Spend more time away from home
- Argue more with others at home
- Have more tantrums/attention seeking outbursts or behaviors
- Verbalize vague physical complaints
- Be more nervous or jumpy

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*"Great people are those
who make other people
feel that they, too,
can become great."*

Mark Twain

All of these feelings are normal and your child or teenager may or may not express them to you. Keeping a journal is a great outlet for them to express their feelings and thoughts. Also, keep in mind that children and teenagers are resilient and may respond to their loved one with few problems.

Some books on the subject
[via Amazon.com search]:
[No Sad Songs](#) by Frank Morelli
[Does Grandpa Have Alzheimer's Disease?](#) by Paulette Hansen
[Always My Grandpa: A Story for Children about Alzheimer's Disease](#) by Scacco, Linda, Ph.D. and Nicole E. Wong

In This Issue

- Feelings and emotional responses of children and teens coping with loved ones with Dementia
- More Popular Scams
- Helpful suggestions
- More scams to be wary of
- Upcoming Events

Ways to Help Children and Teens cope:

- Offer comfort and support
- Let them know their feelings are normal
- Create opportunities for your child to express their feelings i.e. set a regular time to be together with them
- Educate them about the disease and symptoms
- Encourage them to ask questions
- Use simple words not medical terminology
- Respond honestly to questions
- Keep lines of communication open
- Reassure them that just because their loved one has Dementia, that doesn't necessarily mean that he or she or other family members will also get the disease
- Great progress has been made in scientific research. Let them know that better treatments and even a cure could be discovered by the time he or she is grown
- Prepare them for changes as the disease progresses
- Assure them it is not their fault-children can misinterpret behaviors or things said by their loved one with Dementia or they misperceive your symptoms of caregiver role strain [feeling tired, frustrated, sad or short-tempered-all normal feelings that caregivers experience] and think you're mad at them
- Your local Alzheimer's Association chapter may have support groups for teens



[Sources and for more information: www.alzglia.org, Alzheimer's Association 24/7 HELPLINE (800) 272-3900, Alzheimer's Association 'Parent's Guide-Helping children and teens understand Alzheimer's Disease']

More Frauds and Scams:

In last month's newsletter, several types of frauds, scams and other deceptions were discussed. Since then, I have learned of some more:

- **The "I know what you did" letter and email**—letters and emails are sent stating that they have "proof of what you did" and will release it to spouses, children, neighbors, and/or workplace unless money or bitcoin is sent to them
- **The Jury Duty scam**—a scammer calls saying they are from the courthouse and claims you failed to report for jury duty and a warrant has been issued for your arrest. A choice is offered to either pay for the warrant or have an officer sent over to arrest you. The fraudsters will typically demand that the money be paid by money transfer or by loading a prepaid card.
- **The IRS scam**—The phone caller claims to be from the police or an IRS agent who is demanding payment for overdue taxes. If this is not settled immediately, the call claims, you'll be arrested. They'll want the money either wired or put on prepaid card.
- **The Utility scam**—involves convincing you that the utility company is about to cut off service due to unpaid bills. The scammers will also want money sent to them by money transfer or a prepaid card.

If you learn of any other scams to share please call 818.708-6376 or email dkeewhite@onegeneration.org

Upcoming Events and Support Groups

ONEgeneration Caregiver Support Group
3-4:30 PM Tuesday, August 7th, & Tuesday August 21st Call Denise at 818.708.6376 for more information. Groups held at the ONEgeneration JOY Center 17400 Victory Blvd, Van Nuys, 91406

ONEgeneration Caregiver Support Group with guest speaker Sara Ramirez, LVN
Tuesday August 7th Sara is a nurse in the Adult Daycare Program, who has integrated the Music and Memory program to help our program participants improve their mood and quality of life through digital music technology. She will provide a short presentation at the beginning of the support group. Call Denise at 818.708.6376 for more information. Groups held at the ONEgeneration JOY Center [see above]



Savvy Caregiver Express Workshop

Tuesday, August 14th, 21st & 28th

FREE classes that help you understand Alzheimer's & Dementia, learn what to do when daily tasks become too challenging, & identify techniques to reduce caregiver stress. To register, please call 818.705.2345. Workshop held at OSEC [ONEgeneration Senior Enrichment Center] 18255 Victory Blvd, Reseda, 91335

Caring for Your Loved One with Mid-Stage Alzheimer's [a 3-part series]

Wednesday August 15th, 22nd, & 29th 10am to 11:30am Join us for this FREE 3 part series to hear caregivers and professionals discuss helpful strategies to provide safe, effective and comfortable hands-on care to your loved one in the middle stage of Alzheimer's. Speaker is provided by The Alzheimer's Association. To register by phone: 800.272.3900 or www.alz.org/socal Workshop held at OSEC [ONEgeneration Senior Enrichment Center] 18255 Victory Blvd, Reseda, 91335 attendance at all 3 not req'd

Adult Daycare is now open Saturdays

Does your loved one (adult with dementia or in need of supervision) need care on the week-end? ONEgeneration's Adult Daycare specializes in dementia care and is now providing services the first Saturday of each month. Services include supervised activities, breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and assistance with personal care. Hours: 9:30 am – 3:30 pm Cost: \$70 /day – private pay only* For eligibility criteria and information about enrolling, please contact Lucy Nalbandyan DM, MSW, Program Coordinator at (818) 708-6634 or by email: lnalbandyan@onegeneration.org

