

DEMENTIA FOR ALL



THE BIG AND
THE SMALL

HOW TO HELP A PUPIL WHO HAS A LOVED ONE WHO HAS DEMENTIA

If the family has not been in contact with professionals

Most municipalities have dementia coordinators who are responsible for providing guidance and support to families who have a loved one who has dementia. Therefore ensure that you can find the telephone number of the local dementia coordinator and give it to the family. The telephone number is most often listed on the municipality's website. Inform the parents and children that they can get advice and guidance – they do not have to be alone in the situation.

If the family has been in contact with professionals

Speak with the child or young person. For example, ask:

- How does the situation affect you?
- What can we help you with here at school?
- Do you want your classmates to know? Or do you need a “dementia free zone” at school, where there is space for ordinary life?

Ensure that the child or young person knows that you are there for them if they need to talk about it. Often it is not solutions to problems that children need from their teachers. Someone who can listen is often more important.



Children who have a grandparent who has dementia

Children in the youngest classes will often experience life where a grandparent, great grandparent, close neighbour or family friend has dementia. Below is some excellent advice for children from the Alzheimer's Association.

7 GOOD PIECES OF ADVICE

for children who have a grandparent who has dementia

1 Talk about it

It is always a good idea to talk with your parents when you are upset or afraid because your grandparent is ill.

2 Remember it is an illness

It is good to know that it is an illness that makes your grandparent act strange or weird sometimes.

3 Laugh together

Sometimes your grandparent might behave a bit silly and this might make you laugh. It is completely natural to laugh but remember to tell your grandparent why you are laughing – so you can laugh together.

4 Keep talking about yourself

Even though your grandparent might not always remember what your name is, what class you are in at school or what you like to do in your free time, he or she likes to hear you talk about it again.

5 Keep in contact

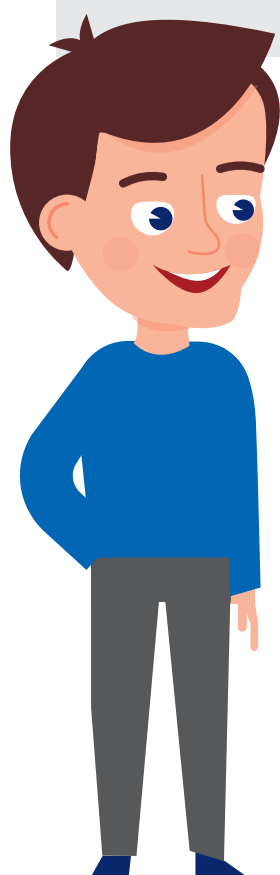
Even though you and your grandparent perhaps cannot do the same things together that you used to do together, keep visiting your grandparent. Your visits to see your grandparent are almost certainly something he or she looks forward to.

6 Do things together

Most people really enjoy doing things together with other people. When you visit your grandparent, you can for example, look at old pictures together, sing a song together or watch a movie together.

7 Tell your teacher and class about your grandparent

When you have a grandparent who has dementia, it is quite natural to be upset about it. It is therefore a good idea that you tell your teacher and perhaps your classmates about your grandparent, so that they know why you are sometimes upset at school.



Children and young people who have a parent who has dementia

If you meet a child or young person who has a parent who has dementia, then they really need your help. Younger-onset dementia can happen to people who are as young as 35-40 years old, and many of them have a type of dementia known as frontotemporal dementia or Alzheimer's dementia. It is very difficult for children in such families, and they need help and support from professionals to deal with the situation they find themselves in. Ideally, they should contact the Alzheimer's Association. You can find the contact information on their website. The Alzheimer's Association knows what services are available to children and young people. For example, there may be relatives groups for children and young people, camps for young people, accommodation families can use, etc. Ensure that you contact the child or young person and his or her parents, and tell them that there is help and support available if they are not aware of this. Ensure that you are open and available to talk with when the child or young person indicates they need to talk.

Alzheimer's Association: Tel.: +45 39 40 04 88

Dementia helpline: Tel.: +45 58 50 58 50