

About Us:

Alexi & Judith

We have been in the same Girl Scout troop for more than five years, and recently found out that both of our grandparents had Alzheimer's.

We felt that we were not really educated about the disease and weren't sure how to handle the situations we found ourselves in. So we decided we wanted to do something about it.

That sparked an idea for our Girl Scout Silver Award. We chose to make this brochure to educate other kids about Alzheimer's so that they could better understand the disease and how to relate to their grandparents or other family members with dementia.

-Alexi & Judith

Special Thanks

We had help from many people in creating this brochure, and we want to mention them here.

Special thanks to Troop 6018 for helping us get started and for editing. Also thanks to Alzheimer's San Diego for facts and helpful information.

Finally, thank YOU so much for reading this. We hope that you find this brochure helpful and informative. Always remember that your grandparents still love you and care for you, even if their memories are fading and things are changing. We hope you have an amazing time with them on this journey. Good luck!

Sincerely,

Alexi & Judith

The Kids' Guide to Alzheimer's

(How to cope with a grandparent who has dementia)

By Alexi & Judith

How to Use this Brochure

This brochure is a guide for kids to understand Alzheimer's. We hope you'll learn some facts and understand the disease better after reading this. We want this to be a conversation starter for parents and kids about what is happening to a loved one. If you talk through this sad time, you might begin to feel better about this life-changing disease.



What to do with your Grandparents

It may feel awkward at times to interact with someone who is confused. But remember they are still your grandparent, and they will probably respond well to your positive attitude and enjoy spending time with you.

If you know they love the outdoors or nature, take a walk with them in a nearby park or garden. You could also take your grandparent to the beach or forest and collect sea shells or leaves. This is great to get them outside and moving.

If they like baking you could make a family favorite together with adult supervision. Eating certain foods may be comforting and help stir up happy memories.

If you know that they have a special belonging, have them tell you about it. Maybe open up a jewelry box or photo album and look for interesting things to talk about.

Finally you could listen to music with them. Choose music from their generation or have them listen to your favorite songs. You might calm them down with jazz or bond over some blues. This is a great idea because music stimulates the brain and can be relaxing.



From left: Judith with her grandmother, and Alexi with her grandfather. Both grandparents inspired the girls to create this brochure.

What is Alzheimer's and Dementia?

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, which is a disease that causes someone to lose their memories and get confused about things they normally do. People's personalities can also change during this time. More than 5 million Americans have this disease as of 2017. In San Diego, there are nearly 65,000 people living with Alzheimer's or another dementia.

However, there are ways around the bad times, and you can find a ray of sunshine in the clouds and mist of this confusing illness. There are a lot of people who can relate to what you and your family are going through!

Advice Column

Dear A & J,

Q: My grandpa recently forgot my name and I am freaking out. Does he not remember me?

A: First off, don't freak out. Your grandpa doesn't remember your name but he still loves you. Names are a hard thing to remember even if you don't have Alzheimer's. Just kindly remind him what your name is and continue the conversation like normal.

Dear A & J,

Q: My grandma forgot that it was my birthday this weekend. What should I do?

A: Don't worry. Your grandma still cares for you, she just forgets things. Simply tell her again nicely and ask a few questions like "What cake flavor should I get?" Chances are this will get her interested in the conversation and will hopefully make her feel helpful rather than embarrassed for forgetting.

Dear A & J,

Q: My grandpa told me that he is going on a business trip this weekend and that is not right. Should I tell him that he is wrong?

A: Don't tell him he is wrong. Simply go with the flow. You could ask him what he is going to do there, or smile and change the subject to something you are doing this weekend.