

Important: Please report your new Dementia Friends

Did you know that completing these activities creates Dementia Friends?

A Dementia Friend is somebody that has learnt about dementia and commits to take action in order to help people affected by the condition live well in their community.

Once you have completed these activities, **please remember to tell us how many new Dementia Friends you have made** and request free Dementia Friends pin badges by emailing the following information to [**youngpeople@alzheimers.org.uk**](mailto:youngpeople@alzheimers.org.uk)

- ① **Your name**
- ② **The name of your school / youth group / organisation**
- ③ **The number of Dementia Friends you have made**
- ④ **Optional:** Share your story with us! Tell us how you used these resources and let us know how you found them

Please note the following when using this resource:

- To make Dementia Friends, please ensure all activities are completed.
- The suggested age range is advisory. Please feel free to adapt to other ages you feel relevant.
- Alzheimer's Society owns and has copyright over this material.

If you have any questions or require further information please contact [**youngpeople@alzheimers.org.uk**](mailto:youngpeople@alzheimers.org.uk)

Thank you for helping people affected by dementia to live well.

Rainbow leaders resource to create Dementia Friends



45 minutes

This activity pack has been developed for Girlguiding to help Rainbow leaders create Dementia Friends in their units. This pack contains activities where Rainbows will learn what dementia is, the five key messages of Dementia Friends, and how they can take action to help support people affected by the condition.

Opening Discussion:



5 minutes

Ask the following question: Has anyone heard of the word dementia?

- Dementia is a condition that affects people in many different ways. Here are some examples; people might lose their memory, have problems with language, or get confused about things like the days of the week. Everyone is affected differently.
- Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain and today we will be learning a little more about how dementia affects someone, why it's so important to know more and what you can do to help people who are affected by the condition.
- In the following activities, we will talk about the five key messages of Dementia Friends that everyone should know. If you feel upset or have any questions during any of the activities today, please let your leaders know as soon as possible!

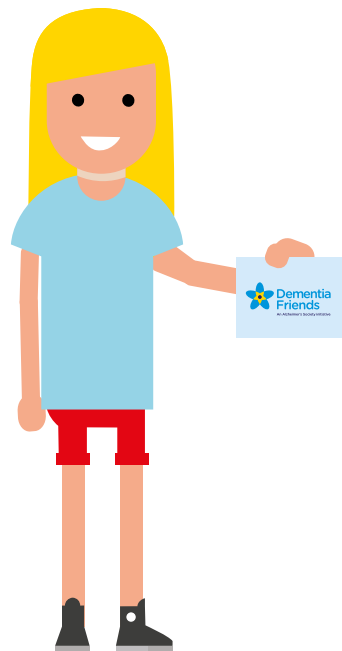
What is Dementia Friends?



2 minutes

Explain the following to your group:

Dementia Friends is a programme run by Alzheimer's Society to help everyone learn a little more about dementia and inspire people to take action to help people affected by the condition. Complete these activities and your unit will become Dementia Friends!



Girlguiding has worked in partnership with Alzheimer's Society to develop and create three fun unit meeting activities (for Rainbows, Brownies and Guides) which can be found in their Better Together topic. The Girlguiding activities introduce dementia awareness, signposting units to become Dementia Friends via Alzheimer's Society Youth Engagement pages and the activities in these resources. Dementia Friends is recognised as an impactful initiative. By becoming Dementia Friends, girls and leaders can explore how to take action in local communities, better supporting people living with, or affected by dementia. – Girlguiding

Activity 1: What does the brain do?

 5 minutes

Learning – what does our brain do.

Ask the group to get into a large circle, or into small groups.

Ask the group: ‘What does your brain do?’ and get the whole group to act out the actions they suggest (e.g. balance – get the group to stand on one leg). Ask for about four answers.

Answers to look out for: Remembering; thinking; balance; communication; hearing; movement; learning; sight.

Explanation: The brain controls everything we do (refer to examples). Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain, which means part of the brain may not work as well as it used to. Let’s find out a little more about what that means for people living with dementia.

Activity 2: True or False?

 10 minutes

Learning – different explanations about how dementia can affect someone.

Equipment needed – 2 pieces of paper/card, one with ‘True’ and one with ‘False’ written on them.

Put one ‘True’ card and one ‘False’ card on opposite walls. Tell the group you are going to read out a statement and they should then decide if it is true or false. Once they have decided, ask them to move to the relevant side of the wall (or stay in the middle if they are unsure). Tell them that this isn’t a test so they shouldn’t worry about getting it wrong and that you will explain the answers in more detail once you’ve gone through them all.

True

False

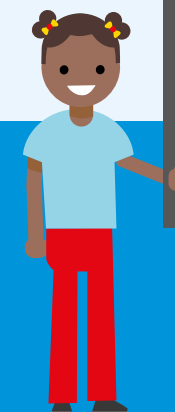
True or False statements:

1. As you get older, you will definitely get dementia – **False!**
2. Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain – **True!**
3. Dementia is only about losing your memory – **False!**
4. People with dementia can still do things they like, like going shopping – **True!**
5. All people with dementia are the same – **False!**

Tell the group that these are the five key messages of Dementia Friends and that you are going to explain a bit more about them.

1. **Dementia is not a natural part of ageing** – Not everyone who is old will get dementia and people can have dementia when they are younger, but this is quite rare.
2. **Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain** – Dementia is a disease that damages the brain. But don’t worry, you can’t catch dementia like chicken pox or the flu. If a member of your family has dementia it does not mean you will get it.
3. **Dementia is not just about losing your memory** – Remember that your brain controls everything you do. That means if someone gets dementia they could struggle with many other things, like: they might find it hard to get the right words out, get lost, get mixed up about dates and times, or not be able to talk or write anymore.
4. **It is possible to live well with dementia** – People with dementia can still do the things that make them happy, like going to the shops and baking lovely cakes. They just might need other people to help them a little bit.
5. **There is more to the person than the dementia** – Everyone is unique and has their own personality. People with dementia still have their own dreams, hobbies and a life ahead of them. We must not just see their disease.

The five key messages



Activity 3: Colourful forget-me-nots

 15-20 minutes

Learning – how someone can be affected by dementia and a recap of previous learning.

Equipment needed – Dementia Friends forget-me-not poster (one per person or group), colouring pens, pencils and sheets of paper.

Explain to the group that next they are going to colour in a forget-me-not poster which can be hung on notice boards, around the local community or taken home to their families. These posters include some ways dementia can affect someone.

Instructions: Hand out the forget-me-not posters, pens and pencils and ask the Rainbows (either individually or in groups) to colour their own Dementia Friends forget-me-not. Tell them that each petal describes one way that someone with dementia might be affected by the condition i.e. communication, thinking, balance, movement, sight. As a group, discuss how each of these things might affect someone with dementia. Then ask the Rainbows to draw or write what was discussed in or around the forget-me-not.

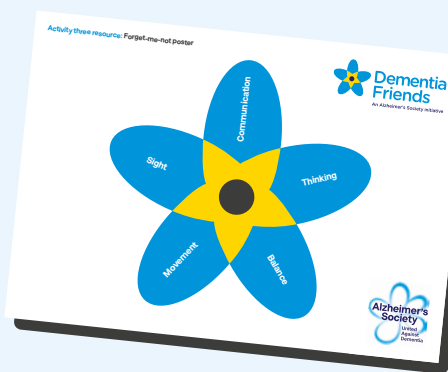
Ask them to make sure that it's colourful and easy to read. Help the groups with writing the words if they need you to.

After they have completed their petal posters ask the group

a) what have they learnt so far about dementia?

b) Do they know why it is important that they understand a bit more about dementia?

Acknowledge the group's answers as they share suggestions and go straight onto the next part.



Activity 4: Taking action!

 5 minutes

Learning – what can you do to take action to help people?

Equipment needed – Dementia Friends action slips, one per person.

Say – Now that you have learned how dementia can affect someone, you are almost a Dementia Friend. The next part of Dementia Friends is about turning your new understanding into an action. An action is something that will help someone affected by dementia in some way, so that they can continue to live the lives they want to. What action could you take? Some examples are:

1. Tell your family and friends about what you have learnt today – teach them the five key messages of Dementia Friends!
2. Hang up your poster! Maybe in a church, town hall or local shop.
3. Wear your blue forget-me-not flower badge with pride.
4. After speaking about actions: fill in the action slip on the activity print out sheet! You can hang these up or ask your leader to take a photo and send it to us at girlguiding@alzheimers.org.uk.

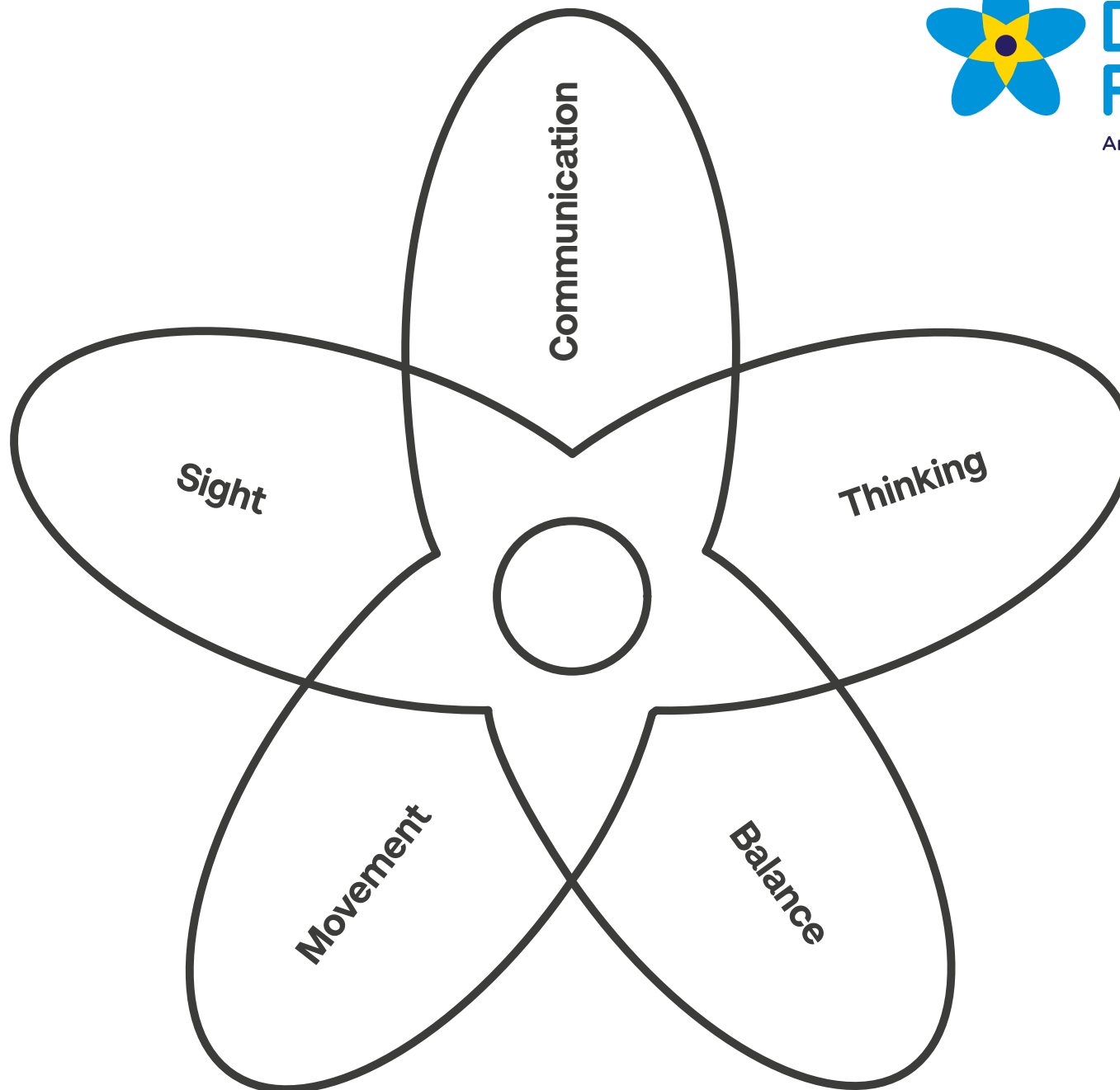
Note: please ensure you have permission from Rainbows parent/guardian before sharing photos with us.

What next

Well done! You and your young people are now Dementia Friends!

Tell Alzheimer's Society that your unit has become Dementia Friends by requesting Dementia Friends stickers or badges for your group. You can request these by emailing your full name, unit name and number of stickers/ badges to girlguiding@alzheimers.org.uk.





Activity four resources: Dementia Friends action slips

My name is _____

I am ___ years old

As a Dementia Friend I will...



My name is _____

I am ___ years old

As a Dementia Friend I will...

