

Creating a global dementia friendly generation



Global case studies: dementia friendly youth initiatives

Why is dementia relevant to young people?

50 million people live with dementia worldwide, and this is set to increase to 75 million by 2030. As the number increases, more and more young people are likely to be affected through family and friends. By supporting young people to understand dementia from an early age, we can help reduce stigma and increase understanding.

Through dementia friendly initiatives around the world, Alzheimer's associations and young people are creating a dementia friendly generation equipped to support people living with dementia in their communities.

'Young people are so open and willing to learn; it almost doesn't occur to them to have the prejudices and negative perceptions.' Person living with dementia

'Secondary carers, usually young people, may also experience distress and a family focused intervention should be considered.'¹

This resource highlights some of the great work of Global Dementia Friends Network members engaging with schools to youth organisations to universities around the world.

Dementia Friends is the biggest social action initiative on dementia. There are more than 65 Dementia Friends programmes around the world, led by Alzheimer's associations and other organisations.

Working under the Global Dementia Friends Network, every Dementia Friends programme is different, tailored depending on the country, and sometimes named differently to suit the cultural context.

Young people are a key audience and 77% of programmes part of the Global Dementia Friends Network have used Dementia Friends to engage them and transform the way the next generation thinks, acts and talks about dementia.

¹Gonglves-Pereria, M, Zarit,SH., Cardoso,AM., Alvesda Silva,J, Papoila,AL, Mateos,R. (2020). A Comparison of primary and secondary caregivers of persons with dementia. Psychology and Ageing, 35(1), 20–27.

Integrating youth engagement into national campaigns

Japan

National Caravan Mates

The dementia-friendly approach originated in Japan to raise social awareness of dementia. In 2005, the dementia awareness project was trusted to the National Caravan Mates Liaison Council from the Ministry Health, Labour and Welfare.

In its initial year of 2005, 30,000 Dementia Supporters were trained, and currently the number of Dementia Supporters has increased to over 12 million.

Children and young people have played an important role in the success of the campaign and many schools across the country have included the training sessions as part of the curriculum.

The courses are for elementary to junior high students and place emphasis on increasing knowledge of dementia, challenging misconceptions and spending time with people with dementia.

By the end of March 2020, the Dementia Supporter Caravan had delivered approximately 60,000 sessions for elementary school children to university students, accrediting 3,391,146 Dementia Supporters.

'Under the administration of the National Caravan Mates Liaison Council, local governments all over Japan and Caravan Mates (volunteer instructors) have been collaborating to make everyone a Dementia Supporter, including children and young people. Youth and children are fast learners and have the potential to understand dementia without any stigma or prejudice. Education during the period of character formation is effective and it will have an effect on their entire lives.'

Noriyo Washizu, Alzheimer's Association Japan



'Now I am confident to support someone who needs help. As long as I wear an orange ring, I should be kind to people around me.' Young supporter

For more information visit:

www.caravanmate.com

www.alzheimer.or.jp



Australia

Dementia in My Family – supporting young people affected by dementia

Dementia Australia's children and young people approach was born from a gap in appropriate, child-focused resources and support.

In consultation with young people and their families, Dementia Australia developed the 'Dementia In My Family' website to support children, young people and their families, to positively impact the environment of the person with dementia.



The website 'speaks' to children of any background and situation. Across five distinct age categories, it covers:

- What a brain is and does
- What dementia is and does
- How children can be affected by the dementia of a family member
- What can help children who are impacted.

There is a section for adults who are supporting children and young people impacted by dementia, useful for parents, grandparents and teachers.

Dementia Australia also provides counselling for children and young adults and their families; capacity building for external services such as schools and private counsellors; and the creation of family friendly spaces.

Impact:

- Children and young people affected by dementia are supported
- Tools to enable conversations about dementia have been provided to families

'When Dad was first diagnosed we borrowed books and videos from Dementia Australia to help educate ourselves, as well as locating valuable information from their websites. We have also frequently relied on their counselling service which has been a lifesaver.'

Young person impacted by dementia

For more information visit:

www.dementiainmyfamily.org.au



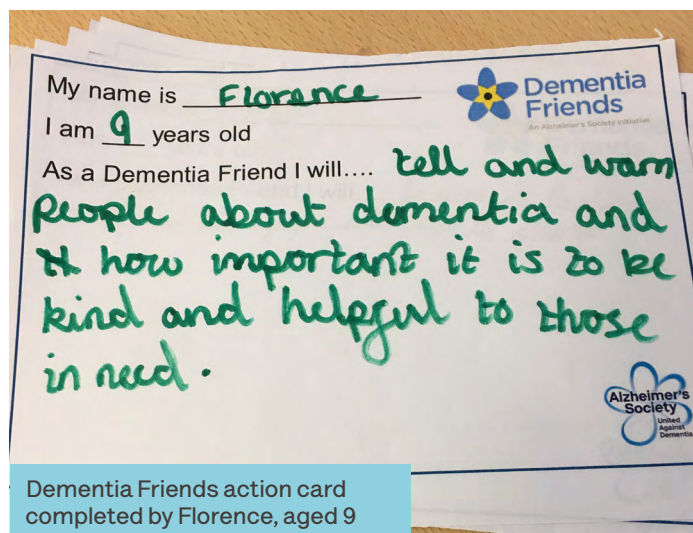
Youth organisations

United Kingdom

Dementia Friends and Girlguiding

Girlguiding is the UK's largest youth organisation for girls and young women.

Alzheimer's Society has teamed up with the organisation to create bespoke activity packs and session plans which help raise dementia awareness amongst girls and young women.



Fiona Joines, a volunteer with Girlguiding and Dementia Friends Champion shares her experience of holding Dementia Friends sessions, and how she's created over 400 Dementia Friends:

'I became a Dementia Friends Champion so I would be able to run sessions within Girlguiding. The values underpinning the Dementia Friends initiative align to those for Girlguiding.'

Fiona has completed sessions with a range of age groups – Rainbows aged 5 to 7; Brownies aged 7 to 11; Guides aged 10 to 14; the Senior Section, aged 14 to 25, and fellow volunteers.

'The activities always create 'Aha!' moments. I always receive thoughtful questions afterwards.'

After the sessions, the girls understand how dementia can impact a person's life as many of them know someone living with dementia.

Some members have gone on to teach their class about the condition. Others have taken personal actions, like visiting relatives more often and some have gone on to fundraise for dementia charities.

To find out more about Alzheimer's Society partnership with Girlguiding visit:

alzheimers.org.uk/youngpeople

United States of America

States across the USA are working to make sure that young people, have the opportunity to become Dementia Friends. From holding Dementia Friends in schools, to institutionalising Dementia Friends sessions as part of the curriculum, to training high schoolers and college students to become Dementia Friend Champions, Dementia Friends programmes have found numerous ways to target this important audience.

Girl Scout Chloe Waipa is raising awareness among young people

In Hawaii 11-year-old Cadette Girl Scout Chloe Waipa from the island of Kauai, is raising awareness to help young people learn about dementia.

Inspired by changes in her grandparents' behaviour Chloe started to learn more about dementia and decided to take action:

'My grandparents are my inspiration. I noticed them having some difficulties in their day-to-day lives, so I decided to learn more about dementia and to do something positive to help. I became a Dementia Friend and then a Dementia Friends Champion!'

Chloe first started with her fellow Girl Scouts troop. She now offers Dementia Friends sessions to Kauai Island Girl Scouts and is delivering one Dementia Friends session per quarter at a local Middle School for grades 6–8.

'Very likely my generation will be increasingly affected by dementia through our elders. Because of that, everyone including kids my age need to be educated on dementia so that we are not afraid to talk about the challenges that come with it. We all need to understand how we can help and be of support to our very own families and beyond.'

Chloe has created over 170 Dementia Friends including Kauai's Mayor!



Chloe is in the process of developing a 'Fun Patch' programme together with Girl Scouts of Hawaii that is designed to create Dementia Friends and girls scouts will receive a #ChloesCause fun patch.

For more information visit:

www.forgetmeknott.home.blog
dementiafriendsusa.org

Dementia Friends in universities

Mexico

The Mexican Federation of Alzheimer's Associations (FEDMA) launched the Dementia Friends Mexico programme in 2019. Since the initiative started there has been a strong interest by health-related university faculties (dentistry, medicine, geriatrics, midwifery and nursing, psychology and physiotherapy). Working together with Dementia Friends Champions and the National Institute of Geriatrics, in less than a year FEDMA has created over 3500 Dementia Friends many of them being university students.

Young people have been instrumental in growing the dementia-friendly movement in Mexico and many of them have influenced their professors who have let them run shorter Dementia Friends sessions during lectures.



Dementia Friends Information Session at Colegio Mexiquense in Toluca, state of Mexico.

'I like the Dementia Friends programme because it helps see the condition with less fear or concern of not knowing how to act. It can also help reduce exclusion.'

Student of the National School Of Social Work

'The impact that the programme has had in young doctors has been very positive. It has not only allowed them to see the condition from a different perspective but has given them the tools to better engage with people with dementia and their families.'

Rosa Farres, President of FEDMA

For more information visit:

www.facebook.com/Dementia-Friends-México

Puerto Rico

Dementia Friends Puerto Rico launched in 2018 at the University of Puerto Rico with the Psychology Students Association. Ana Gratacos Rodriguez, President of the Alzheimer Association of Puerto Rico has also worked with students in other universities like the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, the Ponce Health Sciences University and the Carlos Albizu University. The response has been very positive, and students are very dedicated to not only learn about it from a medical perspective, but to take steps to help people with the condition have a better quality of life. They believe that talking about dementia is a very good start.

Yanelee Perez from the University of Puerto Rico, Cayey Campus:

'This is incredible, it is so good that Dementia Friends exists, and that people are having an impact on a whole society with such important knowledge about a condition that every day more people are developing. I think that Dementia Friends will be of great benefit to the students of the University of Puerto Rico in Cayey.'



Launch of Dementia Friends Puerto Rico at University of Puerto Rico

The Alzheimer Association of Puerto Rico has also worked with other university students showing the impact young people can create.

To add to their success, this year the association will be focusing on small children and adolescents.

For more information visit:

www.alzheimerpr.com

Young children

Bonaire

Intergeneration day-care centre visit

Fundashon Alzheimer Bonaire is piloting an intergeneration programme to raise awareness of dementia at an early age. Starting with pre-schoolers, the programme will bring together a kindergarten and a day-care centre.

Around 25 young children aged between 2–4 years accompanied by their teachers are visiting the day-care centre twice a month to spend time with people living with dementia.

Evert Piar, Chair of Alzheimer Bonaire:

‘Toddlers have an open mind and don’t judge. People with dementia often like toddlers and feel happy with them around.’

Intergenerational Project Coordinator Esther van Baar, shares her testimony:

‘The children are very excited from the moment the bus arrives to pick them up to take them to the day-care centre. The day residents also enjoy the visit from the toddlers and make treats and hats for the toddlers.’

On each visit, the children start by choosing how to greet the residents, from a handshake, high five, or hugs.

Activities include singing, crafts and games. During activities such as crafts, they work together, the toddlers need help with cutting and with glue, so the residents have to help them with it.

During the visits, residents become more active. People who normally do not like to participate in crafts, participate with the toddlers and residents take the initiative to interact with the toddlers.

Both the activity supervisor and the director of the kindergarten are very positive about this initiative. The children are becoming more open with every visit. The director of the kindergarten has said that the toddlers enthusiastically tell their parents about their visits.

‘We think it’s important for young people to engage with people with dementia for understanding and tolerance. They understand each other and don’t judge.’

Alzheimer Bonaire plans to expand the programme and introduce to primary school children.

For more information visit: www.alzheimer-bonaire.com



Kindergarten Jiwiri visit to Ka'i Mimina day-care centre

Additional resources

- **Alzheimer’s Society resources for young people**
Dementia teaching resources available for schools and youth groups
- **Young people and dementia: Universal Children’s Day 2018**
Further examples of global dementia friendly youth initiatives
- Alzheimer’s Society has also partnered with the Scouts Association and together created 23,000 Dementia Friends in the UK.
A Million Hands Initiative