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Alzheimer's - Helping Kids Understand

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Imagine being a child struggling to understand why grandma is acting so strangely or can't remember who you are.

Alzheimer's disease can have a big impact on every member of the family, including children. Each child will react differently to someone who has Alzheimer's. The young people in your life might have questions about what is happening. It's important for you to answer these questions openly and honestly. It will also help to share with them the changes the disease might bring, now and in the future.

In my experience, unlike adults, young people see right through Alzheimer's disease. They see the grandparent they have always known, and recognize that they are sick. While this saddens them they seem to rise to the occasion in a way that most adults might never expect.

You can help by noting your child's emotional responses to situations that arise and offering comfort and support when needed and being prepared to answer their questions. Anticipating your child's questions, respond with simple, honest answers and remember most kids are amazingly resilient.

Help your child stay connected to the person with Alzheimer's. Involve them in familiar activities, such as setting the table together. Shared leisure time is important, too. Even young children can stay connected with a relative who has Alzheimer's by paging through photo albums or listening to music together. If your child becomes impatient with your loved one, reiterate that the behavior isn't intentional — it's a result of the disease.

For more on this topic <http://www.caregiver4caregivers.com/HelpKids.html>

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