New Book Launched to Teach Children About Alzheimer’s Disease

by KATE TURNER

Why Can’t Grandma Remember My Name? Explains Alzheimer’s With Art

When a parent is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, one of the first things we think of is, “How am I going to tell my kids?” Explaining that their grandparent is sick is a tough conversation to have — but telling them in words they can understand is even tougher.

Understanding the weight of this difficult conversation, the Fisher Center for Alzheimer’s Research Foundation set out to help parents teach their children what is happening to their grandparent or other loved one. Their new book, *Why Can't Grandma Remember My Name?*, explains the disease using art created by children and Alzheimer’s patients side-by-side.

Children’s book author Chana Stiefel, whose grandmother has Alzheimer’s, and Kent L. Karosen, the foundation’s president, co-wrote the book, and all proceeds will be going towards Alzheimer’s research.

"With the Alzheimer's epidemic at an all time high, it's never been as important to increase the amount of research being conducted in an effort to find a cure," says Karosen.

5.3 million Americans are directly affected by Alzheimer’s, a number that is expected to rise to 16 million by 2050.

"In the meantime, we must make it a priority to educate those around us about the disease, and through *Why Can't Grandma Remember My Name?*, my hope is that a younger audience will have a better understanding of the disease that affects their loved ones."

In the book, Alzheimer’s is explained to kids through questions and answers. Accompanying their drawings are questions from children, which are answered by Alzheimer’s patients through their own art.

On top of beautifully complementing the words of the book, the art used demonstrates the power and importance of art therapy for Alzheimer’s patients.

"In seeing the results of the paintings of Alzheimer's patients, I can feel the strength and the impact of the artwork featured in *Why Can't Grandma Remember My Name?*," says artist and sculptor Ursula von Rydingsvard.

"Creating art gives Alzheimer's patients autonomy and a sense of dignity in the midst of a disease that often leaves them feeling powerless."

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