

Tuesday, 23 October 2018

Star cartoonist, broadcasting favourite and charity team create book to help kids understand dementia

Illustrator George Haddon and the voiceover talents of ABC broadcaster Libbi Gorr have brought a children's book to life, *My Book about Brains, Change and Dementia*, that speaks directly to young children about the realities of dementia in a language they can understand.

Maree McCabe CEO Dementia Australia said seeing a loved one with dementia change gradually over time can be difficult for everyone in the family to understand, including young children.

"Like adults and teens, young children need to be able to make sense of what they see is going on around them," Ms McCabe said.

"*My Book about Brains, Change and Dementia* is designed to help families talk about dementia in an age-appropriate, warm and sensitive way. It acknowledges the impact of dementia, tackles misconceptions about the condition and provides information and support for children, their parents, family members and loved ones.

"George Haddon's delightful illustrations combined with Libbi Gorr's engaging voiceover (in the online audiobook only), are inspiring. They capture the sensitivity of the issues of dementia while still managing to achieve a lovely balance of being educational and engaging."

Mr Haddon said when I was initially approached by Dementia Australia for my support in illustrating this book, a close friend and former colleague was living with dementia.

"By the time the project was nearing completion another close friend had also been diagnosed," Mr Haddon said.

"It has been particularly rewarding to be involved with this project and part of something that we all hope will make a difference to the lives of children impacted by dementia in their family for many years to come."

Libbi Gorr, Sunday Mornings Health and Wellness host on ABC Radio Melbourne is also thrilled to be involved.

"The strength of a community is in its relationships," Ms Gorr said.

"A book like this can be an important conversation starter between adults and children and, increase the understanding of dementia of everyone involved.

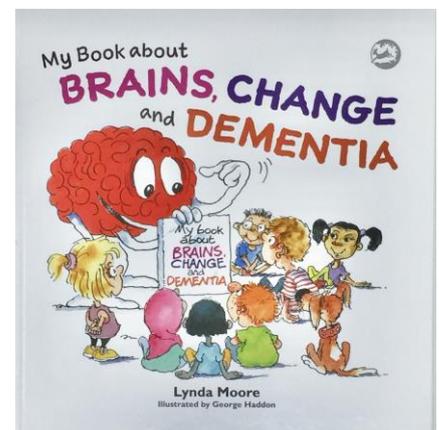
"Kids need to know what's going on in a way they can process."

The book is the latest in a range of resources that have been designed to help children of all ages understand dementia on the *Dementia in My Family* website, a free online portal that provides information, facts, videos and educational resources on dementia for children ranging from pre-schoolers up to their late teens.

The website includes resources for adults and teachers to help them provide the support children need to navigate some of the complex issues associated with dementia.

My Book about Brains, Change and Dementia was written by Dementia Australia family clinician Lynda Moore with the creative input from other Dementia Australia staff members that specialise in providing counselling and support for all members of the family, especially children.

My Book about Brains, Change and Dementia is published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers and hardback copies can be purchased online at <http://bit.ly/MyBookAboutDementia>



To enjoy the free online edition* go to <https://dementiainmyfamily.org.au/preschool/>

To access the free educational resources on how to support young children impacted by dementia visit <https://dementiainmyfamily.org.au/adults/>

To read more from the author go to <http://bit.ly/MyBookAboutDementiaBlog>

The book has been endorsed by:

Ita Buttrose AO OBE, Dementia Australia Ambassador; 2013 Australian of the Year - "This is a great book. Thoughtfully written and beautifully illustrated, it will help children better understand dementia and make it easier for adults explain to children the behavioural changes that can occur when a much loved family member has dementia."

Andy Griffiths, children's author – "This important book equips both children and adults with the means to understand and talk about what could otherwise be a mysterious and distressing subject."

Takaya Honda, ABC Playschool, Neighbours, Dementia Australia Ambassador – "This book does so well at simplifying but not disguising dementia, and explains in a respectful and understanding way the sorts of changes a person with dementia might experience. It also helps kids to get the support they need."

Wendy Mitchell, author Somebody I Used to Know – "A beautifully illustrated, beautifully written book for children that teaches them about dementia in a realistic, yet simple way."

**The title of the online edition has been adapted for the hardback release.*

-Ends-

Dementia Australia is the national peak body and charity for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information. An estimated 436,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach almost 1.1 million by 2058. Dementia Australia is the new voice of Alzheimer's Australia. Dementia Australia's services are supported by the Australian Government.

National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

Interpreter service available

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

Dementia is a National Health Priority Area

www.dementia.org.au

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When talking or writing about dementia please refer to [Dementia Language Guidelines](#).