

UAMS News Bureau

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UAMS Hosts Alzheimer’s Seminar for Kids

FAYETTEVILLE – When a loved one has Alzheimer’s disease, it affects everyone in the family, including children and grandchildren. Therefore, the UAMS Schmieding Center for Senior Health and Education in Springdale is offering a free program for kids April 6 to help them learn to cope with what can be a very stressful and confusing time in their lives.

“Understanding Alzheimer’s Disease for Kids and Teens” is intended for children and teenagers who are being impacted by having people in their lives with the disease.

The center is offering two age-appropriate sessions:

- Children’s program (Ages 8-12) 10:00 a.m. – noon
- Teen’s program (Ages 13-18) 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Both programs will be held April 6 at the UAMS Schmieding Center for Senior Health and Education at 2422 N. Thompson St. in Springdale.

To register, go to <https://uamscaregiving.org/springdale/youth/> or call 479-751-3043 for more information.

Alzheimer’s is a degenerative brain disease and the most common form of dementia. According to the Alzheimer’s Association, about 250,000 children and young adults between ages 8 and 18 provide help to someone with Alzheimer’s or another form of dementia. In addition, roughly one-quarter of dementia caregivers are considered the “sandwich generation,” which means they care for their aging parent and children under 18 years of age.

The program at the Schmieding Center will help young people understand the stages of Alzheimer’s disease and ways they can communicate with their loved ones and strengthen connections. The program goal is to build empathy, reduce fear and help youth effectively transition into the new reality of a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease.

Facilitating the sessions will be Steffanie Naples, Bachelor of Social Work intern, and Brandi Schneider, L.M.S.W., director of aging services and administration.

The sessions will cover topics such as: the brain before and during Alzheimer’s disease, symptoms and stages of Alzheimer’s, how to increase connection and communication, ideas for good self-care and helpful family resources. Educational activities will be part of the program, and there will be time for discussion and reflection.

“Educating children about Alzheimer’s will empower them by increasing their self-awareness and allowing them to develop empathy for the people in their lives who have this disease,” Naples said. “This program will encourage children to open lines of communication through asking questions, help them explore their feelings about the disease, prepare them for changes that will occur as Alzheimer’s progresses and provide them with information to educate others. The program will also help children increase their connection with their loved one and educate them on helpful self-care techniques.”

Schneider added that the program will benefit adults who have dementia “because their loved ones will better understand how to provide them with the dignity and respect they deserve, validate them and increase communication and feelings of security.”

UAMS is the state’s only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. It is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 2,727 students, 870 medical residents and five dental residents. It is the state’s largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children’s Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health.

The UAMS Northwest Regional Campus includes 250 medical, pharmacy, nursing and health professions students, 50 medical and pharmacy residents, and 1,000 community-based faculty. The campus has nine clinics providing advanced health care. Faculty conduct research to improve community health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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