



## Instructions for

# Children's Video

# About Aphasia

### Explanation of the video:

This video is meant to teach young children who are grandchildren of people with aphasia about the language problems faced by the family member with aphasia and to suggest ways of promoting communication with him/her.

The World Health Organization has determined that the surrounding environment influences people with disabilities and is influenced by them as well. Accordingly, the WHO has emphasized the clinical importance of providing appropriate services to the family of the person with the disability. Little information currently exists on how to guide grandchildren of people with aphasia or on how to promote their awareness of the issue. Studies of people with dementia show that expressions of positive emotion by grandchildren regarding their relationships with grandparents is directly related to the grandchildren's degree of involvement in the everyday lives of their families and of the family members with disabilities.

In a study that we conducted with grandchildren of people with aphasia, we looked at attitudes regarding communication between young grandchildren and grandparents with aphasia. We found that there is a need for clear and age-appropriate explanations about "what is aphasia." We also identified a need for ideas for joint activities, and for instruction on communication modes that can help improve the relationship between grandchildren and their family members with aphasia.

**We recommend viewing the video yourselves before viewing it together with your children.**

The video depicts an encounter between a granddaughter and her grandfather, after the grandfather suffered a stroke. The grandfather suffers from aphasia, making it hard to communicate with him. The video calls attention to the grandfather's language difficulties, and an explanation of the problem is provided by the mother in the video. Ways of promoting communication are also presented.

The video may bring up experiences and memories for your child. It is important that the child be given time and space to express and process the memories.

## The video may also raise questions in your child's mind. Below are examples of questions and possible answers:

### How can I help Grandpa?

You can try to change the way you talk with him. You'll have to speak more slowly and clearly, use hand movements and facial expressions to explain what you mean. You can also use drawings to explain. It's also important to listen to Grandpa patiently, to listen to the different sounds he makes and look at his hand movements. If you want to understand something, you should try to ask Grandpa questions that have "yes" or "no" answers. These are easier than "why" or "how" questions. If you still have difficulty, you can always ask for help from a nearby grownup.

### Will Grandma go back to being the way she was?

Over time, Grandma will learn to communicate better, and you will learn to understand her better. It doesn't seem as though Grandma will go back to speaking like she used to. But you and she will be able to talk to each other and do lots of things together.

### Is it contagious?

Aphasia isn't contagious. You can hug and kiss Grandpa as much as you like.

### Could this happen to other grownups, or to me?

Most people don't have aphasia. I can't promise that it won't happen to anyone else you know, but now that you know what aphasia is, you'll also know how to speak with people who have it.

### Could a headache give me or one of my parents a stroke?

No. Headaches usually happen when we're tired or don't drink enough water. Aphasia may happen after a stroke. Strokes can have many symptoms, such as getting words mixed up, physical weakness, and headaches.

### Is it important that I keep trying to keep in touch with Grandma?

Of course it's important. Grandma loves you very much and loves to spend time with you. Your time together makes her happy and helps her feel well. Grandma is a very important part of your family, and it's important to keep loving her and spending time with her, even with her aphasia.

## Ideas for joint activities between grandchildren and grandparents with aphasia:

- Card games: games should be chosen whose language component is minimal, such as War, Go Fish, etc.
- Creative/craft activities or making something together.
- Cooking/baking together.
- Going for walks together.
- Stories – choose a short story or make one up, if possible.
- Watching a movie or TV show together.
- Playing iPad or computer games together.

**It's important that the activity be tailored to the interests of the grandchild and the grandparent, as well as to their language abilities, functional abilities, and motor skills.**



The video was produced by the Adler Aphasia Center, Department of Communication Disorders, Hadassah Academic College in Jerusalem.

Please contact the Adler Aphasia Center with questions, comments, and ideas regarding the video, or to schedule an instructional session for children and grandchildren on communicating with a family member who has aphasia.