



SPARE A THOUGHT FOR DEMENTIA

MY STORY YOUR STORY

Generating Awareness and Support through Stories on Social Media

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INTRODUCTION

For many youth and young carers, there is a lack of personal, emotional, and mental support as the majority of children taking care of parents living with dementia are much older, leading many youths and young adult carers to feel isolated and frustrated.

This poster roadmaps the Spare a Thought for Dementia project, starting from early discussions at a symposium focused on bringing attention to young carers, all the way to its current status as an up and coming collaborative project with community advocates and care partners.

Based out of Ryerson University, the Spare a Thought for Dementia campaign is a new outreach program targeting high school and university/college students to raise awareness of the impacts of dementia through real, lived experiences. This outreach program will provide students with the opportunity to learn about dementia through the lens of youths living with dementia or in the role of a care provider for a loved one living with dementia.

Invisible carer is a term used to describe youths and young adults who are faced with the challenge of looking after someone living with dementia. The general public often faces a misconception that dementia and Alzheimer's disease only happens to older people, when in reality, it can affect individuals in early adulthood.

Spare a Thought for Dementia takes a collaborative approach to create Dementia-Friendly Communities in the digital world.

- The project asks:
1. What does a Dementia-Friendly Community look like in the virtual world?
 2. What roles do carers, educators, organizations, and members of the community play in creating these communities?

Through the My Story Your Story campaign, the project seeks to amplify empowering stories from persons living with dementia and their friends and family carers in order to combat stigma and show carers that they are not alone in their journeys.

Spare a Thought for Dementia envisions "a world where youth are empowered to become care partners and advocates for persons living with dementia"

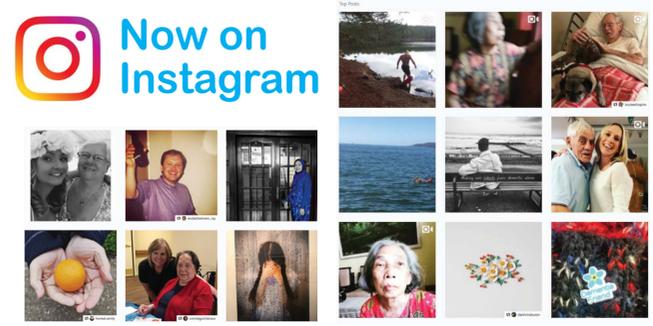
LEARNING LESSONS

Successes

- Connecting with the Alzheimer's Club at local HS
- Connecting with community care partners to expand campaign awareness
- Generating discussion surround dementia awareness on campus at Ryerson University

Challenges

- Lack of interest from school boards in GTA resulting in limited high school outreach
- Initial "authentic" connection with audience via social media on individual and personal level
- Coming up with consistently good content for our social media campaign due to limited research/support on youth and dementia



1. YOUTH SYMPOSIUM



ENGAGED

This symposium brought together high school students and other youth dementia leaders, individuals with dementia and their carers, researchers, practitioners, and NGOs from across the world. 60 people participated in the symposium, with half of the attendees being 25 years old or under.

- Results of the symposium include:
- (1) Exchanged and generated knowledge related to youth, popular, and cultural representations of dementia;
 - (2) Identified gaps in existing knowledge and reached consensus about actions moving forward;
 - (3) Established collaborative cross-sectorial and intergenerational networks and partnerships; and
 - (4) Disseminated key messages to increase youth awareness

2. THOUGHTS FOR DEMENTIA COLLABORATIVE



COLLABORATIVE

The Spare a Thought for Dementia campaign's primary goal is to develop partnerships with communities, schools, and other stakeholders to discuss needs, engagement opportunities, and ways to disseminate knowledge. This will help youth and young carers navigate through society by providing strategies on how to deal with the anxiety, confusion, and other challenging emotions that may arise when encountering or caring for someone with dementia.

The Spare a Thought for Dementia campaign was created by the Thoughts for Dementia Collaborative, which is a group of researchers, care partners, community advocates, and students.

T4D Collaborative



3. SOCIAL MEDIA

To accomplish our goals, we started the My Story Your Story campaign to leverage and connect existing communities.

- The campaign's current success is attributed to:
1. Strong outreach efforts directly on social media
 2. Building reciprocal relationships with users online
 3. Users who wish to share their stories and show their support for others who are going through similar journeys and experiences

GET INVOLVED

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