



## About *Just for Families*

*Just for Families* is a series of informational brochures developed by the Inglewood Family Advisory Committee and published by Inglewood Care Centre. We believe family members are valuable members of Inglewood's care team. By better understanding aging, medical concerns and other issues affecting the residents, families can work with staff to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care.

Our thanks to:

☞ The families and staff who contributed to the content

☞ 'Homes for the Aged' Division, City of Toronto, for inspiring this series as well as some text for this brochure

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# Just for Families

## Visiting Tips

The Inglewood Family Advisory Committee thanks the families and staff who provided the following ideas.

### **Visit your family as much as possible.**

- 1 Even if a resident may not know *who* someone is, they know whom they love—and who loves them. When a well-meaning friend asked an older gentleman “*Why do you visit your wife so often? She doesn't know who you are,*” he replied, “*But I know who she is.*”

### **Bring hugs and kisses for family, compliments and praise for all.**

- 2 Residents need affection and friendly touches. Holding hands feels good for all of us.

### **Bring your grandchildren or other 'young ones' to visit.**

- 3 Most elders love the little ones. Inglewood keeps toy boxes here, too.

### **Leave a life-like stuffed dog or cat, or 'baby' doll.**

- 4 Some women with advanced dementia enjoy 'caring for' and talking to a 'baby.' Language often improves. Once a mother, always a mother.

### **Ask your family member for advice.**

- 5 “*Is my tie straight?*” Better yet, ask her to straighten your tie.

### **Bring your people-friendly pets to visit.**

- 6 Most residents love animals.

### **Visiting your family member?**

- 7 Add just five minutes before or after your visit, to sit and chat with someone else. Not all our residents have visitors.

### **Going out of town?**

- 8 If they know, other family visitors in the same area of Inglewood will make a point of chatting with your family member. You can repay the favour.

### **Suggest a walk to the tuck shop.**

- 9 Shopping for candy, Kleenex or a greeting card is also a good chance for some exercise.

### **Do things together.**

- 10 Doing a simple task together is sometimes a better way to connect than sitting and talking. Ask for help sorting coins, folding towels, polishing shoes, etc.

### **A wink can say more than words!**

- 11 A shared wink with a family member says clearly “*You and I are in this together!*”

### **Knitter?**

- 12 Knit by the fire in the lounge. It's a homey touch, and relaxing for residents to watch you.

### **Art can include colouring.**

- 13 Provide (toxic free) materials. Paint, draw or even 'colour' alongside. If someone enjoys it, who are we to say colouring books are just for kids?

### **Update family pictures.**

- 14 As children and grandchildren grow, update photos in residents' rooms.

### ***Don't ask "Don't you remember?"***

**15** Nor *"Do you know who I am?"* None of us likes to have our failures pointed out—or to be tested! Try *"I remember when you..."*

### ***Bring cut flowers for your family member's room.***

**16** Involve them in trimming stems, arranging and adding water.

### ***Bring in old and new videos.***

**17** Ask the recreation staff for popular choices in commercial videos (musicals, etc.)—and don't forget your own home movies!

### ***Make time for pampering.***

**18** Offer your family member a manicure with a lotion massage.

### ***Go outside!***

**19** Stroll Inglewood's paths; visit the Friendship Garden and various patios. Borrow a transport wheelchair for a less tiring, more enjoyable trip.

### ***Go for a drive.***

**20** Staff can suggest taxis that provide good service for those using wheelchairs if it's too difficult to use your own car.

### ***Many residents ask about current news as well as the weather forecast.***

**21** Family members or friends can read the newspaper with or to residents.

### ***Meet other residents.***

**22** Most retain strong social skills and manners, regardless of dementia. Offer your handshake and introduce yourself and your family member to another resident.

### ***Garden alongside your family member.***

**23** Help yourselves to tools in the Friendship Garden's shed (ask staff if the door is locked). Sweeping and raking leaves are familiar and pleasing tasks for many. The old-fashioned mower is a dream to push and the *clickety-clack* holds many memories. Residents also enjoy watching others work, especially if you ask for their advice.

### ***Over-active children visiting?***

**24** Come summer, remember the putting green in the Friendship Garden (clubs and golf balls are in the shed). Even kids can push our little mower.

### ***Encourage your relatives and friends to visit.***

**25** Share this brochure with them.

### ***Ride our bus!***

**26** Depression can hit anyone. An outing by bus is a real upper. Offer to come along as a volunteer *and* a companion for your family member, especially if they are hesitant to go.

### ***Bring something that needs sanding or polishing.***

**27** The repetitive motion involved can be very relaxing.

### ***With the resident's permission, check clothing.***

**28** Together, find items that need to be altered or mended, or shirts that need buttons replaced. Chatting while sewing can be familiar and relaxing for both of you.

### ***Share tips with less-experienced visitors.***

**29** Suggest friends or relatives bring along a photo magazine or colourful calendar on a subject that will interest your family member (e.g. sports, houses, gardens, cars, royalty). They can look at it together. Be aware, the resident may want to keep it.

### ***What to do now?***

**30** Ask the recreation staff for ideas. They know your family member's specific abilities, which can change over time with dementia.

### ***Bring favourite food treats for your family member.***

**31** Our dietician suggests that residents and visitors who share food also share the enjoyment, turning a gift into a social occasion. NOTE: Ask staff about any dietary restrictions before sharing food. And also check with RN staff occasionally. Residents' dietary restrictions can change (e.g., some people can no longer drink thin liquids easily). TIP: All foods left for residents must have a throw-away date on them, so care staff can dispose of food if required. Let staff know if the resident needs help to find or eat these treats—they'll be happy to help.

### ***Mealtime in a resident's room?***

**32** Make mealtime more home-like by covering the mobile meal tray with a pretty placemat. Add a flower, some personal tableware (be sure it doesn't go back to our kitchen!), and raise a toast to *bon appetite!* Dinner shared with someone makes such a difference.

### ***Visiting someone with dementia?***

**33** Look for our brochure, *When you visit someone with dementia*, for more visiting tips.

### ***Look after you, too.***

**34** Don't feel guilty. You are doing the best you can. Don't feel like coming to visit one day? Stay home. Your next visit will be that much more enjoyable. You can always phone the nursing station to ask how your family member is doing, or to speak with him or her.

# ***Thank you for visiting!***

*You're making a difference in more lives than you know.*