

# Alzheimer's Association

The world leader in Alzheimer research and support

## Alzheimer's Association Joins National PBS Campaign

### To Address Growing Alzheimer's Epidemic In Conjunction with an Evening of Landmark Programming on January 21

The Alzheimer's Association is a national partner for a PBS campaign to raise public awareness of Alzheimer's disease through ***THE FORGETTING: A Portrait of Alzheimer's***, that airs Wednesday, January 21 at 9 p.m. (ET). Local broadcast and/or outreach activity and/or online resources provided by the local PBS stations, the Alzheimer's Association—Greater Illinois Chapter and other partner organizations will provide viewers a deeper understanding of the disease, the science behind it and the experience of those who suffer from its tragic effects.

Today, nearly five million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, but a generational time bomb is ticking as the first Baby Boomers approach 65, and enter the age of greatest risk for the disease. While recent advances in Alzheimer research show exciting progress, effective therapies to combat the disease are still out of reach.

The 90-minute ***THE FORGETTING: A Portrait of Alzheimer's*** documentary explores the latest Alzheimer research and the devastating toll Alzheimer's takes on people with the disease and caregivers. In examining this looming social and economic crisis, ***THE FORGETTING*** focuses on several families whose lives have been steadily ravaged by Alzheimer's. Like so many coping with this tragedy, these families are drawing on reservoirs of strength and compassion to stay focused on the person they love even as personalities and capabilities change from day-to-day.

***ALZHEIMER'S: THE HELP YOU NEED***, a half-hour follow-up special hosted by award-winning actor David Hyde Pierce, will bring together a panel of experts to answer commonly-asked questions and direct viewers to organizations and resources that can offer help and support. Having experienced the ravages of Alzheimer's first-hand—through both his grandfather's and his father's illnesses—Hyde Pierce, best-known for his role as Niles Crane in the NBC comedy *Frasier*, has been a tireless advocate in the fight to find a cure.

"Alzheimer's is a critical problem in our community," says G. Kent Barnheiser, President, CEO of the Alzheimer's Association—Greater Illinois Chapter, "and we welcome this PBS initiative and the opportunity it provides to mobilize regional resources to help people."

A groundbreaking Web site accessible at [www.pbs.org/theforgetting](http://www.pbs.org/theforgetting) will serve as a central hub for Alzheimer's information and support, providing advice, resources and opportunities for Alzheimer's families to share emotions and insights. The site—unlike any other existing Web site—will help the public understand Alzheimer's by weaving together personal stories, science and history. Through interactive features, the site will give visitors insight into such topics as: What is it like to have Alzheimer's? What's normal and what's not? Who's at risk? How do we live well with Alzheimer's?

***THE FORGETTING: A Portrait of Alzheimer's*** and its accompanying nationwide outreach campaign mark the first major PBS initiative on Alzheimer's disease. The landmark program, which was produced by Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) in Minnesota for PBS, was inspired by the best-selling book *The Forgetting—Alzheimer's: Portrait of an Epidemic*, by David Shenk, who served as a consultant to the documentary and appears in it. MetLife Foundation, a longtime supporter of both public television and Alzheimer's research, is sole underwriter of the documentary, the national follow-up program, the companion Web site and national outreach campaign. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting Additional provided additional support for the outreach campaign

The Alzheimer's Association is the world leader in Alzheimer research and support. Having awarded more than \$150 million to nearly 1,300 projects, the Association is the largest private funder of Alzheimer's disease research in the U.S. The Alzheimer's Association is working with Congressional leaders to increase federal funding for Alzheimer research from the estimated \$640 million the National Institutes of Health will spend in 2003 to \$1 billion annually. The Alzheimer's Association's vision is a world without Alzheimer's disease. For more information about Alzheimer's disease, visit [www.alzheimers-illinois.org](http://www.alzheimers-illinois.org) or call 800-272-3900.

We are scheduling public viewings of this PBS special, hosted by Alzheimer's Association staff, in some Illinois communities. Contact your local Program Center ([www.alzheimers-illinois.org/programcenters.html](http://www.alzheimers-illinois.org/programcenters.html)) to see if there is a viewing scheduled near you.