

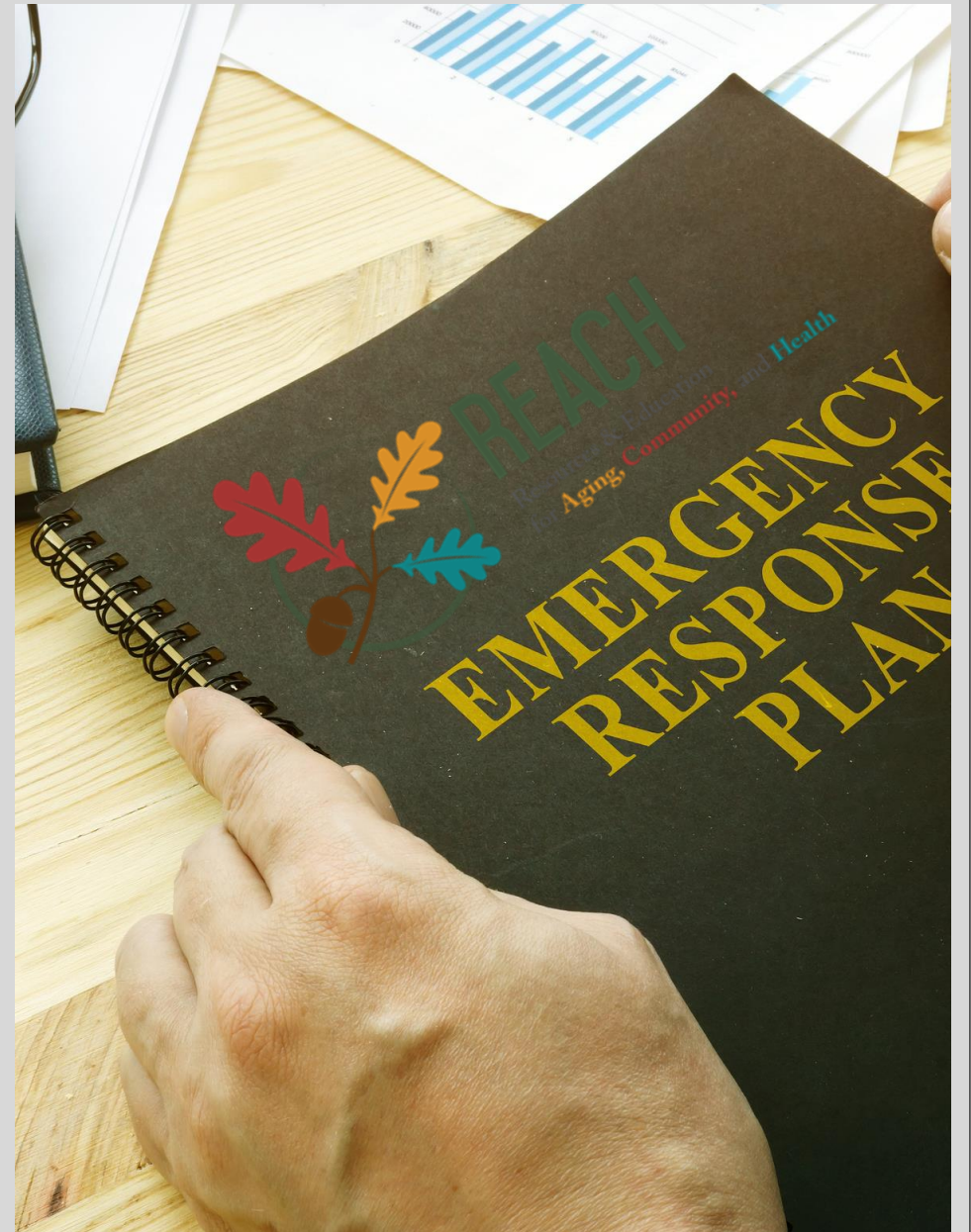
# REACH

A Program Designed to Improve  
Emergency Response for Those with  
Dementia

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# The Reality of Dementia

6.5 million people in the United States living with dementia

55.8 million people live in the U.S. are 65 years and older

53 million Americans are care providers for a friend or family

More than 11 million family members are caring for someone with a form of dementia





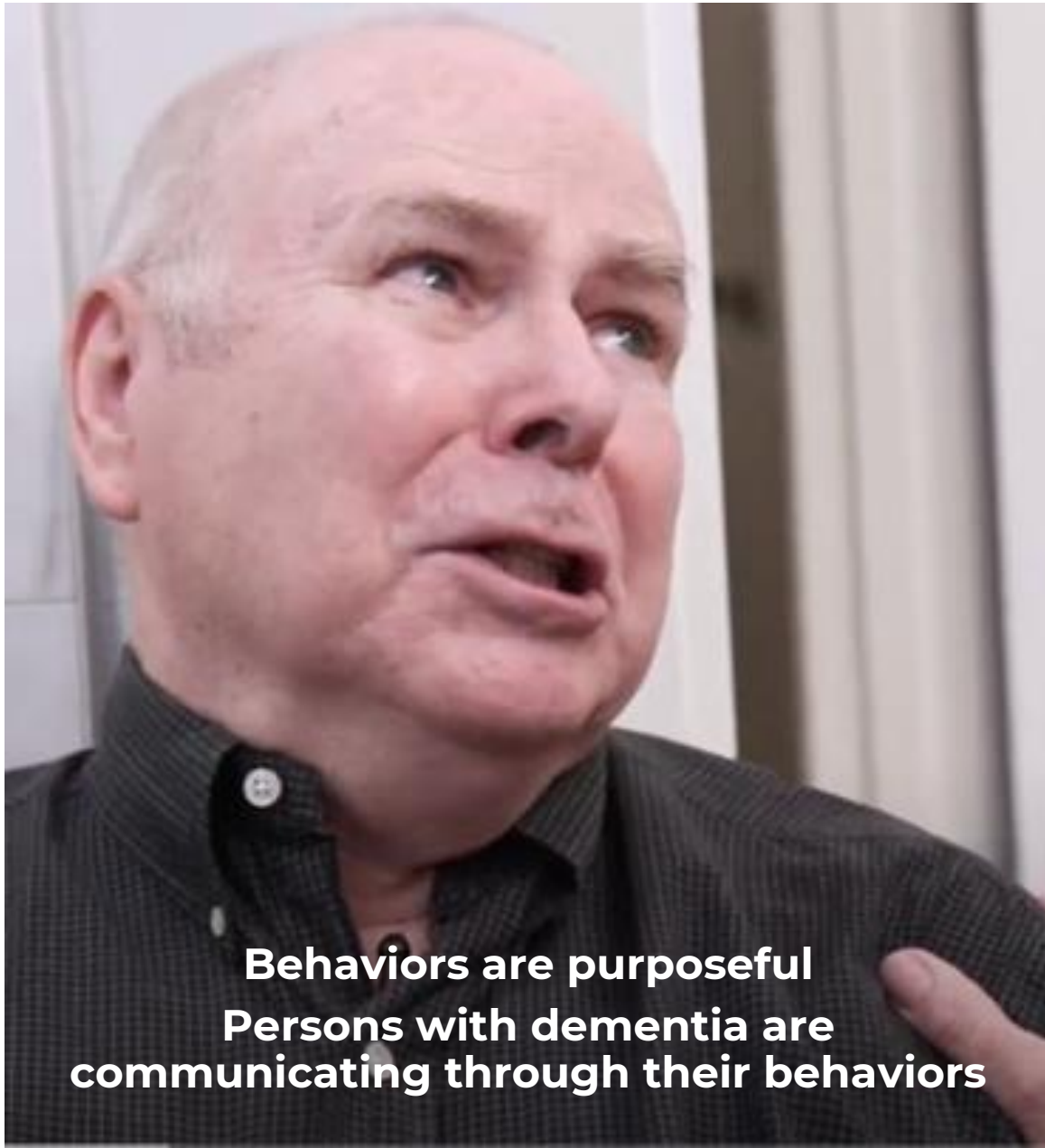
## Why This Training Matters:

- Implement strategies to support persons with dementia and family care partners
- Implement de-escalation strategies in urgent situations with persons with dementia and family care partners
- Gain access to dementia training video materials relevant for dementia-caring community training and advocacy aimed at First Responders and Family Care Partner trainees



## **Crisis Calls and Dementia**

To meet the needs of the growing older populations in our communities more knowledge about dementia and competence in interaction methods is needed.



**Behaviors are purposeful  
Persons with dementia are  
communicating through their behaviors**

## **Understanding how Persons with Dementia Interact with their Environment**

Dementia affects

- Memory, communication, social interactions, and thinking.
- The way a person hears and sees
- Sound can be perceived as too amplified and distorted
- Vision can be diminished and may be misinterpreted

# DE-ESCALATION STRATEGIES

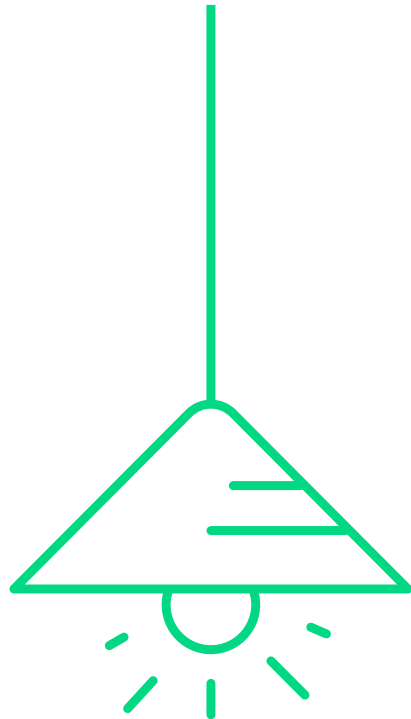
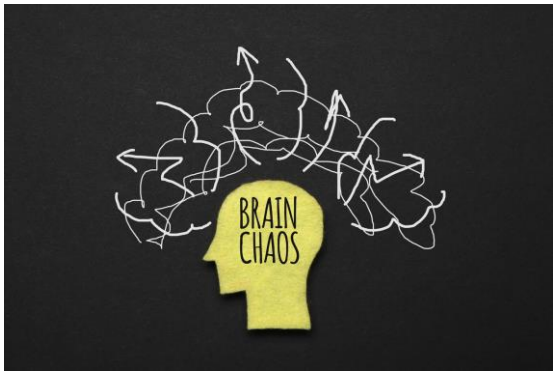
- Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication
- Environment Matters



# Verbal and Nonverbal Communication as a De-escalation Strategy

- Purposeful communication
- Positive, helpful, and reassuring
- Concise
- Empathy
- Eye contact (at their level)
- Facial expression
- Tone and volume of voice
- Gestures
- Position





# Environment as a De-escalation Strategy

- Minimize distractions
  - Visual
  - Auditory
- Lighting
- No clutter
- Monitor reflective surfaces
- Modifications for prevent wandering



# Use the REACH Approach as a de-escalation strategy



## Scenario 1 The Fall - Setting the Scene (youtube.com)

As you are watching the video take note of the things the wife and paramedics do to help the person living with dementia.



## Scenario 1 The Fall - The Paramedic's View (youtube.com)

# The First Responder (Paramedic) View

As you are watching the video take note of what the paramedic team does to help the person with dementia.





# Key Actions for the Care Partner

- Be quick to respond to the emergency
- Keep person calm and comfortable until help arrives
- Prepare emergency medical information for first responder
- Remain calm and helpful
- Prepare environment
- Offer a personal solution to decrease the person with dementia's stress

# Key Actions for the First Responder

- Be purposeful when interacting with persons with dementia
- Medical history
- Eye contact
- Calm and friendly demeanor
- Introduce yourself and remind them who you are
- Explanation
- Community resources
- Be knowledgeable of the signs and symptoms of dementia





## Scenario 2- The Wanderer

As you are watching the video take note of the things the daughter and police officers do using the REACH Approach.

Scenario 2 The Wanderer -  
The Care Partner's View  
(youtube.com)



As you are watching take note of the strategies the care partner has in place and the things they learned.



# Key Actions for Care Partner

- Call 911
- Communicate to dispatcher that the person missing has dementia
- Offer solution to build trust
- Remain calm and focused when speaking with all first responders
- Answer questions calmly and to the best of your knowledge
- Have recent picture of the person with dementia available
- Prepare emergency information handout
- Medical ID bracelet
- Enroll in Safe Return program
- Consider easy home modifications that help prevent wandering





# Key Actions for First Responder

- Be calm, direct, and purposeful with the care partner
- Observe surroundings for risk assessment
- Medical history
- Try to establish timeline
- Get most updated photo and any personal markings that can identify missing person
- Community resources

# Overview of REACH Approach



01.

De-escalation  
Strategies



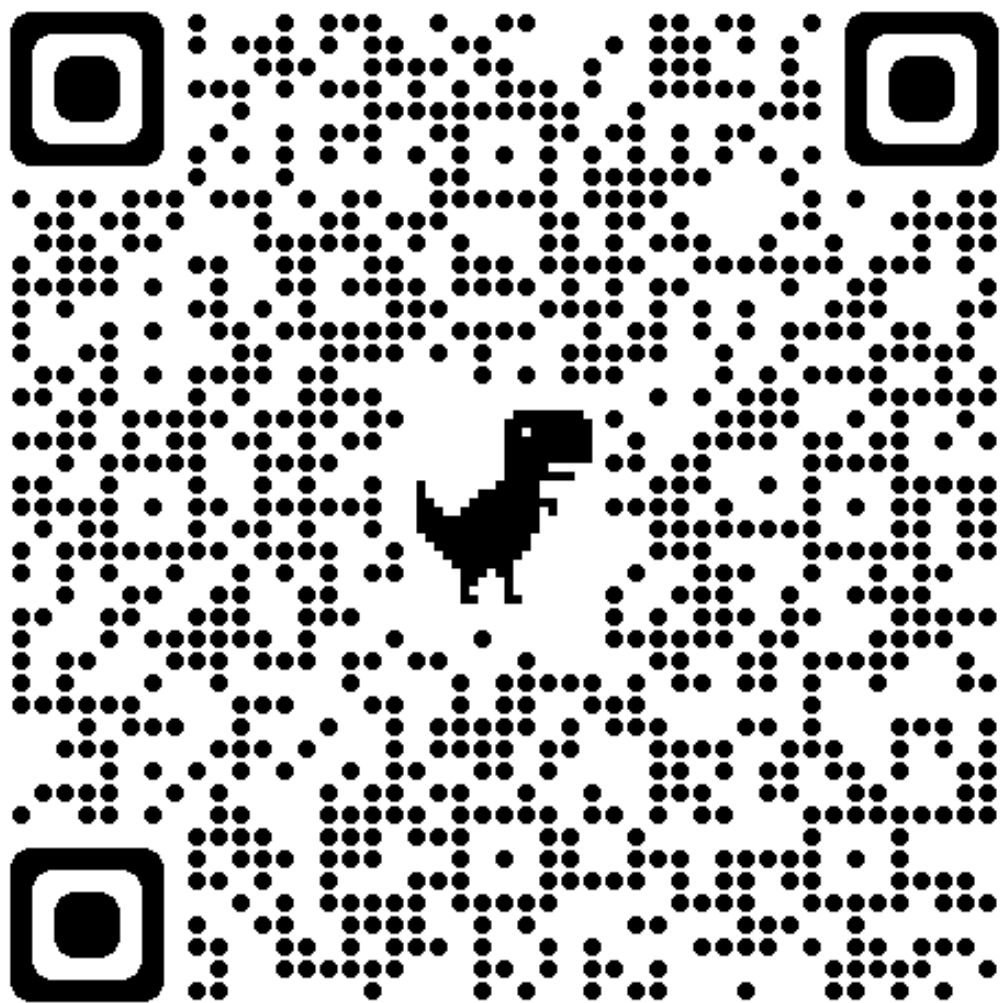
02.

Care Partner  
Preparedness



03.

First Responder  
Training



## How to Access This Program

- Videos, Key Takeaways, and Handouts, are accessible on the REACH website
- or
- Videos on our [YouTube Channel](#)



## Dementia Caregiving: How to Respond in Emergency Situations



**Are you a care partner for a loved one or family member who is living with dementia?**

Follow these 3 steps in an emergency situation to communicate effectively with first responders.

- 1** Tell the 9-1-1 dispatcher that the injured or missing person has dementia.
- 2** Communicate important information, such as medical conditions, changes in behavior, or advance directives.
- 3** Provide resources and information that can help calm the person living with dementia.

**Use &  
Share!**



**Watch the full video series to learn more.**



# CARE PARTNER PREPAREDNESS CARD





## First Responder Dementia Guide: How to Respond in Emergency Situations



### Have you ever responded to an emergency situation where a person living with dementia was involved?

Follow these steps when interacting with persons with dementia to establish trust using purposeful interaction.

- Consider the environment and minimize distractions before engaging (sight and sound)
- Speak slowly and make eye contact at their level
- Introduce yourself and tell them why you are there
- Ask short, simple questions
- Wait for a response - it can take up to 90 seconds for someone with dementia to understand what you are saying
- Rephrase, write, or gesture if needed
- Do not challenge their reality

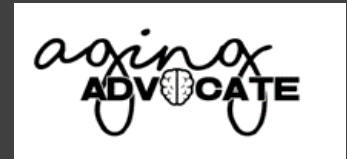
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# FIRST RESPONDER PREPAREDNESS CARD



# BE PART OF THE SOLUTIONS

SHARE QR CODES WITH YOUR LOCAL FIRST RESPONDER AGENCIES AND FAMILY CAREGIVERS

EDUCATE OTHERS ON WHAT YOU LEARNED TODAY

SHARE THESE VIDEOS

SEND PARTNERS OR TRAINING CONTACTS

TO [SGAD@AGINGADVOCATE.COM](mailto:SGAD@AGINGADVOCATE.COM)  
AND/OR

[NICOLETTE.CASTAGNA@MED.FSU.EDU](mailto:NICOLETTE.CASTAGNA@MED.FSU.EDU)

TO STRATEGIZE ON WAYS TO GET THIS INFORMATION OUT.



# REACH is Trending!

- **550+** First Responder departments have been trained.
- **700+** Family Care Partners and Professionals have been trained
- **Thousands** of YouTube views
- **The Entire task force** for the Florida Dementia Care and Cure initiative (DCCI) has been given the training videos.
- The State of Alabama incorporated **REACH APPROACH** into an online learning platform for EMS to gain .5 credits for distributive education for training.



THANK YOU FOR  
PARTICIPATING IN  
THIS TRAINING.

PLEASE COMPLETE A  
BRIEF SURVEY.

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**REACH**

Resources & Education  
for **Aging**, **Community**, and **Health**

[REACH.med.fsu.edu](http://REACH.med.fsu.edu)



[agingadvocate.com/](http://agingadvocate.com/)



**DEMENTIA**  
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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

Developing Dementia-Caring Communities Across Florida





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**Elder**  **Affairs**  
FLORIDA

 **SCENT**   
**EVIDENCE** **K9**<sup>®</sup>  
BRINGING THE LOST HOME

# Together We Make a Better Community

## Scent Preservation Kit:

- A key approach in achieving this mission is by developing proactive family safety measures like [The Scent Preservation Kit](#)<sup>®</sup> and helping communities focus on providing services to the most vulnerable populations with greater risk of becoming a missing person.
- Two vulnerable populations found in most communities are children with [autism spectrum disorder](#) and persons with [Alzheimer's Disease](#) and dementia.