Native Hawaiian ‘ohana (families) provide the bulk of care to their aged parents, including those with dementia. Native Hawaiian youth are more likely to live with grandparents, including those with dementia, because they are more likely to live in multigenerational families than youth of other ethnic groups in Hawai‘i. Limited research has focused on the needs of youth caregivers who are largely invisible to the eldercare service network. This knowledge gap is especially critical for Native Hawaiians due to their heightened risk for chronic diseases associated with dementia.

To address this gap, we developed a culturally responsive storybook for Native Hawaiian ‘ōpio (youth) using plain language and scenarios relatable to a Hawai‘i audience. The book includes frequently asked questions, links to web-based resources, and a crossword puzzle to guide readers to key lessons.

The story introduces Pomai as she navigates troubling changes she is noticing in her Papa (grandfather). Pomai is not sure how to help and is struggling at school. With the help of supportive adults, Papa is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease and Pomai learns age-appropriate ways for her to contribute to Papa’s care.

The story opens with hali’a, fond memories of good times together. It was important to show Papa before the onset of dementia. HALI’A is used as a mnemonic throughout the book to help readers recognize dementia-related memory loss and how it differs from normal aging.

**Literature Review**

With students from the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health, we conducted a literature review on evidence-based, dementia-education models for youth.

**Subject Area Expert Interviews**

Experts knowledgeable of dementia and community services were interviewed about educational needs of youth on dementia.

**Native Hawaiian Youth Discussions**

Four groups of young people residing in the Papakōlea community participated in discussion meetings on developing this resource.

**User Survey**

We continue to gather feedback from readers on how they've used the resource to help us in refining the storybook further.

**Findings**

- Youth were familiar with dementia, but knew little about the disease, its progression, or ways to help.
- Youth voiced interest in an educational comic book featuring local people, places, and words.
- Youth wanted links to web-based and social media resources
- Experts recommended distinguishing dementia from normal aging and stressed the importance of being realistic about disease progression
- Experts also felt the storybook should identify things youth and kūpuna can do together, despite a dementia diagnosis

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The goal of Hā Kūpuna: The National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders is to assure the transmission of hā (breath of life; wisdom) from older to younger generations by enhancing knowledge to improve health and well-being. Hā Kūpuna is supported by grants #90OI0007/05 and #90OIRC0001–01–00 from the Administration on Aging, US Department of Health and Human Services.