



By Michelle Houriet, Executive Director
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GrandPals Make The Greatest Pals

We are so proud of the partnership between Independence Hill Retirement Community and Las Lomas Elementary School. Fortunately, the school's leadership realizes the value of bringing seniors and youngsters together. It is hard to explain how magical it is to watch the interaction between the Independence Hill residents and their little "pals."

One of our favorite programs we share with the school is the Grandpal Reading Program. The kids are Grandpals to the seniors and the seniors are Grandpals to the kids. We figure, with so many people moving across the country, sometimes kids don't get to see their grandparents as often as they'd like, so this way they can have a "fill in." The Grandpal Reading Program gives each student a "reading buddy." Twice a month, the Independence Hill Grandpals visit Las Lomas Elementary where children are paired up for some individual reading time with their Grandpal.

"It gives the students something to look forward to, something that breaks up their day, and gives them more reading practice time," explained Las Lomas' Principal Jennifer Lomas.

And our residents just love helping the youngsters! In fact, they feel like they get as much out of it as the kids do. The residents love to work with the kids.

"I love kids and I love reading so this program is a perfect fit for me!" said Mary, an Independence Hill resident.

There is nothing better than learning from your elders; their life experiences are of great value. One great lesson that Grandpal Dorothy is working to pass on, "If you can read, there is nothing you can't do!" That is why she chooses to participate in this great program.

Grandpal Cecile reflects on the relationship that she has developed with her little Grandpal.



"I work with the same boy each time so we really get to know each other, which I think is the key to success," she said. "We have talks, and together, he and I are noticing his progress. It seems to truly mean something to him to have this opportunity, but what I have realized is that it means so very much to me as well."

"It is always a benefit when we can give the kids that extra one-on-one time, listen to their reading and support their love of reading," commented Principal Lomas. "One of the Grandpals is even a retired Reading Specialist which is just wonderful."

Residents love living at Independence Hill Retirement Community because we aren't afraid to try new things and we always offer exciting opportunities. Learn more about how full your life can be by calling one of our Lifestyle Specialists today at (210) 209-8956.

Independence Hill Retirement Resort Community is located at 20450 Huebner Rd., San Antonio, TX 78258. For more information, call (210) 209-8956 or visit www.independencehill.com.

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