

Press Release

September 16, 2008

PRNewsChannel.com

Nintendo Not Just Child's Play Anymore

Aging residents at Regal Palms, an assisted living facility in Largo, use the video game to improve their hand-eye coordination and exercise their minds.



Dusty Case, resident of Our Place at Regal Palms, plays Nintendo Wii with Mary Lou Walsnovich, activity assistant.

Largo, Fla. – It's not just about playing cards anymore. The seniors at Regal Palms, an assisted living facility in Largo, are trying their hand on Nintendo's Wii. It may seem like just fun and games. But there is actually more going on.

It's therapy.

"It helps them improve their hand-eye coordination," says Tara Lanzer, ADC, lifestyle coordinator at Regal Palms. "They're also exercising their brain as well as their body."

But that doesn't mean they aren't having fun. In fact, Lanzer says the men, in particular, have gotten quite competitive while playing the simulated boxing match.

The experience draws a crowd, too.

"The residents really participate as the audience especially when a player knocks out their opponent," Lanzer says. "We have one resident who's 90. He's unsteady on his feet but loves to play the boxing game."

The Nintendo is also a hit at "Our Place," the secured Alzheimer's care unit at Regal Palms.

"It was an activity that was scheduled for one hour that ended up lasting nearly twice that," says Tammy M. Dunlap, ADC, program coordinator for the memory care unit. "My residents really enjoyed it."

Dunlap says the residents were amazed by the technology and really built camaraderie. She says they took turns bowling and playing golf.

"They were rooting each other on and there was a lot of laughter in our room," says Dunlap. "It's a great way to get exercise, share fellowship and just have a fun time."

"There were comments like, 'What will they come up with next,' 'This is amazing,' and 'can we play this again tomorrow,'" she recalls.

Sure, the makers of Nintendo may have created the games for people a quarter their age, but who cares? After a lifetime of working hard, they're having fun.