



FROM SEED TO TABLE

Two-year-old Nina Holloway can barely hold the cucumbers that she helped harvest in the organic vegetable garden at Sunshine Care in Poway. She unfolds her arms so that the greens slide down them and into the waiting wheelbarrow.

On this sunshiny day, she is one of about 13 children who are participating in the twice-monthly intergenerational organic garden club, a program devised by Jill Morganelli, director of horticulture, and Lisa Lipsey, activity director, wherein seniors and children work together to plant, grow, harvest and share meals from Sunshine's greenhouse, orchard and organic fields.

Little Zach Andreason makes sure to shut the gate as

everyone heads up to the herb garden to see if the basil is ready for picking.

Nina's mom, Nichole, says her family has been participating in the garden club since its inception two years ago. "Now my kids know where the produce comes from in the grocery store," she says.

"Plus they're eating tomatoes like they were apples."

The kids, some from nearby schools, some relatives of residents, are partnered with the seniors who live in this assisted-living and state-of-the-art dementia facility tucked into 28 acres beneath the Green Mountains.

After the herbs have been placed in baskets, the kids are eager to make their way to the greenhouse where they will team together with their "grandmas" and "grandpas" to wash what they've picked and to plant new seeds.

"I need more seeds, Grandpa," says Remington Namvar to resident Vernon Lindtvedt. Lindtvedt opens his hands to reveal a palm full of basil seeds. Namvar takes a few seeds, pushes the seeds into the little container and checks to see if the soil is damp enough.

"Time for lunch," says Lipsey.

And off they go, children hand-in-hand with the old folk, strolling toward the kitchen to make and share a meal.

Above, left: Remington Namvar (left) and Vernon Lindtvedt. Right: John Fetty and Madeline Andreassen.

Left: Toby Fisher can't wait to eat this carrot.

