If your child is struggling in school, and has difficulty paying attention in class, you have probably heard teachers recommend medication for ADHD. For many teachers, this is the ideal solution for a classroom management problem. But is it the best solution for your child?

Let’s look at the facts. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 7% of school-aged kids in Texas are taking ADHD medication; twice as much as in 2007. ADHD is typically treated with psychostimulant drugs such as Ritalin, Adderall, Concerta and Vyvanse.

For a child to get diagnosed with ADHD they typically visit a pediatrician or psychologist and parents are given a series of behavioral checklists. Once those checklists are collected and rated, if the child scores above a certain rating, he can be diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed medication.

So, if my child can’t pay attention in school, is it because of ADHD? Well, not necessarily. It is important for parents and teachers to look very carefully at whether the attention challenges are causing the learning problem and not the other way around. For many students, attention problems are more of a symptom of an underlying learning problem, rather than the cause itself.

Children with weak processing skills, or retained reflexes may feel over-stimulated by light, certain sounds or the fabric in their shirts. This can cause them to be excessively wiggly, or focused too much on trying to manage the rush of sensory stimuli that they are experiencing in a noisy classroom.

Struggling readers may have to focus so much on sounding out the words, that they lose comprehension. When asked about what they read, it may seem like they were not paying attention.

For some children, ADHD medication can be part of the solution. But buyers beware, while medication can control many of the symptoms, it will not correct a learning problem. And it will certainly not teach your child to read. If you choose to medicate your child, it should always be coupled with a 1 on 1 cognitive training program that fits the child’s needs.

Leslie Jernigan has a Masters Degree in School Psychology and is Director of Assessment at Learning Foundations. If you have a child that is struggling in school, contact (210) 495-2626 or visit www.learningfoundations.com/adhd for more information on how to get help for your child. Email questions or concerns about your child’s learning challenges to leslie@learningfoundations.com.

Technology and Seniors?
That is the Question
By Michelle Houriet, Executive Director
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True or False: Senior adults are not using technology nor are they interested in learning it? The answer: False! This is a common misconception, as seniors are a fast growing group who use new technology. As they realize that the most desired way to communicate with their grown children and grandchildren is through the use of technology, seniors usually go for the smartphone.

“My tablet was a godsend, as the arthritis in my hands made holding a book for long periods quite difficult,” declares Phyllis Wallace, who is not only a resident, but is one of Independence Hill’s biggest Facebook users.

Senior adults aren’t joining social media or using new technologies because everyone else is, they are actually getting real benefits from their time online. They are finding new and lost friends, building a support network, managing their healthcare, learning about so many things and most importantly, having fun!

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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As we celebrate Veteran’s Day, Autumn Leaves of Stone Oak would like to salute our Veterans and all those who served.

Stop by and visit our new Wall of Honor, highlighting all of our residents who have served their country!

Autumn Leaves of Stone Oak offers unparalleled care to those with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia.

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