



# HEALTH AWARENESS

## Erb's Palsy—What You Should Know

(NAPSA)—Up to 1 in 1,000 children born in the United States sustain nerve damage in the neck as a result of traumatic deliveries. Erb's palsy, obstetrical palsy and brachial plexus birth palsy are all terms used to describe the condition that paralyzes the muscles used to rotate the shoulder, making it difficult for the child to reach above his head, comb his hair, throw a ball or perform other tasks most people take for granted.

In Grant's case, the nerve damage affected his left arm. Determined to give their son a healthy start in life, his parents quickly sought help. Their first stop was the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif., where Grant was evaluated and referred to California Children's Services for physical therapy.

During the physical therapy sessions, Kathleen, Grant's mother, met many other parents dealing with birth palsy and noticed a familiar name in many of the conversations: Dr. Michelle James, assistant chief of orthopaedics at Shriners Hospital for Children—Northern California; a noted orthopaedic surgeon specializing in children's hands and upper extremities. Patients with brachial plexus are routinely referred to Dr. James from hospitals throughout Northern California, and more than 100 have had shoulder surgery at the Northern California Shriners Hospital during the past 10 years.

After examining Grant in the clinic, surgery was scheduled. When Grant's brace came off in March 2004, Shriners Hospitals occupational therapist Tiffany Terrell led the youngster through two weeks of intensive workouts



**Occupational Therapist Tiffany Terrell offers smiles and encouragement as patient Grant completes a task.**

cleverly disguised as play.

Terrell had learned that 3-year-old Grant took his two favorite toys—Sonic the Hedgehog and Buzz Lightyear—into surgery with him. “I knew we had to bring Buzz and Sonic into therapy,” said Terrell.

“The goal of this therapy is to get the child to use the nondominant hand and keep it integrated,” said Terrell. “People take for granted many day-to-day tasks, and the goal of therapy is to make all the movements natural.”

For more information on Shriners' network of 22 hospitals that provide medical care and services totally free of charge to children with orthopaedic problems, burns and spinal cord injuries, write to Shriners International Headquarters, Public Relations Dept., 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa, FL 33607 or visit the Web site at [www.shrinershq.org](http://www.shrinershq.org). Treatment is provided to children under age 18 without regard to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.

If you know a child that Shriners can help, call 1-800-237-5055 in the United States or 1-800-361-7256 in Canada.