



spotlight on health

Shriners Hospital Puts A New Smile On A Twin

(NAPSA)—Twins Maya and Mara Grant, age 2, of Holmen, Wisc., were beautiful newborns, and though it is unusual, one of the twins was born with a cleft palate.

In the early weeks of prenatal development, the right and left sides of the lip and the roof of the mouth normally grow together. About one in every 800 babies is born with a separation of the upper lip, called a cleft lip, or a similar birth defect of the roof of the mouth, known as a cleft palate.

Correction usually requires several surgeries throughout childhood and adolescence. The twins' mother, Jennifer Grant, talked to other parents and found that, at some point, most insurance carriers label these surgeries as "cosmetic," then deny coverage.

Fortunately, a Shriner, who is the father of one of Jennifer's friends, called the family to suggest Shriners Hospitals for Children as an option.

Jennifer and her husband Matthew visited the Chicago hospital's Web site and discovered that "the credentials of the attending physicians there were fantastic!" More than 700 patients are currently being treated there for cleft lip and palate.

When Maya was only 10 months old, she had her first surgery at the Chicago Shriners Hospital. She will have subsequent surgeries as her face grows and develops.

"It's obvious that they want to



Mara (left) and Maya Grant have plenty to smile about.

follow through, not just to solve the immediate problem," said Jennifer. "They're doing so much for so many kids."

For more information on Shriners network of 22 hospitals that provide free treatment 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 www.shrinershq.org.

If you know a child Shriners can help, call 1-800-237-5055 in the United States or 1-800-361-7256 in Canada. Shriners Hospitals provide free treatment to children under age 18 without regard to race, religion, or relationship to a Shriner.