



# Good News Department

## Growing New Skin: Shriners Hospitals Turn Misfortune Into Good Luck

(NAPSA)—Manny is not your typical second grader. When asked what he likes to do for fun, he answered, “Math.” Erik Andersen, his guardian, whom Manny calls grandpa, proudly commented that Manny has a 97 percent average in his math classes.

After talking a bit more, Manny said that he likes playing soccer and riding bikes. “I like to go swimming with my grandpa. I am a good swimmer,” he added.

At the age of 4, Manny was burned severely when his mother poured gasoline on him and set him on fire. He has scars on his neck, arm, trunk and thighs. He was then taken out of his home and placed in Ciudad del Niños, or City of the Children, an orphanage in Chile.

It was there that he met Andersen, an international educator. Anderson later found that Manny needed medical care, but that he would not be able to receive care in Chile because there were no funds available.

Without further treatment, Manny’s scar tissue would not stretch and grow like normal skin and he would get contractures that would cause deformities and breathing problems.

Andersen decided he had to help. He arranged for a foster family to care for Manny but when that fell through, he became Manny’s guardian and took him home to Tucson for the medical care that he needed. Manny first was treated locally in Tucson and then was accepted at the Shriners Hospital for Children in Los Angeles.

To reduce his scarring and to give him full range of motion, tissue expanders were used. A tissue expander is a clear silicone balloon that can stretch up to 10 times its original volume without breaking.

Tissue expander procedures require months of daily treatments that may cause discomfort.



**Shriners Hospital patient Manny has tissue expanders in his cheeks and shoulder. Once removed, the scars are minimal.**

The expanders create such an unexpected appearance that most children over age 9 won’t go to school with them in.

“But even though tissue expanders can be a lot of trouble and can’t make a deformity completely normal, they can certainly help it a lot, and just about every patient will tell you they’re worth it,” said Susan Kay, M.D., a plastic surgeon at the Los Angeles Shriners Hospital.

Manny will require years of reconstructive plastic surgery to reduce his scarring. However, when asked if he was looking forward to returning to the Los Angeles Shriners Hospital, Manny replied, “Yes, I want all of my burns gone!”

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 regardless to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.

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