

Children's HEALTH

Shriners Hospitals Support Bone and Joint Awareness Decade

(NAPSA)—To help improve the quality of life for people with problems of the bones, joints and muscles, Shriners Hospitals for Children has joined forces with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the National Athletic Trainers' Association to promote the United States Bone and Joint Decade (USBJD) 2002-2011. It is a campaign aimed at raising awareness, seeking new treatments and educating the public on musculoskeletal conditions. Shriners Hospitals is the first hospital network to support the efforts of the USBJD.

"Most people don't understand the extent to which musculoskeletal diseases affect the population, particularly children," said Dr. Peter F. Armstrong, director of medical affairs for Shriners Hospitals for Children. "By working together with both the Bone and Joint Decade and other involved organizations, Shriners Hospitals hope to raise awareness and improve treatment through continuing education and research."

Since its inception, Shriners Hospitals has been at the forefront of understanding musculoskeletal problems associated with childhood injuries and conditions. The 19 orthopaedic Shriners Hospitals commonly treat disorders such as clubfoot, limb deficiencies and discrepancies, scoliosis, hand and back problems, osteogenesis imperfecta (brittle bone disease) and growth problems. In 2001 alone, there were more than 22,000 admissions for orthopaedic care, and more than 60,000 braces and prostheses applied.

Shriners Hospitals promote the USBJD's efforts to increase global funding for prevention activities and treatment research. Shriners'



THE U.S. BONE AND JOINT DECADE: 2002-2011 is a time for improving the quality of life for people with problems of the bones, joints and muscles.

researchers have conducted extensive studies in understanding the musculoskeletal problems associated with childhood conditions such as spina bifida, cerebral palsy and skeletal growth abnormalities. In 2002, \$24 million has been allocated to Shriners Hospitals' medical research program, while \$1.5 million has been allocated to clinical outcomes research. Many of the projects focus on bone and joint disorders.

For more information on the Bone and Joint Decade visit www.boneandjointdecade.org/us.

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, 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.