



# La Clínica

Nogales, AZ

St. Andrew's Children's  
Clinic

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## Where Do Our Patients Live?

Our current patient caseload numbers 1,423 children. They come from all over Mexico—as far as Baja California (west), Nuevo Leon (east), Oaxaca (south), and Sonora (north). The care we provide translates into enormous benefits for the patients' families.

As expected, most of our patients (97%) come from Sonora, which borders Arizona. Children come from 51 different towns in Sonora.

More patients (569) come from Nogales, Son. than any other town. Nogales is just across the border from No-



gales, AZ where our clinic is located. Daniel Pereida (age 3) is one of the children who lives in Nogales, Son. Here he is checked by Dr. Jeminah Van Handel in the **Pediatrics Department**.

Daniel has paralysis.

The next largest group of patients is from Hermosillo (197). Alberto Castillo (8 yrs.) is one of the children who travels from Hermosillo for health care. Alberto surprised his therapist, Barb Tracy, by walking into the **Physical**



**Therapy Department** by himself. He had graduated from a walker. To celebrate, he made cascarones (an Easter tradition) for Ms. Tracy.

María (age 10) travels from Ciudad Obregon which is close to an 8-hour trip.



She is a patient in the Audiology Department. She has hearing aids in both ears.

Thanks to Volunteer Jim Archibald who recently created a database of our patient files so we could tabulate the data used in this article.

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## Vision Department

Miriam Contreras (age 16) came to the Clinic when she was about 10 years old. Blind since a very young age, she



had learned to write Braille using a slate and stylus. At the Clinic, she learned how to use a Braille writer and eventually received her own from a Clinic donor. As a result, she goes to regular high school and keeps up in her subjects just like her peers. Miriam reads everything "she can get her hands on." Her latest request was for a Braille Spanish version of Harry Potter. Thanks to a Clinic volunteer, Miriam got her wish and began reading the book at the Clinic.

Ariel Yepiz (age 4), blind since birth, uses a pre-cane to learn how to move about. The pre-cane is the step before learning to walk with a cane. Ariel lives in Nogales, Son. with his twin brother who has limited vision.



Volunteers from Nationwide Vision have been coming to the Clinic for several months to help fit children with glasses.

At the April Clinic, they brought 250 frames. Special thanks to Al Bernstein, Nationwide Vision President, for this donation.

At the Clinic, Dr. Davis tested eyes, and the opticians, Suzanne Maya and Ann Hill-Patterson, fit the frames.



Francisco Armenta, age 13, lives in Hermosillo.



Karen Lopez, age 6, lives in Nogales, Son.



Mario Vega, age 6, lives in Caborca.

### Clinic Wish List

If you want to donate any of these things, please call the Clinic office at (520)648-3242.

- Wheelchairs—an urgent need as we are out of child-size and adult-size wheelchairs
- Children's chewable vitamins with minerals
- Cranberry juice—10 or 12 oz. bottles only
- Disposable bibs
- Disposable diapers
- Food supplements (Ensure, Pediasure)
- Paper goods (plates, cups, napkins)
- Physical therapy (exercise) balls
- Prune juice—small cans only
- 18" deep metal shelving for our 8'x40' mobile, mini-warehouse
- Arts & Crafts supplies: crayons, construction paper, popsicle sticks, glue, children's scissors, coloring books
- Personal hygiene items: soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.



## Patients Need Different Services

Keila Valdez, age 10, is a patient in the **Speech Pathology Department**. She has had hearing aids for 3 years. She



is very shy and does not speak much. She signs with her mother. The therapist is working with her mother to educate her on how to work with Keila.

Lizbett Mundo, age 4, is blind and used to getting her food in a bottle. When she gets food coming on a spoon she gets nervous. She has a tendency to throw her head back; then she chokes. Marsha Klein, Occupational Therapist, has been working with Lizbett in the



**Nutrition Department**. She is teaching Lizbett's mother how to feed her so she won't be afraid of food on a spoon.

Francisco Javier Lopez is 3 years old and lives in Nogales, Son. He doesn't walk



yet. He visited the **Orthopedics Department** where doctors recommended a brace for his left foot. He went to the **Orthotics Department** the same day.

Anna Ruiz, age 11, visited the **Cardiology Department** because she was



passing out. She was referred to Dr. Carlos Macias, the pediatric cardiologist, for a possible heart problem. Her mother was relieved to learn that Anna does not have a heart problem. Dr. Brent Barber, from University Medical Center, assists Dr. Macias. Dr. Macias is in private practice in Tucson and works mostly at Tucson Medical Center.

**We invite you to visit our Clinic.** St. Andrew's Clinic operates the first Thursday of every month except July when there is no Clinic.

E-mail our business office to make arrangements for a tour: ([office@standrewsclinic.org](mailto:office@standrewsclinic.org)) or call: (520)648-3242. On Clinic Day, meet the Tour Guide at the Ramada behind the Church.



## Sights Around the Clinic

Every Clinic day is busy with patients seeing a variety of health care personnel. The reception area is the place where patients and families wait to see “el doctor” or their therapist. To ease the waiting, several volunteers staff the Arts and Crafts table. Here children color, paint, or make crafts.



Above, volunteer Joyce McQuiggin of Green Valley plays Candyland with Veronica Mada (age 6) and Mario Aleman (age 15). Joyce doesn't speak Spanish, and the children don't speak English. But there is no language barrier in rolling dice and counting spaces to move the game pieces.

Most months, the Shriners Hospital sends a doctor and nurse to assess pa-



tients for surgery in their hospital. Dr. Joel Lerman, from Shriners Hospital Sacramento, was at the March Clinic. He has been coming for about a year. He explains his interest in our clinic, “You

feel really good that you're helping this group of children who may have problematic access to care.”

Another common sight is tour groups who come to see how our clinic oper-



ates. Above, Volunteer Buck Clark talks with a group from Gold Canyon Methodist Church.

Always, there is evidence of love and caring at the Clinic. In addition to the wonderful health care, patients and their families receive a package of food donated by the Borderlands Food Bank in Nogales, AZ and a package of donated clothing. Various groups donate handmade items which the patients and their families treasure. At the March Clinic, Flagstaff residents Betty Mankowski and Linda Chan sent a basket of hand-knit chicks for the children. Each chick covered a plastic egg filled with candy.



### Calendar of Events

- May 5—St. Andrew's Children's Clinic, Nogales, AZ
- June 2—St. Andrew's Children's Clinic, Nogales, AZ
- July—no Clinic
- Oct. 9 & 10—Cleft Palate Mission, Hermosillo, Mexico
- Nov. 12 & 13—Save dates for SACC Golf Tournament & Dinner/Auction, Tubac Golf Resort, Tubac, AZ



## Smiles, not Seizures

Eight-year-old Tamara Reynoso of Hermosillo is smiling because she is now seizure free. Before recent brain surgery, she was having more than 100 seizures a day. Expensive anti-seizure



medication kept her seizure free so she could function and go to school.

Tamara has Sturge-Weber Syndrome. In addition to the seizures, she has weakness on her left side and a large port wine stain on her face. The weakness will get better with occupational therapy, but she will never have 100% strength on her left side.

Many thanks to St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix for providing the surgery free of charge to the Clinic.

Now Tamara will have speech therapy and occupational therapy to help her with remaining symptoms. The occupational therapist, Kathy Lynn, explained to her mother that an aggressive therapy treatment could be tried, but it would require much work from the mother to be successful. Tamara's mother replied, "I will do anything to help my daughter. I quit my job so I can help her with her therapy." Such devotion is common among the patients' parents.



Robin Maxwell, Alex Corbett & Maren Golden paint the Clinic storage shed. The girls were part of a group visiting from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Duluth, MN. The youth spent their spring break learning more about Arizona and Mexico.

## What It Costs to Help Our Patients

One urgent need right now is for two SPRINGBOARD individual communications devices for patients in the **Speech and Language Therapy Department**. These children cannot speak, and the SPRINGBOARD will enable them to go to school and communicate with their teachers. Each device costs about \$3,000.

We have \$553 pledged toward one device. Vicki Fitzsimmons asked that her voice recital contributions be applied to a SPRINGBOARD. Fitzsimmons said, "I have the gift of speech and song, and I want to help those without these gifts to have a voice through the SPRINGBOARD." Fitzsimmons issues a challenge to other groups and individuals to complete donations to purchase at least one communications device.

Elisabeth Quinonez, age 12, waits below to be fitted with a new prosthesis. As children grow taller, a new prosthesis is needed. A full prosthesis costs \$3,000, and a partial (knee down) costs \$1,200.





## Spotlight on Volunteers

We have an average of 150-200 volunteers at each monthly clinic. Without these dedicated people, we could not exist. Hats off to our volunteers!



Dr. Julian Ballesteros is a physiatrist who practices at the V.A. Hospital in Tucson. He is affiliated with the University of Arizona Medical Center. Dr. Ballesteros has been a volunteer at the Clinic for about 15 years. Why does he keep coming back? "Because I feel that the patients are following the recommendations we give them. So, I am encouraged to spend my time with them."

Deacon Anne Vellom of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church volunteers by serving food in the waiting area. "I really enjoy being in here where I can see the patients and the families. I had a younger sister who had Down's Syndrome. Once in a while I see her in



some of these patients. I've been volunteering here about 7 years; it's a part of our life now."

Christine Small, occupational therapist, volunteers in the **Speech and Language Therapy Department**. Christine helps with positioning and access to communications devices for children who have communication difficulties. Here she holds a bubble maker that has been adapted by Adaptation Station so it can



work with a switch. That way, a child who can't blow can still be able to make bubbles and play with friends. Christine has been a Clinic volunteer for 4 years. "I love all the parents because they're such fighters to have gotten here. They're really trying to do something for their children and are so grateful for everything you do for their children. And, they follow through. Of course, the children are wonderful!"



Justin Johnson enjoys a traditional Mexican lunch served to volunteers. Justin is a new volunteer in the **Reiki Therapy Department**. He lives in Tucson.



## Donors Are Important!

Dick and Barbara Blake are involved in the Clinic because of the children. "Dick and I feel so blessed because we



have 5 children and 11 grandchildren. We have survived family crises, and now we want to pay back and say thank you."

Currently, Barbara is President of the Clinic Board of Directors. She is a very active president. Recently, she and Dick organized the St. Andrew's Children's Clinic Golf Tournament which was a great success. It was their first

time organizing a golf tournament.

On Clinic day, Dick goes to Borderland Food Bank in Nogales, AZ to get whatever vegetables and milk that might be available for our patients and their families. Then, it's back to the Clinic where he does whatever needs to be done.

Barbara and Dick are regular donors but go further by persuading other people to donate funds as well. They bring people to see the Clinic because they know the power that seeing our miracles in action can have on people. They say, "Your heart just goes out to the children." Barbara likes to point out to visitors that the biggest thing about the Clinic (other than the miracles) is that 94½% of every dollar goes to the children.

### ¡Muchas Gracias!

Many thanks to the following groups who have recently provided special funding to the Clinic.

- Arizona Diamondbacks Charities—\$2,500 for wheelchairs and strollers
- Haven Women's Nine-Hole Golf group—"Swingin' for the Kids"—\$535 for wheelchairs
- Knisely Family Foundation, a supporting organization of the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona—\$3,000 for mobility devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, crutches, and special equipment adaptations to give the gift of movement to the children

## Clinic Program Director

In July 2004, Judy Oestreich was hired as Administrative Assistant for the Clinic. Because the Clinic has been growing so fast, that position was upgraded to Program Director in January.

Judy runs the programs and operations part of the Clinic. On a typical day, she will schedule children's transportation to and from the Shriners Hospitals, meet with different departments to ascertain their needs, order needed supplies, generate thank yous for donations, and do whatever needs to be done for the Clinic to function.

In addition to managing the day-to-day operations, Judy oversees the volunteers. She coordinates Clinic needs with volunteer skills.

"My job is a feel-good job," says

Judy. "It allows me to give to something or someone so when I go home at night I feel good about what I've done. Clinic Day, in particular, gives me an opportunity to see some of the patients that I've made different arrangements for, and I like that."

Judy lives in Green Valley with her husband, Bob, who is a volunteer in the Clinic transportation area.



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**NEWSLETTER**

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serving Mexico's indigent children  
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## Now She Can Walk and Dance



When one-year-old Ana Melissa Acedo came to the Clinic from Ciudad Obregon, she could not walk. She was born with her right leg missing the femur. Doctors suggested a prosthesis so the baby could learn to walk.

Now 3 yrs. old, Ana Melissa walks with a limp, but this doesn't stop her from getting around.

While waiting on the examination table in the **Orthopedics Department**, she delighted the

volunteers by posing for pictures and demonstrating her dancing ability.

The prosthesis has allowed her to stand up in the world—crucial to helping her develop physically. There may still be surgery in the future for her, but for now she is happy to be walking on her own.

