

BAPTIST HEALTH SYSTEMS OF SOUTH FLORIDA

# RESOURCE

Spring 2000

When 10-year-old Daniel Kowal, an orphan from Poland, met his foster mother, he had three questions. First, "Can you find me a mom?" Second, "Can you get me new ears?" Third, "Can you help me become an FBI agent?"

Daniel's foster mother, Dawn Amora, answered his first question — she's in the process of adopting him. Baptist Children's Hospital answered his second question with its Day of Smiles last fall.

Eight children and young adults had free surgeries to correct facial deformities such as scars, disfigured noses and lips, and extended ears. Baptist Children's Hospital donated the supplies and facilities, while the doctors and nurses provided their expertise for families who were unable to pay.

"Day of Smiles was a wonderful way to help the children and young adults in our community," said Brad Herman, M.D., a plastic surgeon who

## Reason to smile



Anesthesiologist Vincent Conte, M.D., (photo at right) gives Daniel a pre-surgery check-up. Daniel is all smiles as Dr. Salomon (above) removes stitches from his new ear.

helped organize it.

Daniel was born with Treacher Collins Syndrome, a condition in which the bones of the face are underdeveloped. Baptist Children's Hospital surgeons used cartilage from three of Daniel's ribs to sculpt his

left ear. Daniel can hear with the help of external hearing aids, and future surgeries will reconstruct the passages between the inner and outer ears.

"The day the bandages were removed, he just stood at the mirror staring at his ears," Ms. Amora said.

"He'll need three or four

more surgeries for his ears, cheekbones and chin," said Jhonny Salomon, M.D., the plastic surgeon who performed the operation.

**"The day the bandages were removed, he just stood at the mirror staring at his ears."**

— Dawn Amora (Daniel's mom)

Robert Jakoby, director of Pastoral Care and coordinator of charity care for Baptist Health Systems, said

that Day of Smiles was not a one-day event. "We are willing to help local children throughout the year." The parent or guardian of a South Florida child who would benefit from plastic surgery should call Dr. Herman's office at 305-595-2969 for an appointment.

The answer to Daniel's third question won't come for several years, but with his positive attitude and upbeat spirit, no one would be surprised if someday he's Agent Daniel Kowal.

— Keith Bowermaster