



5TH EDITION | FALL 2017

# FAMILIES LIKE US

CHILDREN & THEIR DEVELOPMENT

MECA Therapies  
*Children's*  
OUTPATIENT CLINIC

MEET THE  
**Wonderful  
Doctors of**  
FULL BLOOM  
PEDIATRICS

*Las Cruces*  
**Cleft Palate Clinic**

PROVIDING EARLY DETECTION & CONTINUITY OF CARE

Cover Photo by Lezley Alba

FAMILIESLIKEUS.COM





### A Special Thanks to the March for Babies and High Heels for High Hope Ambassador Family!

#### To NICU *Families*:

It is both an honor and a privilege for our family to represent other premature babies as the Ambassador Family for March of Dimes.

While every journey is unique in its own way, we hope that you can find comfort in knowing these truths and more importantly that there is hope! We understand that this is a very scary time for you but hold on to your faith. Our babies are so much stronger than we give them credit for. Some days your baby(ies) will progress a few steps forward and other days regress a few steps back, but don't be discouraged. It's all part of the process, so stay strong!

There will be days where you feel exhausted, and emotionally drained, but learn to appreciate this season because it is just that, a season. It's not your "forever!" All your baby knows is how to fight and they will.

If you can, breast feed your baby (ies). Hold them if you can and read to them. Let them hear your voice as it will comfort them, and give them strength.

Don't be afraid to ask questions, and appreciate your nurses, for they are an extension of your love for you baby. Remember to rest and eat. Take care of yourself. IF you have other children, don't forget them. They are going through this with you.

This time seems like an eternity but soon it will be over. This is part of your story and what a tremendous privilege, to be the parents of such strong, beautiful babies!

I believe God chooses parents for all babies, but He selects the strongest parents for preemies. Let that strength carry you through this time.

*- From Carmen Medina & Family*

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#### LAS CRUCES CLEFT PALATE CLINIC CARES FOR LOCAL CHILDREN

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Every provider in the list donated their time and services to the great cause of the Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic. Together they served almost 30 families!

# Welcome to



## FAMILIES LIKE US

# A Publication for the Families of New Mexico

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 5 FALL 2017

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#### ABOUT US

Families Like Us is published monthly by Cheddar Advertising and is free to our readers. This publication aims to inform the Southern New Mexico public and beyond of the issues facing our communities in regards to child development. Our goal is to shed light on child development and the issues surrounding this subject.

#### SUBMISSION POLICY

Families Like Us is always open to collaboration that will create awareness to child development and welcomes submissions. Submissions can be emailed to [anthony@cheddarize.com](mailto:anthony@cheddarize.com). Families Like Us reserves the right to edit submissions and cannot guarantee publication.

#### ADVERTISING POLICY

Space in this publication will be available soon for paid advertising.



Therapies LLC

# CHILDREN'S OUTPATIENT Clinic

## SERVES COMMUNITY with Speech, Physical & Occupational Therapy Services

**L**as Cruces is a community of caring and support. Everywhere you look someone is trying to help someone else. MECA Therapies is a local company with a goal that reflects our community: to help local families by promoting healthy lives through their Children's Outpatient Clinic.

The Children's Outpatient Clinic provides the highest quality of care to children and youth from a set of therapy experts that range from physical and occupational therapists, as well as speech-language pathologists.

"Through comprehensive evaluations, we identify the intervention and treatment that is needed for our patients and their care," said Terry Berridge, Director of Outpatient Services. "Our MECA team is dedicated to providing the utmost quality of treatment and services that are needed to improve our patient's performance and functioning that focuses on helping them become more independent in their everyday living."

MECA Therapies first began by providing pediatric services through the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program that cares for children birth to age three and their families. MECA Therapies opened their Children's Outpatient Clinic in 2007. Services include

speech, occupational, and physical therapy for children ages three to 21-years-old.

MECA Therapies Children's Outpatient Clinic is fully equipped with a large physical and occupational therapy area, as well as several individual therapy rooms, speech and communication suites, a therapy pool, and a specialized skills area for sensory motor development.

Physical therapy services focus on gross motor skills to include standing, walking, balance and strengthening through therapeutic activities, appropriate positioning, and adaptive devices that can be incorporated into a child's typical day.

Occupational therapy focuses on the development of fine motor skills as well as sensory motor, self-regulation, body awareness, and support daily living activities.

Speech therapists work with a full range of communication disorders such as pragmatic language, fluency, oral-motor disorders, apraxia, and working to help children plan and coordinate movements needed to make speech sounds.

The therapy treatments mentioned are only a small part of what the MECA Therapies' team does for children.

In addition to individual therapy MECA Therapies provides education for the parent/caregiver on how to best help their child at home. MECA Therapies service providers also utilize co-treatment for some children who can benefit from more than one

specialized service.

The Children's Outpatient Clinic treats children with the following conditions:

- down syndrome
- cerebral palsy
- autism spectrum disorder,
- speech-language disorders,
- sensory disorders,
- developmental delays,
- cleft lip and palate,
- and other rare syndromes.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

☎ (575) 522-9500.

Appointments must include a referral from a physician. Bilingual services are also provided.



Children's Outpatient Clinic Team



MECA Therapies offers aquatic therapy services utilizing their in-house therapy pool.



# Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic:



Dr. Williams provided audiology services during the Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic.

## PROVIDING EARLY DETECTION & CONTINUITY OF CARE

**T**he halls of MECA Therapies, a local early childhood services provider, were filled with laughter and discussion from children and families during the biannual Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic.

The Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic was established in Las Cruces to serve patients in the southern New Mexico area and provides comprehensive cleft evaluations and provide highly specialized services, according to the New Mexico Cleft Palate Center, an independent, multi-disciplinary team committed to the care of children born with cleft lip and palate.

"Our goal is to bring to these children, the highest level and standard and care for clefts and make sure they meet national and international standards of cleft care," said Dr. Luis Cuadros.

Dr. Cuadros has been providing cleft care for over 25 years. He has extensive experience in the surgical management of cleft lip and palate. He is the medical director of the New Mexico Cleft Palate

Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where services are provided all year. The Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic provided services for almost 30 families from around the region during their biannual clinic on November 4th, 2017. The clinic serves at capacity during every event.

The cleft palate clinic provides families with an extensive screening to identify problems related to cleft palates or cleft lip or both. The clinic also allows families to make contact with all the providers that will provide treatment for the condition along their journey, and to receive up-to-date treatment.

Lincoln Moreno received services during the clinic to get updated treatment from the providers. Lincoln also went through a procedure for his cleft lip, and has completely recovered.

Lincoln's mother Deanna Moreno values the clinic as a resource for her son.

"The clinic has been great for us. It really exposed us to a lot of providers here in town that we didn't know about before," Deanna said. "Speech therapy for Lincoln was a big one because he has already

gone through a year of speech therapy. So meeting the early intervention team and finding the right path for us to take to see where we need to go, resources wise for him, and what the next steps should be has been wonderful. That's been the best part of it is getting a head start with what the next couple of years will look like for Lincoln."

Little Lincoln is active and healthy and enjoys spending time with his older brother Isaías.

Colleen Villanova of Las Cruces discovered her daughter Alyndria had a cleft lip at 20 weeks during a routine ultrasound at New Mexico Sonographics, who provide 3D/4D ultrasound services. Colleen and her family have taken steps to get treatment and support. Alyndria attended the Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic.

"The cleft palate clinic is a good way to get everything done at once. Because it's hard to go around to all the different doctors' offices, to meet with all the different people because of the time," Colleen said. "It's nice to have everything done in 2 hours."



Colleen said the services that were provided by the clinic have been important for Alyndria and her overall health.

"If anyone has a child that is getting diagnosed in utero, learn what you can, work with the professionals because they know what they are doing," Colleen said. "Don't worry about everything. It really will be okay."

Baby Alyndria is a healthy, happy baby and will be receiving services from Dr. Cuadros and his team to treat a cleft lip in December.

Isaias, Deanna, & Lincoln



The Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic team consists of qualified providers in the following specialties:

- Plastic surgeons,
- Oral & maxillofacial surgery,
- Pediatrics,
- Orthodontics,
- Dentistry,
- Speech pathology,
- ENT/otology (hearing),
- Audiology,
- Feeding and nutrition

"It seemed to me and others that there were a large number of kids with cleft in southeastern New Mexico that needed services and surgeries and close follow-up,"



Cleft Palate Clinic Volunteers

Dr. Cuadros explained. "So traditionally, they had been getting services through the state and randomly, so we've put together a clinic with a group of involved people including, NMSU, Children's Medical Services, and UNM to try and put together as many kids as we can to bring them up-to-date on treatment."

The Las Cruces Cleft Palate clinic is a partnership between MECA Therapies, New Mexico State University, New Mexico Cleft Palate Center, the New Mexico Department of Health, and the University of New Mexico, and is hosted at MECA Therapies in Las Cruces.

Roberta Martinez-Flores, Cleft Palate Clinic Coordinator and Co-owner of MECA Therapies indicated that speech services are being provided for children with cleft lip and/or palate through both their Early Childhood Program as well as through their Children's Outpatient Clinic.

Roberta also explained that the collaboration and participation with the Cleft Palate team has been both positive and beneficial to MECA Therapies staff as well as families served.

"This partnership has provided our Speech-Language Pathologists with direct training from Dr. Cuadros as well as consistent consultation with other health care providers in the community," said Roberta. "Because of that, children get specialized therapy as well as a continuum of care from the time they are infants throughout their school age years."

The next Las Cruces Cleft Palate Clinic is going to be Saturday, April 28, 2018 at MECA Therapies in Las Cruces. The clinic is open and free to all patients of all ages. According to the New Mexico Cleft Palate Center, cleft lip and palate occurs in approximately 1.5 to 2.0 per 1,000 births in New Mexico, making the developmental condition the most common to affect newborn babies.

For more information and to set up an appointment with the clinic, contact Roberta Martinez-Flores at [roberta@mecatherapies](mailto:roberta@mecatherapies) or (575) 522-9502. Or, contact Dr. Cuadros at [info@NMcleft.org](mailto:info@NMcleft.org) or 505-243-7670. You can visit [NMcleft.org](http://NMcleft.org).



Cleft Palate Clinic Providers



# Meet the Wonderful DOCTORS OF FULL BLOOM PEDIATRICS

## Full Bloom Pediatrics Promote Healthy Children in Our Community

A special, dedicated group of pediatric providers call Las Cruces their home. Full Bloom Pediatrics makes it their priority to establish open, cooperative relationships with the families of Dona Ana County. Optimum health for the children they care for is their goal, and they do just that through extensive experience and backgrounds in pediatric health care.

"We hope to provide good care, education, and preventative medicine to help our patients become healthy adults and live a healthy lifestyle," said the providers of Full Bloom Pediatrics. "Full Bloom provides preventative care and acute care to patients. We provide vaccines; have capability to run tests such as Group A strep tests, influenza, RSV, lead screens, hemoglobin tests, urinalysis, lipid levels, and vision screenings. We also address mental health and behavioral issues."

Full Bloom's practice is smaller and tends to allow for the providers to see their own patients and allows for the providers to

get to know them and their families on a personal level. Patients commonly see the same provider for sick and well visits. The providers of Full Bloom are all mothers, and have real life experiences to pass on to the families they serve.

Full Bloom prides itself on having staff that have been with them for several years- this helps to provide consistent care and a familiar face to our patients.

Full Bloom's providers are experts the behavioral, developmental, and medical care for children.

Pediatricians have training that is specialized to children. The training is exclusively focused on children for three years following medical school, according to Full Bloom Pediatrics. Children are not little adults.

"Their developmental and behavioral changes which occur as they grow, are part of our pediatric training," according to the providers of Full Bloom Pediatrics. "Their disease process management is different than treating an adult. The training a pediatrician receives looks at the whole child, and embraces preventative care."

Full Bloom Pediatrics has supported community programs such as Hearts for Autism, Healthy Kids Las Cruces, Mesilla Valley Hospice, Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate Team, and the Multidisciplinary Team for Child Abuse. Full Bloom has worked with Memorial Medical Center and Mountain View Regional Medical Center to improve care to our newborns as well as hospitalized pediatric patients.

Full Bloom Pediatrics is a proud supporter of early childhood development.

"In pediatrics, we are monitoring growth and development of children from the start. If we see abnormalities, we act on them quickly and refer to early intervention providers," said the Full Bloom doctors. "Studies have shown that children who receive early intervention from birth to 3 years of age have great outcomes if a developmental delay or disorder has been detected."

Full Bloom Pediatrics is composed of Dr. Settles, Dr. Williams, and Dr. Owens as the providers, and was formed by Dr. Settles and Dr. Williams in 2010.





For more information and to make an appointment, call (575) 532-6006 or visit [fullbloompediatrics.com](http://fullbloompediatrics.com).

### Meet Dr. Cynthia Settles

Dr. Cynthia Settles is native to Las Cruces, New Mexico and began her medical journey at New Mexico State University, graduating with a B.S. in Biochemistry. She received her M.D. in 2001 from the University of New Mexico. Dr. Settles soon called Austin, Texas home to complete her pediatric residency at the Children's Hospital of Austin. She served as Chief Resident at the hospital.

Dr. Settles was also a hospitalist and faculty at the Austin Medical Education Program after completion of her residency. During this time, she coordinated care for the Children's Hospital and teaching residents. Dr. Settles and her husband returned home to Las Cruces in 2005 to be closer to their families. She has served as department chair at MMC and has served on the board for Mesilla Valley Hospice Foundation. She is active in volunteering at her boy's school and in the Las Cruces Community.

### Meet Dr. Jana Williams

Originally from South Carolina, Dr. Jana Williams brings to Las Cruces an extensive spectrum of knowledge in pediatrics. Dr. Williams started her medical journey at the University of South Carolina, receiving a B.S. in Pharmacy. She completed her medical degree from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, and completed her residency in pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, Texas.

After practicing in Houston for four years, Dr. Williams moved to Las Cruces and has called the city her home since. Dr. Williams is an active member in the community and local health care efforts, such as being a Board Member of MASC (Mariposa Autism Service Center) and being involved in Healthy Kids Las Cruces.

### Meet Dr. Heather Owens

Dr. Heather Owens is also a Las Cruces native, and brings an abundance of experience to pediatric health care to her home town. She began her career in medicine at New Mexico State University, graduating with a B.S. in Biochemistry. She graduated from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas.

After completing her residency at the University Of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Dr. Owens worked for Kaiser Permanente. During her time there, Dr. Owens assisted in establishing the hospitalist system with the organization along with three other physicians. Together they organized tertiary care and community hospital coverage with almost 30 physicians. Dr. Owens worked for eight years in Napa, California as a community pediatrician. Dr. Owens brings extensive experience with inpatient pediatrics, moderately ill and special needs newborns, and behavioral and development challenged children to Full Bloom Pediatrics.

# Special Thanks

## TO ALL THE PROVIDERS WHO VOLUNTEERED & ASSISTED FAMILIES DURING THE LAS CRUCES CLEFT PALATE CLINIC



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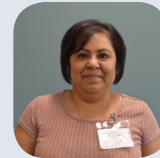
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Thank You!

