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Gifted team gives children with severe facial deformities new faces

By Lisa Dutton

Many people think that plastic surgery is something only celebrities and “would-be” celebrities are doing. We think of Hollywood starlets getting facelifts, Botox injections and other, um, enhancements. But that’s definitely not the whole story. The members of the Montreal Children’s Hospital (MCH) new Craniofacial Surgery Program also perform plastic surgery but they use their skills and expertise to help children who have severely deformed faces and skulls.

Many of these children have such severe deformities that they require numerous complex surgeries and other treatments over many years. To better manage the care of these children, the MCH created its Craniofacial Surgery Program led by plastic surgeon Dr. Mirko Gilardino and orthodontist Dr. Broula Jamal.

The program brings together a team of 19 specialists from dentistry, genetics, otolaryngology, ophthalmology, neurology, neurosurgery, and respiratory medicine among others.

This team approach allows the MCH to better manage the treatment options available to these children. Together the program members decide on the best course of action (e.g. tests to be done, sequence of procedures, simultaneous surgeries). “By working together, we can reduce the number of surgeries these children require and we can improve their ultimate outcomes,” says Dr. Gilardino.

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