



Despite sustaining severe injuries during the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing that will affect him throughout his life, Brandon has a positive outlook. With the help of Shriners Hospitals, he continues to progress and improve.

## Taking Positive Steps: The Denny Family

The Denny family doesn't take things one day at a time.

"We take one minute at a time and enjoy every minute of every day like it's our last," Jim Denny said. "This is the way we live, and it's a good life."

Over the years, the Denny family of Oklahoma City has created and maintained a positive approach to life. Shaping that perspective in part was an experience so devastating that it forever changed the lives of the Denny family, and left a lasting impact on the entire nation.

On April 19, 1995, Jim Denny went about his morning routine of dropping his wife, Claudia, off at work and his two youngest children – 3-year-old Brandon and 2-year-old Rebecca – off at America's Kids, a daycare center located in the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

At 9:02 that morning, more than 5,000 pounds of explosives were detonated near the Murrah building in what was, at the time, the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil. The explosives were in a rental truck, which was parked just outside the second-story windows of America's Kids. Nineteen of the 25 children there were killed.

Rebecca and Brandon were the only child siblings to survive. Rebecca sustained extensive injuries to her left side; and Brandon had massive injuries, including life-threatening ones to his head and brain. Rebecca recovered after spending 10 days in the hospital. Brandon's condition was far worse.

In the weeks and months following the attack, Brandon had four major brain surgeries, each posing life-threatening risks. After 126 days of hospitalization, Brandon was released, but his prognosis was not favorable.

Within eight months, Brandon was walking and talking, which doctors did not expect he'd be able to do. Because of the necessary removal of brain tissue, he had no use of his

right hand and his wrist was pointed downward. He also walked with a limp.

After years of therapy failed to produce tangible results, Brandon's Oklahoma City physician recommended the family seek treatment at Shriners Hospitals for Children — Shreveport. In the summer of 2007, Brandon, who was then 15, had several surgeries at the Shreveport Shriners Hospital to improve his gait (walking pattern), arm mobility and use of his fingers.

Brandon returned to the Shreveport hospital this past fall for a month-long session of intensive therapy, focusing primarily on eliminating the need for a walker. Upon completing his session, Brandon walked out of the hospital unassisted.

"We're at a place in Brandon's life where I couldn't be happier," Jim said. "This is a five-star facility without a doubt, from top to bottom. Everyone we've come in contact with has been super."

Having experienced firsthand one of the darkest days in American history, the Denny family savors each moment together and maintains a steadfast, positive focus on the future. While Brandon will always have orthopaedic issues related to his brain injuries, both he and Rebecca exude amazing perspective and determination. For Jim, it's the right view.

"It's a long road, and we've never asked for sympathy from anybody, but what we've received from people is understanding, a lot of prayers and a lot of help from good doctors," he said. "We feel we're in the best position at Shriners Hospital for Brandon to continue his efforts to walk better and use his fingers."

The family will continue their positive journey. One minute at a time.



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