Hope in Motion
When one arrives at McKenna Farms, tension dissipates and a feeling of well-being takes over. This sets the stage for the magic about to begin. Senses and positive emotions are aroused as parents, siblings and others observe a beautiful interaction between children, teams of therapists and horses. Physical and emotional limitations become redefined and reimagined, as children with disabilities achieve new skills and mindsets in a natural environment surrounded by love. Their joy is overwhelming!

The Story of McKenna Farms begins with one woman’s deep desire to help children with physical and emotional challenges achieve things they never thought possible. In so doing, they experience tremendous happiness, confidence and self-esteem, and the entire family becomes transformed.

Founder, Jessica Moore, established a highly-effective model integrating Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapies across unique modalities including hippo and aquatic therapies. Children with a range of disabilities respond extremely well to treatment in a beautiful, dynamic and nurturing farm setting that appeals to all children’s innate senses.

Everyone who steps foot at McKenna farms experiences and contributes to Hope in Motion.
At present, 24 highly skilled, licensed and certified therapists as well as 18 specialized team members, 300 volunteers and 16 horses work diligently to change the lives of over 500 children and teens up to age 21 who are seen weekly. The team helps children with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, Down Syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, Multiple Sclerosis, Scoliosis, Sensory Integration Dysfunction, learning disabilities and language struggles to talk, walk, eat, learn, improve motor skills, play and enjoy life.

Naturally, children much prefer coming to McKenna Farms over sterile, clinical settings, and this then changes everything. They make more rapid progress because they are having fun. Their bodies and minds work even harder, consciously and unconsciously. Motivation becomes intrinsic, repeatable and sustainable. Parents are renewed and strengthened.

In hippotherapy, the unique combination of the horse, the horse’s movement, and the non-clinical environment produces an extraordinary effort on all systems of the body. The therapist can modify the horse’s movement to promote specific responses within each child. This treatment approach uses activities on the horse that uniquely address client’s functional goals. What’s more enjoyable than receiving therapy on the back of a horse?

Nowhere else can parents find the McKenna Farms model of services at one location and in a beautiful, family-friendly, farm setting where their kids don’t consider clinical therapy to be work.
“My child went to physical therapy for months and months and could not walk. After three weeks at McKenna Farms not only did she walk, but she started smiling again.”

- Graduated Parent
“The team at McKenna Farms is well trained and follows best practices, but what separates them is that they are always thinking outside the box. They have the attitude to ask “how might we...?” instead of just settling. It’s so fascinating to watch them collaborate on new ways to get results. For them, it’s so much more than a job, it’s a passion – and they always put my daughter first. You can’t even begin to imagine what this is like for a parent who has struggled with other clinics, health care providers and teachers well-meaning, but ineffective.”

-Current Parent

Unique properties of water help children accelerate functional abilities.

**WHY WATER?**
- Buoyancy
- Deep Pressure
- Body Awareness
Like other professional therapeutic centers, McKenna Farms responds to referrals from pediatricians and a range of medical specialists beginning with clinical evaluations followed by individualized plans, goals and benchmarks. But McKenna Farms provides so much more...

**Integrated, Holistic Treatment**

Children with special needs require multiple services and treatment modalities. McKenna Farms offers one-stop shopping for families who would ordinarily go to separate facilities for physical, occupational, and or speech therapy. The incorporation of hippo and aquatic therapies adds huge value, stimulating additional systems in the human body helping to promote functional outcomes. An integrated and holistic approach is not only good for treatment, it is good for the entire family.

"My son dreaded going to therapy at a clinic and the tantrums were horrific for me. Now he can hardly wait to get to McKenna Farms. For him it’s all about the love he feels from the horses and the team. It is truly the highlight of his week, hence mine too."

-Current Parent

**McKenna Farms is Distinct**
A Wonderful Experience and A Support System for the Entire Family

Parents are Fully Supported

McKenna Farms is Their Home Away from Home

The team at McKenna Farms has great respect and empathy for parents because many of them also have children with special needs. Services for parents include:

- Assistance with insurance research and financial options.
- Beautiful walking trails for personal exercise and/or relaxation.
- Quiet lobbies with tranquil farm and stable views, free Wi-Fi and work tables.
- Conversation lobbies and outdoor porches for exchanging ideas and building relationships with other families.
- Playgrounds for their other children.
- A nurturing, professional team.
- Parent workshops and support groups.
- Camps during school breaks.
- Other psychological therapies.
- Family events throughout the year, including holiday celebrations.

“I no longer have to scramble to get babysitters for my daughter while taking my son to multiple therapy sessions all over town--and of course as a parent you always worry that you’re giving your special needs child more attention than their sibling. My daughter enjoys coming to McKenna Farms as much as my son in treatment. She loves petting and connecting with the horses, exploring the sensory trails, playing on the playground and talking to staff and family members spread throughout the farm. She considers it to be her special place, not just her brother’s.”

-Current Parent

“I’m so proud of the McKenna Farms Special Olympics equestrian team and our kids. They are remarkable and inspire me every day.”

-Longtime Volunteer
McKenna Farms is a nurturing community which is so vital to families who all too often become isolated due to their child’s challenges socially and otherwise.
While the Center will achieve the critical objectives outlined above, it will also serve as an important community symbol of pride as the ONLY center in Georgia (and in fact the country) that integrates five therapeutic modalities with life/work skills in a magnificent, family-friendly farm setting. It will position McKenna Farms as an innovator in helping special needs families to not only alleviate pain and isolation, but to **thrive**. Diversity and inclusion will continually take on a whole new meaning at McKenna Farms as will the word normal, serving as a model for others throughout the country who dare to dream with the team leading **Hope in Motion**.

A three-year campaign called **Hope in Motion** was launched in January of 2019 to create this new facility estimated at $3 million.

This will include: Architectural Design
General Building Construction
Pool Construction
Funds for Maintenance

“An investment in McKenna Farms is an investment to literally change trajectories for families one child at a time. This elevates us all and builds the strongest possible community.”

-Dr. Ricky Poe, Board Chair

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Innovative teams are never complacent! Such is true of the leadership team at McKenna Farms. They continually raise the bar for the kids they serve and especially themselves. Their vision includes creating a one-of-a-kind Center for Innovative Therapeutic Life Skills which will house:

- **Additional therapeutic spaces allowing hundreds of children and families on the waiting list to be served** by way of additional therapeutic space augmenting existing therapy cottages;

- **An indoor pool for aquatic therapy.** At present, aquatic therapy is the only service that is not provided on the campus of McKenna Farms. McKenna Farms therapists, trained in aquatic therapy, currently use public pools in Cobb County which are not designed for therapy. The McKenna Farms pool will be designed and built to accommodate a full range of challenges with proper temperatures, salt water, nonintrusive lighting, proper access points for wheelchairs etc. McKenna Farms will utilize the pool to offer the community water safety courses, especially for special needs families;

- **Flexible spaces to set up mock homes and work environments** in order to expand current programs for teaching life skills. Such space will allow McKenna Farms to build programs and attract partners that help clients transition to independent living. This will include appropriate job training skills — which at present is a huge need;

- **Similarly, space for a day learning/transition program for young adults at the age of 21;**

- **Innovative labs to allow for ADL activities and also use and testing of new innovative therapy tools and technologies;**

- **Conference space** for meetings, family workshops, symposiums and thought leadership seminars with other innovative organizations locally, regionally and nationally;

- **A small coffee/sandwich cafe** for families with extended daily stays which can simultaneously serve as a real-life training work spot for appropriate clients; and

- **Additional space to accommodate a relatively new program started to assist veterans with services for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other physical and emotional challenges encountered in the line of duty.**

The architecture and design of the Center will fit with the family-friendly, farm atmosphere, consistent with the character and beauty of the full campus. Development of the Center is visionary from two aspects, it will ensure that McKenna Farms can meet growing demands of the community, and it also allows for new, innovative programming and techniques, some of which have not yet been created. **Thinking ahead is critical to help all children achieve their full potential in our rapidly changing society.**