

## Pass It On®...

### Playtime is for Everybody.

*A dad sells off his business and builds a theme park for disabled kids.*

Gordon Hartman just might be the leading candidate for “Dad of the Decade.” When his daughter Morgan was growing up, Gordon was heartbroken after watching her on the playground. Other children refused to play with her, mostly because her disabilities meant she couldn’t access the places where they were playing. The family tried other places but were never satisfied.

“What we found was there was no place that was an ultra-accessible, fully inclusive park,” Gordon said. So he went home and sold his construction business, bought an abandoned quarry, and went to work building an entire amusement park for disabled children.

All kids need playtime, and Morgan was no different. The park — named Morgan’s Wonderland — finally offered Morgan that opportunity. What the Hartmans discovered is that kids without disabilities enjoy the park just as much, and they interact a lot more with everyone when all are included. In fact, three-quarters of the park’s visitors are not disabled. And that makes it all the more fun.

Everybody enjoys the rides, from the carousel to the train. Each ride is specially designed to accommodate wheelchairs. Even the water park provides waterproof wheelchairs.

Watching the kids play together without barriers makes you realize that we are all the same, and having fun is for everybody. But it doesn’t end there. One-third of the staff also has special needs. Seeing the way they interact also puts a smile on your face. They take their jobs seriously, and they make sure everybody is having fun.

How does it feel to see kids of all abilities having so much fun? “It feels fantastic because we get to see people who are not given the opportunity to experience the types of rides we have, get on a carousel, get on a train easily, go fishing,” says Gordon.

The park has been visited by people with special needs from over 67 countries. “When we opened

this, we didn’t know if it was going to work,” says Gordon. “All we wanted to do was bring people who have special needs and people who don’t have special needs together and play.”

Just look at the smiles at Morgan’s Wonderland, and you’ll see how much good it does.

**Inclusion...** [PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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