

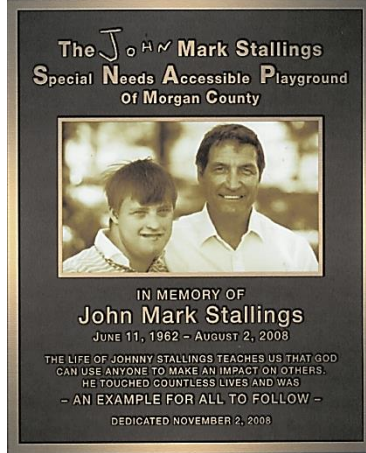


# Welcome!

to

## The John Mark Stallings

# Special Needs Accessible Playground (SNAP) of Morgan County.



Thank you for visiting us at [Hartselle.org](http://Hartselle.org) or [Hartsellechamber.com](http://Hartsellechamber.com). We hope that you will take time to discover what the Morgan County community accomplished to put a smile on the faces of an estimated 2500 special needs children in Morgan County, who are unable to play on standard playground equipment.

It is hard to think of anything more rewarding than seeing the smile on the face of a child who heretofore was restricted to merely observing unchallenged children freely participating in typical playground activities. One can only imagine the yearning of special needs children to actively participate. That yearning is now satisfied by SNAP, a million-dollar boundless playground made possible by the compassionate and gratuitous support of hundreds of donors.

The playground is dedicated in memory of John Mark Stallings who, although severely challenged throughout his life of 46 years, served as an inspiration to all who knew him and especially to those dedicated, for ten years, to bring to reality this premiere special needs playground.

The following pages offer insight to the project and hopefully pique your interest to visit this unique facility in the near future.





# "Happy Snappy"

## Welcomes You To Hartselle!

### Home of Morgan County's Million-Dollar Inclusive Playground



We hope that you will be able to discover what Morgan County and our community accomplished to put a smile on an estimated 2500 special needs children in Morgan County alone, who are incapable of playing on standard playground equipment.





# Project Overview

In 2006, the civic clubs of Hartselle (Civitan, Kiwanis, Lions and Rotary), in an unprecedented move, united to plan and develop a playground for physically challenged children in Morgan County. The playground, named “The John Mark Stallings Special Needs Accessible Playground (SNAP) of Morgan County,” is designed to accommodate the now-estimated 2,500 special-needs children and other children in the county.

The overall objective of the project was to develop the “premier” special-needs playground in Alabama. Parallel goals were to: (1) Provide recreational facilities and interaction opportunities for special needs children in Morgan County and the surrounding region; and (2) Stimulate other communities across the nation to similarly recognize and accommodate such needs.

Soon after the clubs united, the City of Hartselle, Hartselle Area Chamber of Commerce, Hartselle Medical Center, Morgan County Volunteer Firemen Association, United Way of Morgan County, Volunteer Center of Morgan County, and Walmart of Hartselle joined in support. The four civic clubs and these entities are recognized as SNAP “Founding Partners.”

Compelling support emerged for this compassionate, needed, and worthy project. The list of endorsements includes:

- Proclamations from the Morgan County Commission, Cities of Decatur and Hartselle, and Towns of Eva, Falkville, Priceville, Somerville, and Trinity.
- Letters from State Senator Arthur Orr, State Representative Ronald Grantland, the Autism Society of Alabama, and Children’s Hospital of Alabama.

The entire complex is accessible and usable and is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Of paramount importance is encouraging interaction of children with all abilities.

The site in Hartselle, near the Sparkman Civic Center is centrally located in the county, offers balanced access from throughout the county and good access from Interstate 65. The specific location satisfies prime considerations of safety and well-being, ambient environment conducive to a feeling of inclusion, continual oversight by a trained staff, restrooms, drinking water, and ample and convenient parking.

SNAP is designed to be a destination attraction and features comprehensive play equipment which satisfies ADA requirements. Comfort and aesthetics are significantly enhanced by shades, seating for adults and abundant landscaping.

The complex has been constructed in increments to permit use as funding became available:

2008 - Swing Area; 2010 - Splash Pad; 2011 - Pavilion; 2013 – Main Entrance and Playground A; 2016 – Playground B and overall complex enhancements.

It is noted that the SNAP Splash Pad was recognized in 2011 by Aquatics International as the “Best of Aquatics Spraypark” in the nation, typifying the character of the entire complex.

The ten-year project has been administered in total by non-paid volunteers, with construction being made possible by donations, grants, and in-kind services. The complex represents an investment of approximately one-million dollars, including cash donations, grants and in-kind services.

# "Far More Than a Place to Play"

✓ **Satisfies Physical & Emotional Needs**

**how can play engage the senses?**

sliding	spinning	swinging	climbing	social	tactile
Sliding provides kids with a different perspective. Their visual and vestibular systems actively receive information about the speed and point of gravity. Tactile and proprioceptive responses include information on the air's texture and the pressure needed to slide down to land on the ground. This sensory input helps children develop a broad sense of balance and weight from the ground and weight down to their body.	Spinning is one of the core movements that engage the vestibular system. When a child spins in a circle, or any other equipment, they are providing their brain with valuable vestibular information. This information connects with input from their motion and joints to help them maintain their body posture and balance in the world.	Swinging back and forth is more than a game. This simple motion provides each child's vestibular system with a wealth of visual, vestibular and proprioceptive information. Children gain an auditory feeling of how their body moves through space, the speed of movement, and the constant pressure of being in motion. This sensory input helps them learn to increase their body posture and balance in the world.	All children desire to climb and conquer. Climbing involves four key sensory systems: tactile, proprioception, vestibular and sight. Each system actively collects information on those senses. Tactile information is needed to feel against ground, and proprioception helps with balance when the child moves while climbing. This information helps them learn to increase their spatial perception. Children learn to balance their body posture and balance in the world.	When children play together, they encourage each other to develop in ways that they couldn't do alone. Social interaction helps children learn to share, negotiate, and cooperate. Through playful interaction, children learn to work together to solve problems and overcome challenges.	Children touch everything because it's the most accessible sensory system. It allows them to develop and the longer they touch it, the more they learn. Tactile input helps the brain receive information for developing visual and auditory systems. Play experiences that provide tactile input are essential to help children learn to work together to solve problems and overcome challenges.

play4all.com

**how can play engage the senses?**

**TACTILE, SOCIAL, SPINNING, CLIMBING AND SLIDING**

THROUGH SENSORY PLAY, CHILDREN DISCOVER THEIR WORLD AND HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN IT. ALL THE COMPONENTS ABOVE ARE INCLUDED IN THE SNAP PLAYGROUND.

✓ **Encourages Interaction**

✓ **Promotes Social Skills**

✓ **Enhances the Lives of Children & Their Families**

**ALL OF THESE COMPONENTS ARE INCLUDED IN THE SNAP PLAYGROUND.**

**VISUAL, AUDITORY, MOTOR PLANNING, AND SOCIAL/IMAGINATIVE**

SENSORY INPUT HELPS KIDS DEVELOP A BETTER SENSE OF BALANCE AND MOTOR PLANNING TO ACCURATELY MOVE IN THEIR WORLD.



One need only to witness the excitement and smiles of children playing in the facility to agree that almost ten years of gratuitous effort and one-million dollars cash and in-kind services were well invested. Among overheard comments by small children were: “I just love this place.” and “This is the best day of my life.”



Most importantly, the facility is all-inclusive, permitting extensive interactive play opportunities for all children, with and without disabilities. Mutual acceptance, social well-being, and mental and physical development are promoted.

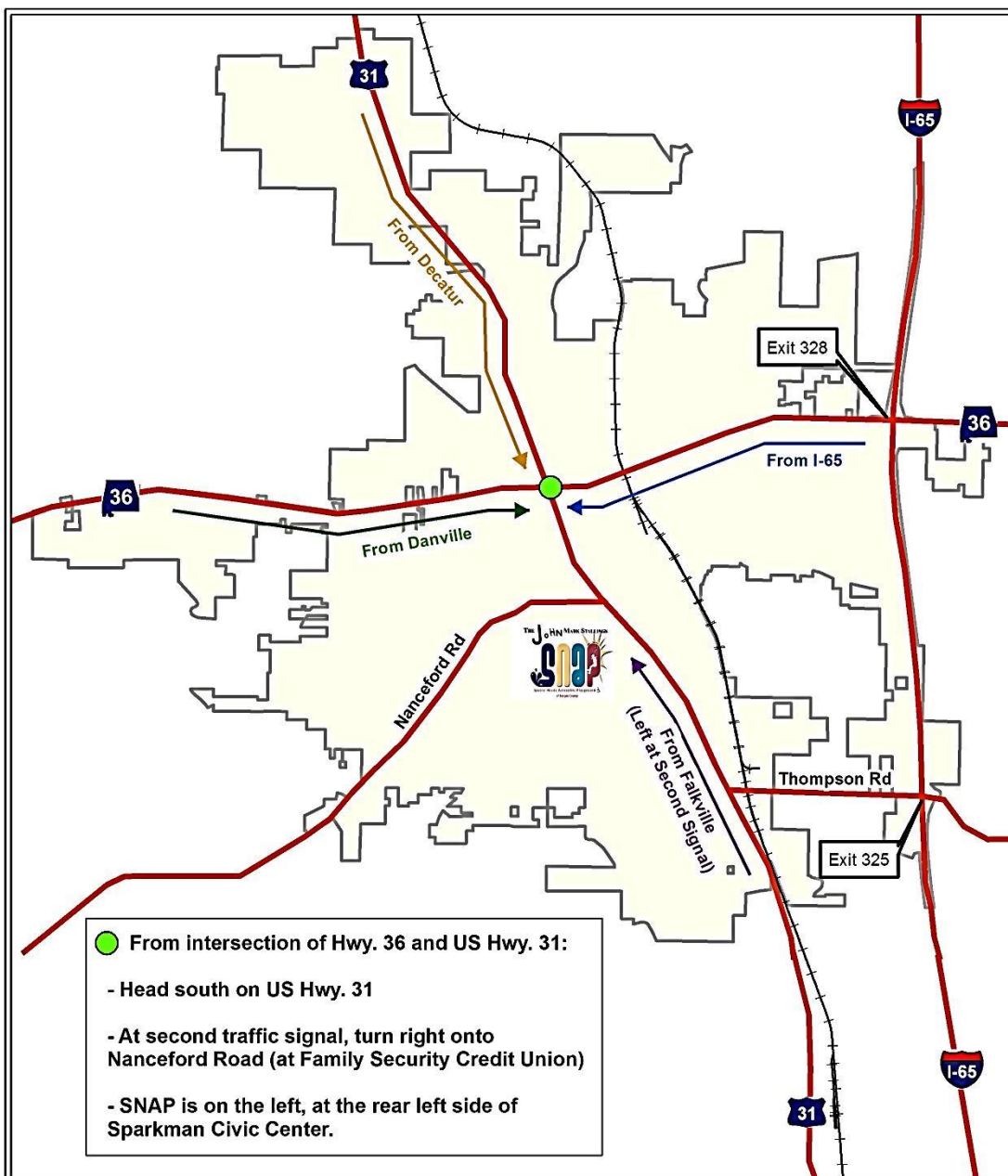


*Please Visit Soon! See directions following page.*



**Hours of Operation: 7 Days/Week, 8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**  
**Playground - Year-Round, Splash Pad - Seasonal**





- From intersection of Hwy. 36 and US Hwy. 31:
  - Head south on US Hwy. 31
  - At second traffic signal, turn right onto Nanceford Road (at Family Security Credit Union)
  - SNAP is on the left, at the rear left side of Sparkman Civic Center.

SNAP of Morgan County



● 36/31 Intersection