

Big Hope

A tiny horse helps sick kids.

Kimberly's brother has a **disease**, or an illness, called cancer. He has to stay at a hospital in San Diego. Kimberly, 9, and her parents stay near the hospital at a special house for families of hospital patients. Not every day is a happy day, but recently a tiny visitor made a big difference for Kimberly.

Kimberly met Thumbelina, the world's smallest horse. She met the animal at the Ronald McDonald House in San Diego. "She was amazing," Kimberly told *WR News*. "It is surprising to see such a small horse."



Courtesy Michael Goessling

Thumbelina is friends with the dogs that live on their farm in Missouri.

Thumbelina is a **miniature horse**. She is also a dwarf for her breed, making her extra small. Thumbelina is only 17.5 inches tall. She is about the size of a medium-sized dog.

Don't let her size fool you! Thumbelina has a big job to do. Since April, she has been touring the country. The tiny horse is visiting dozens of children's hospitals, camps, and schools. She is helping to raise \$1 million for sick children like Kimberly's brother, who was too sick to meet her. Thumbelina's tour will end in November. At that time she will return home to her farm in Missouri to rest.

Thumbelina's owner, Michael Goessling, travels with her. "Thumbelina has the ability to make everything OK for these kids, at least for a little while," he told *WR News*.

It's true—good things really do come in small packages!

Fun Facts About Thumbelina

- Thumbelina was born on May 1, 2001.
- She lives on a farm in Missouri. The farm is called Goose Creek Farms.
- Thumbelina eats twice a day. She eats 1 cup of grain and a handful of hay for breakfast and dinner.
- There are about 50 full-size horses that live on Thumbelina's farm. She likes to play with them. She is even friends with the dogs that live there!