

## **Press Release**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Jr. FacePlace Goes International**

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Jr. FacePlace, the Grant County theater project that assists young children with autism to develop social skills and self confidence, has recently begun a parallel study with a similar program operated by an organization in Hong Kong, China. The two programs will share data and outcomes to determine if applied theater techniques differ cross-culturally. The collaboration will also evaluate the relative effectiveness of different types of drama-based interventions.

This past summer, at a conference on autism in Chicago, Chris Bohn, Child Services Coordinator at the Grant County Special Education Cooperative, met Dr. Eva Lai and Mr. Mandu of the Mandu Shed of Creation, a Hong Kong-based organization. After comparing notes on their respective theater-based activities, the decision was made to collaborate.

Mandu said, “We are excited to have the chance to work together, yet separated by thousands of miles, with our friends in Indiana.”

Christiaan Campbell of Carey Services, echoed this enthusiasm, “One of the goals of the project has always been to share information and to identify best practices. We are thrilled to be involved in this partnership.”

Jr. Faceplace and Faceplace are collaborations between Carey Services, the Community School for the Arts, and the Grant County Special Education

Cooperative. The program utilizes applied theater to connect with and improve the social functioning of individuals with autism and related diagnoses. It is funded by a grant from Autism Speaks.

Mandu Shed of Creation is an organization in Hong Kong founded by Mandu Shed and Dr. Eva Lai. It's goal is to initiate projects in the areas of sustainable living, minorities, and social justice. The applied theater project is one such endeavor.

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