

**FY2016-17 Competitive Process Special Appropriations Grant Awardee,  
NORTHWEST CHILDREN'S THEATER AND SCHOOL**

**Grant Project: SENSORY FRIENDLY PERFORMANCES FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM  
DISORDERS, ADHS, AND OTHER SENSORY SENSITIVITIES**

The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention identifies approximately 1 in 68 American children as on the autism spectrum – a tenfold increase over 40 years, and Portland alone has over 15,000 autistic children. In 2013, NWCT informally surveyed families and discovered some could not enjoy all the theaters offerings, or were placed in awkward positions of leaving some of their children out of activities because they were considered over-stimulating. Many of these children were diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders, which inform strong response to visual and auditory stimuli and anxious reactions to surprise.

In response to this need, in 2013 NWCT became the first theater in Oregon to offer a sensory friendly performance with *Goodnight Moon*. The response from the community, local media outlets, and educators was overwhelming. In 2014, the theater offered two performances and offered the tickets for free through therapists and social service workers. All 600 tickets sold out, with *The Jungle Book* selling all tickets in 45 minutes.

In 2017, NWCT will welcome 1,200 individuals to four sensory friendly performances.

These are candid snapshots of this year's grant projects,  
including:

- A tail of Sleeping Beauty...With Puppets!

