

Local Grandmother and Grandson authors teamed up to rewrite the Autism stigma



Elizabeth Densley (left) with her grandson DJ Densley (right)

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A place for every child.

That is the dream of 14-year-old author, DJ Densley.

Though DJ lives with Autism and struggles with both learning and socialization delays, he has acted upon his dream as part of a greater movement that many families with special needs children have rallied behind.

Social integration and acceptance for children like DJ have proven increasingly difficult in a culture whose youth has virtually isolated themselves in front of a screen, and are uncomfortable in new or unusual situations.

Elizabeth Densley, DJ's grandmother and a published fiction/non-fiction writer from Herriman, Utah, is using her storytelling craft to tackle these issues head-on and literally create a place for every child to set their creative minds free and reconnect with the people around them.

"Excessive screen time decreases the amount of time we spend with friends and family," said Elizabeth.

Her new book, which she co-authored with her son, DJ, and had published in December 2018, is based entirely on DJ's imagination and is aimed at encouraging creative expression among children with special needs while re-uniting them with their families through the shared experience of reading.

"Encourage your child to read," said Elizabeth. "Our children are losing their ability to imagine since technology always tells them what everything looks like and prompts them on what to do next."

The book, wildly titled *The Bug-Eyed Vulture People - The Lost*, documents the sword-fighting adventures of Dex, a boy who becomes so addicted to a video game on his phone that he literally



gets sucked into the fantastical world of the game itself. The first few lines open like a scene from a summer blockbuster, the prose itself as vivid as CGI.

DJ boldly hopes the new book will be adapted into a motion picture someday and provide him with a starting point for his dream to build a place where children like him can learn, grow and be accepted.

To make that dream a reality, the grandmother-and-grandson writing team will donate a portion of the proceeds from their book to the Spectrum Academy of Pleasant Grove, Utah, a charter for children living on the Autism spectrum.

Elizabeth and DJ's ultimate goal is to create the Snowflake Foundation. "Like a snowflake, each child is unique to themselves and just as beautiful," said Elizabeth of the

inspiration behind the foundation's namesake.

The organization will give special needs families the resources and support they need to integrate with society while raising positive community awareness for Autism and inspiring more children like DJ to turn off their devices and turn on their imagination.

With the support of their community, their book may be the first chapter in re-writing a staid narrative and redefining Autism as a window to a brilliant world we cannot see.

The Bug-Eyed Vulture People - The Lost is now available for purchase on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [BarnesandNoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com).

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About Elizabeth Densley: Elizabeth is a published author from Herriman, Utah. As a part of the growing indie-author movement, her previous works include *The Future is Mine to Design* and a children's book entitled *I Wonder What God Looks Like*. She is an advocate of social equality and is an

active member in the community of families with special needs children. She graduated from Brigham Young University with a Bachelor's Degree in nursing, and has enjoyed a successful and fulfilling career as a registered nurse taking care of newborns and their families. Elizabeth is a proud mother of six children and twenty grandchildren, and lives in Herriman, UT, with her husband for 46 years.

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For Media Inquiries:

1-888-552-1811 | info@universalbooksolutions.com