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ABROAD**

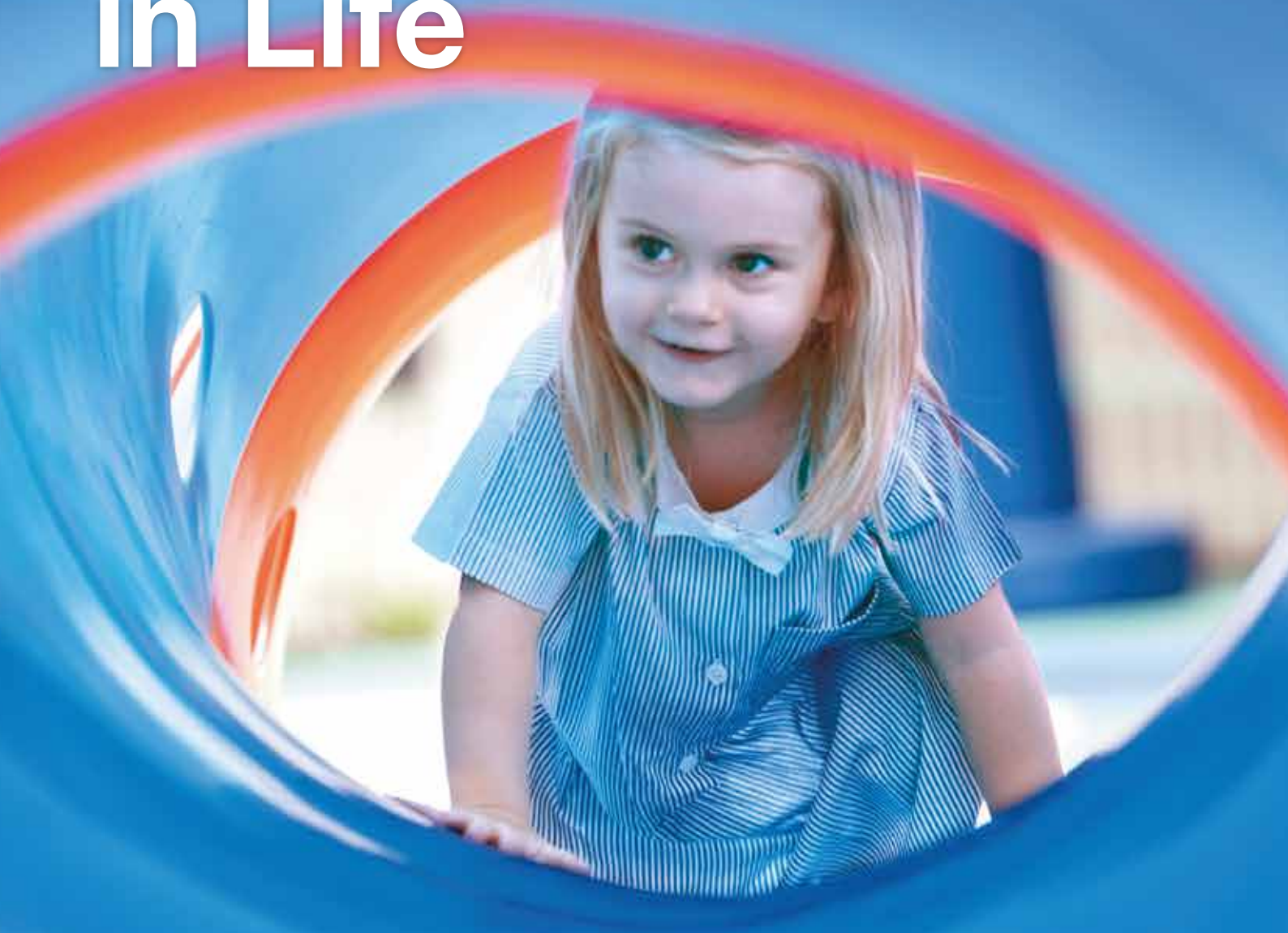
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COMPASSION**

**CREATION STATION:  
LOVEBUG HEART CUSHION**

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## Welcome to **BAMBI**

**"Support and  
friendship through  
the common bond of  
parenthood"**

Mel Habanananda



We are a group offering support and companionship to each other through the early years of parenting.

We offer prenatal and postnatal support, regular playgroups, fundraising for charities and more. If you wish to join, come to our New Members' Coffee Morning or any other regular BAMBI activities. To volunteer or serve on the committee, email [vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org](mailto:vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org) or visit [bambiweb.org](http://bambiweb.org).

**BAMBI is a project of the Childbirth & Breastfeeding Foundation of Thailand (CBFT).**

#### Mission Statement

The CBFT is a non-profit networking and resource center dedicated to ensuring the best possible start in life for our babies. We believe that this can best be achieved through:

- Encouraging the appropriate use of technology and medication for all births.
- Promoting breastfeeding for every mother and baby in the community.
- Providing information and training to health professionals involved in maternity care.
- Supporting parents through the pregnancy, birth and postnatal period.

For more information on CBFT, contact:

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Thai speaking, Mobile: 081-776-9391;

[info@cbfthai.org](mailto:info@cbfthai.org) or

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5 Committee Letter

6 Editor's Corner

## On the Cover

16-17 Love Abroad

26-28 Self-compassion

## Special Features

12-13 Creation Station: No-Sew Lovebug Heart Cushion

20 Infographic: What is Your Language of Love?

24 Readers' Corner: Books to Inspire

29-30 Fun Corner

32-33 Working Towards a Successful Divorce Process With  
Your Children

## In Every Issue

5 Our Cover Kid

8 Welcome, New Members!

8 Happy Birthday from BAMBI!

10 Member Profile

14 How to Become a BAMBI Member

22 BAMBI Member Benefits

34-36 Call for Volunteers

38 Bangkok Support Groups

40 BAMBI Playgroups & Activities

41-42 BAMBI Team



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[regents-pattaya.co.th](http://regents-pattaya.co.th)





Miki Kato

Dear members,

Welcome to our February issue!

As we all know, it's the month of Valentine's Day. How do you celebrate 'love' in your culture? In Japan, there is a custom that women express their feelings to men by giving them chocolates on Valentine's Day, but nowadays it's not only in romantic relationships. Valentine's Day is a day to give chocolates to show our love and appreciation to family and friends as well!

In this issue, we explore 'love' as a journey. It's hard to express what 'love' is in words; it can be associated with honesty, trust, respect, and so on. But these words, along with others are vague and don't fully explain what 'love' is. Love can come in many different forms. How each of us loves and wants to be loved can vary, as can what or who we love.

I can say that the people I love are always in my heart even when I'm physically away from them. I always want to support them as much as I can and wish for their happiness and success.

Let me say thank you to everyone I met in Bangkok, as I return to my home country next month. I got married, left my job, and first arrived to Thailand in early April 2018. By the end of April, I'd found out I was pregnant, returned to Japan, and given birth there in December 2018. I was apart from my husband for about two years during the COVID lockdown. It was not easy, but I was able to overcome all the difficulties because there was always someone who supported me.

BAMBI is looking for new volunteers. These include a new activities coordinator and other various positions! I've enjoyed being on the playgroup, treasurer, and activities team as a BAMBI volunteer. I changed teams depending on my son's age and my routine. It was such a valuable experience with amazing people. It's a great opportunity to start something new!

Miki  
BAMBI Activities Coordinator

## OUR COVER KID PETE

### NAME

Koki

### WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Japan

### HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THAILAND?

Two years

### FAVORITE PLACE TO GO AS A FAMILY IN THAILAND:

Safari World!

### WHAT'S ON YOUR THAI BUCKET LIST?

I'm a mommy's boy, but I want to be able to go on a soccer team trip by myself.

### WHAT DOES BAMBI MEAN TO YOU?

A great place to meet people from different countries.



Welcome to the month of love, readers!

With the first month done and dusted, 2023 is well underway, and I hope you have all settled well into the year by now.

I recently traveled to Paris with my family, and it struck me that the only constant about love is that it changes as we change, as our situations change, but it's always there; we just need to see and accept it in whatever form it presents itself.

For my husband and I, once upon a time, 'love' meant conversations that went on till dawn, impromptu weekend getaways, and so on. After 10 years of marriage and children, with growing responsibilities and the pressures of everyday life, 'love' has come to mean knowing that there is someone who can pick up milk on the way home so that the kids' breakfast is sorted. It also means the same person will pick up some popcorn as well, so that we can share a bowl while binge watching Netflix once the kids have gone to bed.

Love also means giving an arm and a leg for those little monsters that drive you crazy throughout the day, but insist on snuggling with you at bedtime because you're squishy and warm, and they love you very much.

So in Paris, we didn't go for romantic strolls by the Seine or enjoy candlelit dinners at cute restaurants. We loaded up on enough cotton candy and popcorn at Disney Paris to keep ourselves and the kids pumped till closing time. Then we carried them on our shoulders so they'd be able to see the evening illumination show, knowing fully well that we'd be waking up in pain the next morning, but the happy smiles on their faces—and thus ours—was worth it.

This month with the theme, 'Love—Phases and Expressions', the magazine looks at 'love' as a journey—how it evolves over time according to our needs and circumstances.

As expats, one of the trickiest things for many of us is navigating our love lives in a country other than home—new cultures, new standards for social etiquette, the pressures of settling into a new life...the list goes on. But Rachel Ofo, our outgoing deputy editor, successfully managed to trump all that and find her love in Thailand. In 'Love Abroad' she discusses the pros and cons of looking for love away from home in the backdrop of her own sweet story.

Love languages can also sometimes keep us second-guessing our loved ones' actions, words, and expectations, and if you feel that you need a quick review of the many ways that love can be expressed and felt, check out our infographic on love languages.

And it's not just romantic love that can be difficult to maneuver. Sometimes it takes a lot of hard work and patience to truly love and be compassionate with oneself. As a woman trying to juggle motherhood, work, home and personal needs, this rings a bell for me, and Cecilia Yu's article, 'Self-Compassion' really struck a chord in helping me remember how I can be kinder to myself.

In Creation Station this month, Anelia Van Zyl, our new deputy editor (Welcome, Anelia!), steals our hearts with some cute and easy no-sew lovebug cushions that you should try out with your little ones, and in Readers' Corner, Angela Chen reviews 'Love' by Matt de la Peña and 'The Five Love



Sanam Raisa Rahman

Languages' by Gary Chapman—delightful reads to commemorate the month of love, available at the Neilson Hays Library.

Finally, we have 'Working Towards a Successful Divorce Process With Your Children' by Piyachat Finney which shows us that while separation from your partner may not be avoidable, your journey as a loving family can still continue if you give the right support to your children through this tough time.

I hope you enjoy this month's content, and that it gives you the inspiration and strength needed to move forward in your journey of love whether it's with a partner, children, friends, family, or yourself. On behalf of the entire magazine team, Happy Valentine's Day!

Sanam

Editor



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Bangkok Patana is a not-for-profit IB World School, accredited by CIS.

# WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!



Duangporn Chaiwatanayon  
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Eva Ngolo  
Kasumi Kodaka  
Konkanya Leetranont  
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Thitiporn Thongtawat  
Tom Lawrie  
Waleerat Thaweebanchongsin  
Yvonne Shi

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY FROM BAMBI!

### FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Alba Perez Corish  
August Low  
Beatrice Angela Costanzo Hu  
Gabriel Ketprapakorn  
Leia Harris  
Linus Wilhelmi

Mia  
Nanon Saengsrichan  
Patin  
Thianatip Rungpitakmana  
Valen Vacharasinthu



WE ARE LOOKING FOR A NEW

## PHOTO EDITOR

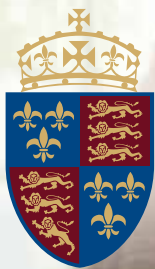
They say a picture is worth a 1,000 words. If you have a way with photographic words, join BAMBI as a photo editor!

We're looking for someone who can tell a story with a single image. From sourcing photos to organizing cover shoots, we need someone with a strong sense of photographic awareness.

If you think this could be you, send us an email at [editor@bambiweb.org](mailto:editor@bambiweb.org).

**BAMBI**





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# MEET AYA

Despite arriving during the COVID lockdown, Japanese-native Aya has found so many things to fall in love with in Thailand.

## **Where are you from and what's your nationality? Can you tell us about your life back home?**

I'm from Japan. I lived in Okayama Prefecture, next to Hiroshima Prefecture, in a place blessed with beautiful nature and good weather.

## **Can you tell us something about your career and work?**

Before coming to Thailand, I worked for the same auto parts manufacturer as my husband for ten years. I quit when he was transferred to Thailand. But I would like to start my own business when I return to Japan in the future.

## **When did you move to Thailand? What do you miss about your home country?**

I came to Thailand in December 2020. I love Thailand so much that I don't miss Japan. Sometimes I miss my Japanese friends, but I want them to come here.

## **Can you tell us a bit about your routine here in Bangkok?**

When I was working in Japan, I had no time at all to do what I wanted to do. Now I am doing what I like to do, such as eating local foods, exploring the city, exercising, and volunteering.

## **What do you love most about Thailand? Which parts of Thailand have you traveled to, and which did you enjoy the most?**

What I like about Thailand is the generosity of Thai people. I also like the year-round warmth because winters in Japan are quite cold. Lastly, in Thailand I feel more relaxed.

I have not been able to travel much in Thailand, but I like Hua Hin. I don't like crowded places, so quiet, relaxing, natural places by the sea are nice.

## **What were your main challenges as a parent in Thailand?**

As soon as I entered the country, lockdown began. I was spending all my time at home with my children. However,



I overcame that period and my bond with my children became stronger.

## **How did you find out about BAMBI?**

When I arrived Thailand and had to quarantine in the hotel, I found BAMBI on the internet and immediately applied.

## **Are there any specific suggestions you can give to BAMBI's new members here in Bangkok?**

There are many Japanese people in my area and I don't really feel like I am living abroad. Thanks to BAMBI, I have made non-Japanese friends and have opportunities to use English. I recommend BAMBI to better enjoy your life in Thailand.



# OPEN HOUSE

Monday 6th March, 8:45am



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# NO-SEW LOVEBUG HEART CUSHION



In honor of Valentine's Day this month, our resident creator Anelia shares a super cute, no-sew, cushion craft to do with your kids and celebrate the thing that binds you to each other—love.

*Time: 90 minutes    Level: Easy    Age: 5+ with adult supervision*

"Love, love, love . . . all you need is love." It's one of those catchy Beatles songs that you'll hum all day long after it sneaks into your mind. We're reminded of the sentiment shared in this song every 14th February—what we also know as Valentine's Day.

Each year on this day, people around the world celebrate love. This month's craft honors the idea of spreading love on this day, and reminds us to love and be loved each and every day, too. This cute and cuddly lovebug is fun and very easy to make, and your kids can join in, too.

Go kitsch, go cool, and go colorful with this craft. Make it stand out and be unique, just like your love.

## Supplies

- A large piece of paper (enough for a 60 cm-wide heart)
- 2 pieces of 80 cm x 80 cm cotton or linen fabric of choice. I decided on contrasting designs to add more character to my cushion.
- Fabric scissors
- Sewing pins
- Cushion stuffing (you can also use stuffing from an old cushion as I did)
- Large plastic toy bug
- Glitter, rhinestones, and everything bling
- Pom-poms, ribbons, buttons or other decorations
- Hot glue gun







## Instructions

1. Draw a 60 cm-wide heart on the paper, and cut it out to make a template.
2. Place the heart template on the first 80 cm x 80 cm piece of fabric. Pin it down with sewing pins, and cut around it. Repeat with the second piece of fabric.
3. Place the wrong sides of the two fabric hearts together, and set them aside.
4. Go back to your heart template, and cut out a smaller heart of 50 cm in width.
5. Place the smaller heart template on top of the fabric hearts you cut earlier, and pin in place, leaving a 10 cm-wide space around the paper heart.
6. Cut 1 cm-wide strips all around the paper template, making sure you cut through both layers of fabric.
7. Remove the paper template and start tying the strips together by taking one strip from the top and one from the bottom and tying a double knot. Continue all around the heart, leaving a small opening for your stuffing.
8. Stuff your cushion, and finish off by tying the small opening closed.
9. Add some sparkle to your toy bug with rhinestones, glitter and any other bling that you love! Anything goes with this little lovebug; so you and your kids can exercise your creativity when you decorate it. I used rhinestone stickers and washi tape.
10. Using the hot glue gun, attach your bug and other decorations to your heart-shaped cushion. Remember to avoid burning little fingers by supervising your child when using hot glue.
11. That's it! Your no-sew heart cushion is ready to cuddle.

## Notes

You can use an old baby fleece blanket for the fabric too; they make beautiful, soft cushions.

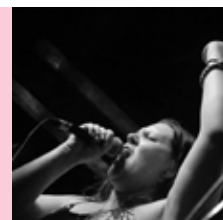
This lovebug cushion makes the perfect gift for that special someone, or why not make it for yourself? Spread the love and have a wonderful Valentine's Day.

*Here I am!*



## About the Author

Anelia is a performing artist from South Africa. She has been living and working as a teacher in Thailand for eight years. She also writes educational children's books, makes music, and loves to spend time in the kitchen. Follow her adventures on IG @aneliavz.





# HOW TO BECOME A BAMBI MEMBER

Becoming a BAMBI member is very simple. Go to any BAMBI playgroup or event, including New Members Coffee Morning, and pay the membership fee in cash. You will get a membership card and receipt on the spot.

Alternatively, you can make an ATM or online payment to our bank account, and then send us your proof of payment using the form on the BAMBI website. We will activate your membership within a few days of receiving your submitted form, and you will receive your membership card by mail within two weeks of activation.

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# LOVE ABROAD

Navigating the turbulent seas of love isn't always easy, especially when you've traveled overseas to do it. Deputy Editor, Rachel Ofo, highlights some positives and negatives, while sharing her personal story of finding love in a country away from home.

**T**here are plenty of fish in the sea. This is a commonly used phrase meant to cheer up those who may be having a hard time finding a mate. However, what isn't mentioned is which sea; is one to fish nearby or travel overseas? If you're like me, the dating pool at home was okay at best. You may have run into someone at a party, at the grocery store, or even at work. But alas, none of those worked out, and you were left giving up on love or taking a different route altogether. You've convinced yourself that your hometown, state, or even country is not conducive to your quest to find love.

A popular dating app took steps in upgrading its services to include a 'passport' feature, which allows for hopefuls to not only find exactly what they're looking for, but even search across borders. So if one has exhausted options in their country, they can simply search for matches thousands of miles away. However, for those looking for more conventional ways, dating and finding love abroad is still possible. In most cases, it requires an actual passport and maybe a bit of luck. Six and a

half years ago, I moved to Thailand without the slightest interest to date. Within six months of arriving, I was having drinks with a coworker, and six months later he proposed.

Dating in a foreign land can be tricky waters to navigate, especially if you're new to a country. If you're dating a local, you must consider certain dating dos and don'ts, as well as be able to explain what you're socially okay engaging in. Although my overseas dating is limited to my husband, it's safe to assume a few differences between dating cultures. For example, timeliness is huge in the States. If you're meeting someone, please be on time. Whereas in Thailand, given the more relaxed culture and regular traffic, arriving late might not be as egregious.

Another added complication is if the person you're dating isn't even from the country you're dating in. In such cases, three different dating cultures must be respected. This was the case with me and my husband. I moved here from the US and he from the UK. But regardless of rules and possible

faux pas, our love continued to grow like the waves of the Andaman Sea.

Thailand's beautiful beaches and affordable prices make it a great country to get married. I've met plenty of foreign couples who chose to tie the knot here. Although the process isn't always the easiest or most efficient, it doesn't deter the proclamation and registration of love in the country.

Depending on the district office and staff that day, getting married can either be a short morning affair or an all-day event. Ours was the latter. It was a rainy day where we'd spent hours shuffling back and forth, making copies on top of copies of documents that, in the end, weren't even used. It was bittersweet; I was tired and annoyed, but I'd officially been able to call my fiancé 'husband'. It wasn't ideal, but after plenty of signatures and pictures in front of cheesy fake plants, and a marriage certificate neither of us could read, we were set. We were ready to spend the rest of our lives together, in a country neither of us were from.





Finding love abroad also allows for an almost 'clean slate'. Yes, being away reduces distractions of home comforts. The comforts that may have allowed you to ignore possible relationship flaws are no longer around. Friends and family influences are also limited. Speaking to a few expat couples in Bangkok, the general consensus was that although being away from home was hard, they felt that family and friends may have gotten too involved in their relationships. So being away means couples are allowed to argue as one, problem solve as one, and

grow as one because even the smallest bit of meddling can affect the outcome of misunderstandings and relationships. That is one of the things I'm most grateful for; having married my husband in Thailand and started our family here, we've been free to figure it out. When we have disagreements, there is no one on 'our side', except each other. We've been forced to be teammates, rather than opponents because we have no one else.

Being away from home or meeting someone from a different land

should never be a reason to deny love. There is nowhere in the world where you won't notice some form or expression of love; it's a natural human feeling. In general, people want to love and want to feel loved. And although it may not be from the comfort of your homeland, taking the steps to possibly find your person, can be worth it. And who knows, it may come when you least expect it, like in my situation. Once this article has reached your doors, my husband and I will have celebrated our five-year anniversary and I can't wait to see where our love boat takes us.

*Photos courtesy of author and Canva*



#### About the Author

Rachel Ofo moved from the US to Bangkok in 2016.

She has a daughter, whom she loves dragging around the city on various adventures. In her free time, she enjoys reading, watching movies and trying new restaurants. She also enjoys being out in nature with her daughter. She looks forward to her time with BAMBI.





## DESIGN FUTURES

**ELC international schools** are places where children are active protagonists in their own learning. They comprise a family of unique schools where students base their research, discovery, and experimentation within the context of contemporary culture and learning. Those within strive to resolve dilemmas of individual and shared importance in their quest for knowledge and understanding but most importantly, imagine possibilities for a better future.

In the daily life of ELC schools, we can perceive a pronounced increase in children's creativity, the quality of their research, and their ability to access information. This facilitates the development of complex digital projects and products of knowledge, which are elaborated between children and between children and adults.

*digital bicycles for enjoyment in the park using arduino technology*  
designed by  
Pop and Anna  
(ages 8 to 9 years )



*automated solar and wind-powered street cleaner using arduino technology*  
designed by Caden, Fabian and India  
(ages 10 to 11 years)

# elc international schools

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**The Purple Elephant 39**  
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**The Purple Elephant 49**  
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**The Purple Elephant 55**  
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**The Country School**  
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only elephants should wear ivory



elc international schools

# WHAT IS YOUR *language of love?*

Love languages are like any other language used to communicate ideas and feelings. Love languages come in five major forms and include spoken and body languages. These forms of love are used not only to express love to someone, but they reveal how we'd like to be loved. It can even help with the understanding and expression of self-love.

## Words

Affirmations and encouragement: a simple "I love you" or "thank you for..." goes a long way.

## Service

Acts of service can include tasks like helping around the house or even planning dates without prompting.

## Touch

You feel loved or show love with physical touches like hugs, cuddles and hand-holding.

## Time

Spending quality time with loved ones is what makes these lovers feel complete.

## Gifts

Receiving or giving gifts is the ultimate act of love for you.





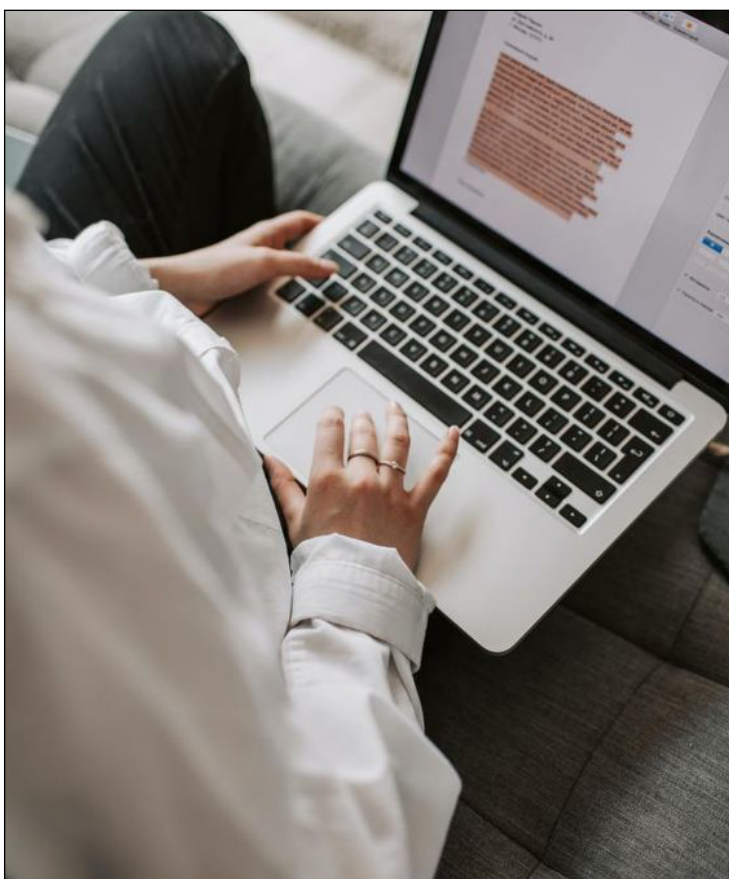
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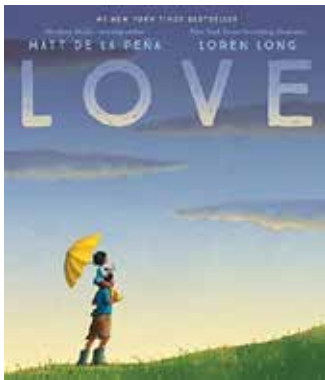
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# BOOKS TO INSPIRE

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## LOVE

written by Matt de la Peña and illustrated by Loren Long

Caldecott and Newbery award-winning author Matt de la Peña was inspired to write 'Love' after being overwhelmed by emotion following the birth of his daughter. De la Peña and celebrated illustrator, Loren Long, bring to life the strong bond of love in the ordinary and extraordinary moments in life. While they include countless pure and joyous depictions of love, 'Love' also includes complicated moments of heartache, confusion, and loss. Like all of Matt de la Peña's work, the diversity depicted in 'Love' covers a wide spectrum of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

The poetic words, stunning illustrations, and beautiful message will captivate readers of all ages. Although young children may not fully grasp the deep meaning of each heartfelt and at times bittersweet example of love, it is an important introduction to the complexity of love and life. Parents, on the other hand, will appreciate and be moved by the emotional depth woven throughout Love.

*Published by G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers in January 2018. Matt de la Peña is the Caldecott and Newbery award-winning author of 'The Last Stop on Market Street'.*

*Loren Long is the award-winning creator of the 'Otis' book series and is also the illustrator for many beloved children's books, including the re-illustrated edition of Watty Piper's 'The Little Engine That Could'. 'Love' is suitable for ages 3-8. A hardcover copy can be found in the Children's Corner of the Neilson Hays Library.*



## THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES

by Gary Chapman

It's no surprise that over 20 million copies of 'The Five Love Languages' have been sold worldwide since this bestseller was published 30 years ago. An updated version was released in 2015. The book's subtitle is 'The Secret to Love That Lasts' and while it won't be a magic wand that fixes every crack and wrinkle in a relationship, it can bring greater understanding and better communication between loved ones. Written by Gary Chapman and rooted in his experiences as a counselor, the delivery is pragmatic, amusing, and relatable.

Chapman breaks down the five love languages as words of affirmation, quality time, giving/receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch; all of which are important and unique. However, most relationships are not aligned in each individual's preferred love language. The book details how the five love languages may be communicated and perceived and provides tools to meet the different needs of each. Whether it's your first or fifth reading of this iconic book, it's full of practical reminders of simple everyday ways which we can bridge gaps in our relationships.

*First published by Northfield Publishing in 1992, an updated version was released in 2015. 'The Five Love Languages' has been translated into 49 languages and has spun off a series of concept books specific to children, teens, single adults, and so on. A hardcover copy can be found in the non-fiction section of the Neilson Hays Library.*

### About the Author

Angela Chen is a Neilson Hays Library Board Member and Children's Program Chair.

The Neilson Hays Library is Thailand's premier English-language library. The Children's Program offers Saturday Story Time, a cozy Children's Corner, and special holiday events. Adult programs include concerts, art exhibitions, book clubs, and book sales. Located in a beautiful historic building with a garden and cafe on site: 195 Surawong Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand. Follow us on Instagram and Facebook





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# SELF-COMPASSION

Compassion involves the act of sympathizing with others. However, sometimes it is easier to sympathize with others than ourselves. Cecilia Yu shows us how to exercise self-compassion, leading to a healthier relationship with ourselves.

Let me ask you this: What are you thankful for? I bet you can rattle off a laundry list of things and people, while grinning.

Now, another question: What about YOURSELF are you thankful for? Think about it. Is it taking you longer to answer than it did for the previous question? Look at your list. How many things can you name?

Many of us may not have been taught to praise or love ourselves especially in difficult times. Are you one of those? This isn't a rhetorical question meant to offend you. Let me break the ice and confess.

I am Cecilia. I wasn't raised to praise and love myself. I am a recovering perfectionist.

All this means I cohabit with a friend who sometimes can be a tenacious inner critic. Both on good days and days when I need motivation, she pounces on me and enthusiastically screams, "Get up, you can do better. You deserve better. You've got this! I am with you no matter what. I am your soft landing." I love her when she shows up like this for me. On other days, especially those tired, everything-has-gone-wrong days, she

pulls and tugs mercilessly at my mind and heart and screams any or all of the following:

Hello?! How could you have missed that?

Now, *how* will you ever fix that?

Omg! *What* were you thinking?

So yeah, she isn't always my cheerleader BFF. She can be overly critical and judgmental. Thankfully, I haven't let her inconsistent empathy affect how I show up for others. When my friends and loved ones encounter huge (sometimes ego-crushing) blows, I become their soft landing cushion. I intentionally empathize with and listen to them as they vent, cry, and express self-doubt. I soothe them with words like:

You did your best.

It must have been hard.

That took a lot out of you. Cry, if you need to.

You are still cherished, despite what happened.

You are only human; of course, mistakes can happen.

I lovingly play my part to help them feel heard, seen, and respected. I bet your friends hear more of these loving words from you than you have told yourself, correct? OK, now it's your turn to confess. Do you have a similar, cohabiting friend? If so, read on.

We need to stop our so-called 'friend' because they can harm us in two ways when we don't draw boundaries with them. In one instance, studies have shown that when we let our inner critic blare out, our cortisol levels rise. Cortisol equates to physiological inflammation, which may lead to many diseases (1). No amount of healthy eating can eradicate these inflammations. Harsh, abrupt words, colored with judgmental tones never motivate us. Another harm I've seen in my professional experience, is how this negativity can crush our spirits and even rein us in from taking risks meant to help us grow. Worse, what kind of examples do we set for children? Their learning is etched into their subconscious through observing us, and not by mere self-love pep talk sessions their guidance counselors or favorite TikTok influencers give.

So, ditch your 'friend' and replace her with self-compassion, which is a mindfulness practice that calls for us to be





as kind to ourselves as we are to our loved ones, in good times and bad times (especially the latter).

Dr. Kristin Neff, a renowned psychologist who pioneered research on self-compassion, has passed on a legacy of valuable learnings about this process. Her research, which is based on the foundational pillars of many subsequent self-compassion studies, concluded that self-compassion is accomplished in three ways (2):

- 1) Be aware of and present with your feelings
- 2) Recognize the common humanity of feeling what you feel; it makes us human
- 3) Show kindness to yourself

### **Be present with feelings**

Name your feelings to tame them. Dashing from them isn't the answer; the pain will eventually catch up. Repressed or unacknowledged anger can turn into resentment towards others. Grief becomes overconsumption with work or isolation from what brings you joy. Feeling overwhelmed can result in being overly controlling. Fear becomes a risk aversion of living and experiencing life. When we mask

emotions that dampen our spirit, we numb our abilities to feel full of even the good.

I 'sit' with my feelings and self-inquire about what they may indicate by:

- Crying, sometimes lots of it
- Screaming, also sometimes a lot
- Journaling
- Talking to someone

Acknowledging our feelings is really about being human and experiencing the richness of the living experience. Recognize that whatever you are feeling shall pass, or at least ebb and flow in its intensity, because nothing is permanent.

### **Recognize common humanity**

Common humanity involves viewing our struggles as what makes us human. Confiding in those you trust might reveal that they have experienced something similar. This may help you understand that others are going through what you're going through, and that it's likely they have reacted similarly. Find a support group for what you are struggling with. By doing so, you may also encourage others sailing similar boats, in similar waters, swallowed by similar tides, to confess their heartaches.

In sharing, we uplift each other and feel not so alone.

### **Show yourself kindness**

I won't judge your go-to self-care practices. You should lovingly ask yourself, "What do I really need in this moment of suffering?". Your needs can look like this:

- Hibernating in a spa oasis
- Bathing in an aromatic warm body of water, with lit candles by your side
- Dancing the night away
- Gorging that tub of ice-cream
- Running till your legs and breath are exhausted
- Lying on your couch completely still, in your PJs, while binging on Netflix
- Shopping mindlessly; filling your carts with items you suddenly 'so desperately' need.

Fancy adding to this list?

But know that these fixes are temporary. Yes, they bring a short-lived joy. They temporarily numb and bury your heartaches, but these will resurface and rear their ugly heads in self-sabotaging ways (as I mentioned in a previous section) (3).



More lasting fixes you ask? Honestly, journaling. I would say it is a triumph to talk to your confidantes. You may fail to understand how you are truly feeling until you quiet yourself, write (from a stream of consciousness, unfiltered, truthfully), read (out loud if you want), and reflect on the journal entry. Journaling helps you to tap into your inner wisdom (we all have it); it's like a free therapist accessible 24/7.

After you acknowledge your suffering, name the feelings you have towards it, and recognize that suffering is common to many. Be as kind to yourself as you would to a friend who has tearfully confided in you. Hug yourself (seriously, skin contact gives your body the feel-good hormone, oxytocin like breastfeeding does [4]). Create for yourself loving kindness that resonates. Suggest ideas like:

May I forgive myself?

May I be patient with myself?

May I let go of the need for perfection?

Write them down and post them around your rooms: on your mirrors, TVs and computer screens (perfect reminders during your Netflix marathons). Carry them in your wallet (ideal reminders during your retail therapy). Record them on a voice memo app (hopefully you remember to open this app as you mindlessly scroll through social media). Repeat them frequently, and you will begin to believe them. Much like how we soothe and encourage our children when they tread new territories with fears and anxieties.

Finally, see the silver linings and lessons in your mistakes and shortcomings, even if they are as simple as, "I won't act like that again". That alone is growth and learning, right? After all, aren't we all here to evolve, and live more in alignment with the core of who we truly are?

If my ideas still remain foreign, then just remember this:

Be the love you already are, and listen to 'yourself' with every fiber of your being.

*Photos courtesy of Canva*

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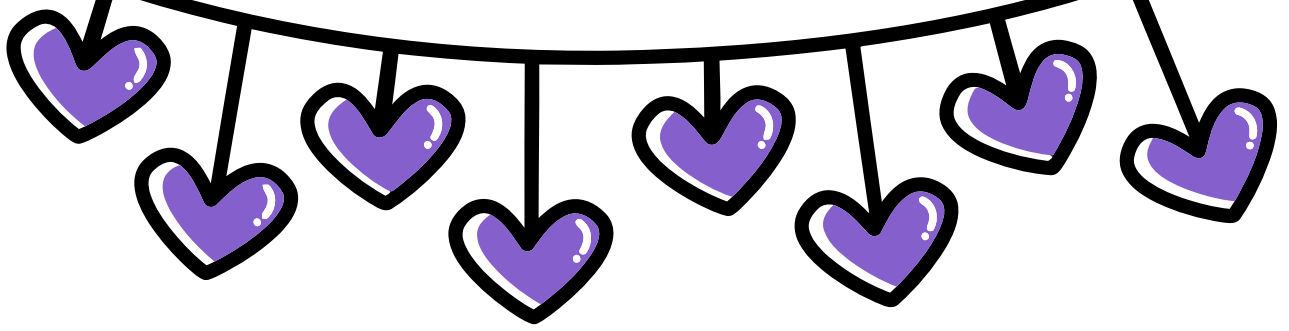
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## About the Author

Cecilia Yu is a self-compassion enthusiast and coach. Certified in Integrative Nutrition Coaching, Culinary Nutrition, Goddess Yoga and Women's Circle Leadership, Cecilia empowers mommies and their loved ones to lead a healthy, soulful life through anti-inflammatory dietary lifestyle, meditations, yoga, journaling, and her Self-Compassion Circles for Moms. For inspiration, follow her on @CeciliaADoseofVitaminL (FB/IG).

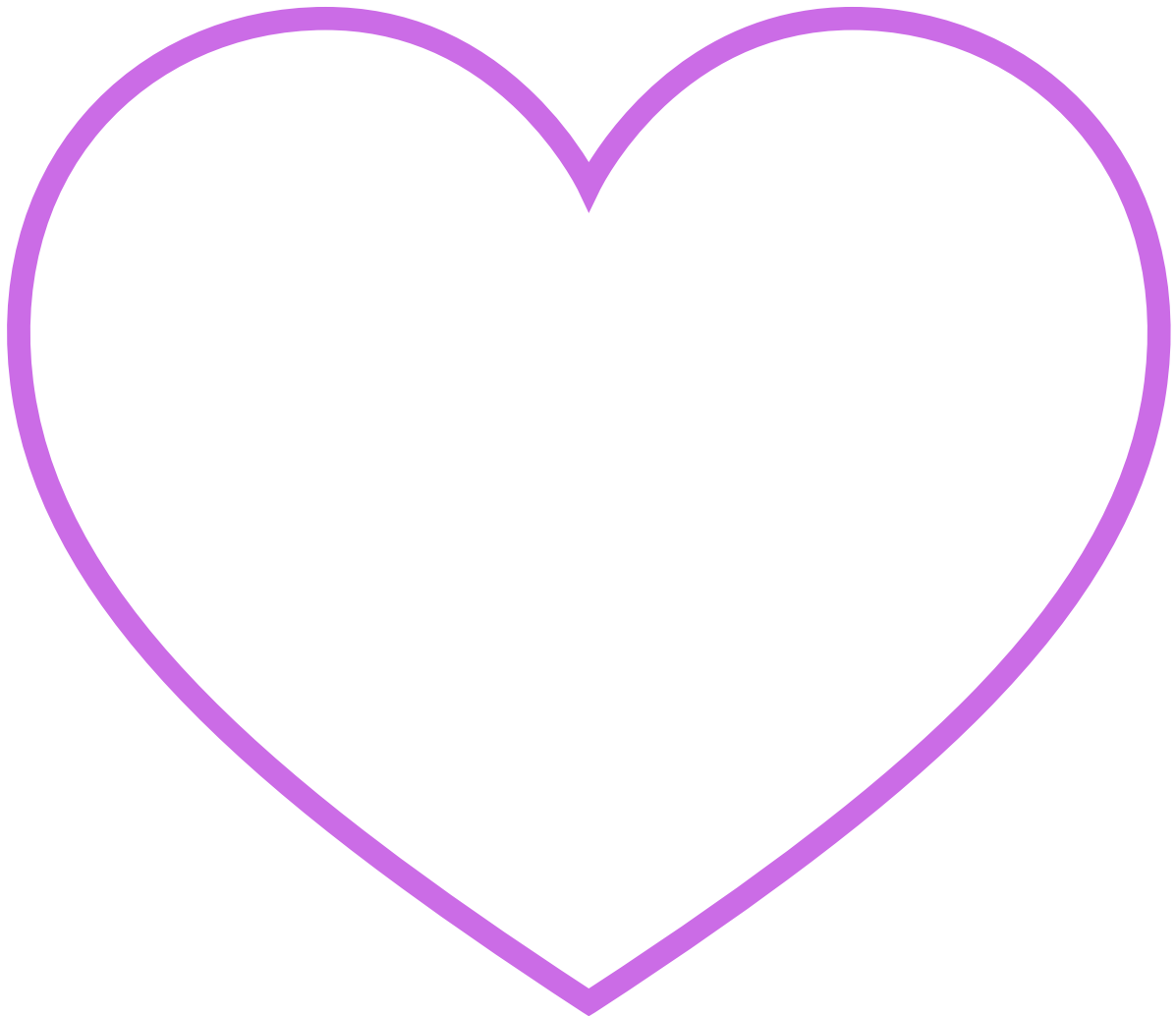






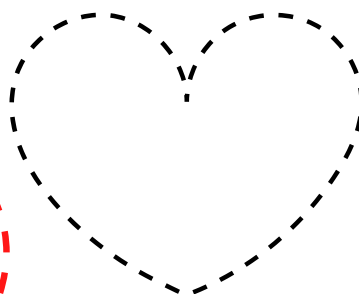
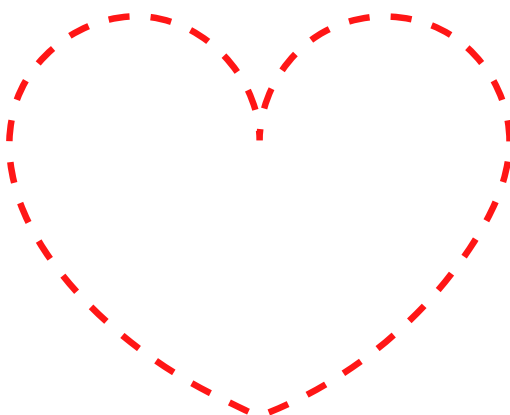
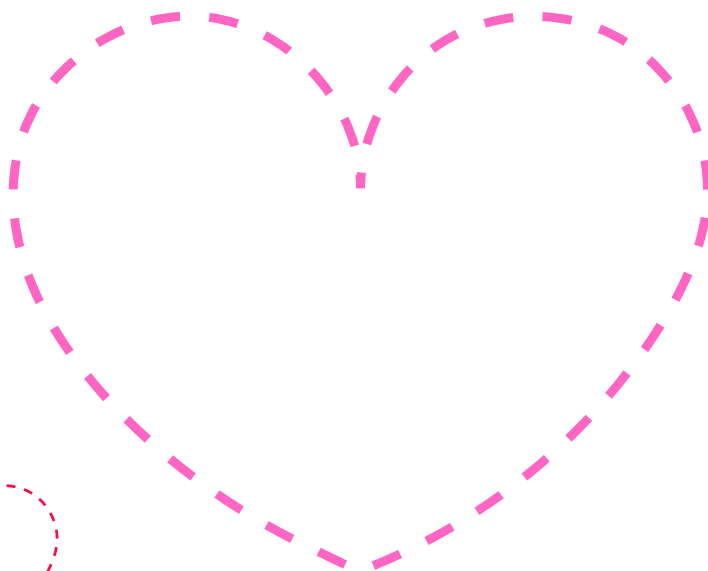
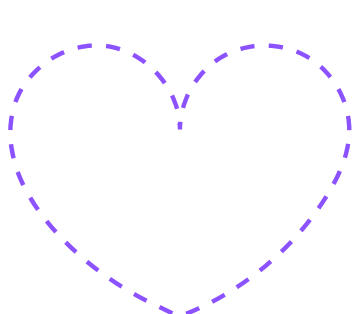
## SHAPE POEM: LOVE

Write a shape poem about all of the things that you love:



# I Can Draw Hearts

Help Owliver the Lovely Owl to trace the hearts.



**How many hearts are there?**

---



*Objective,  
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### **PLAYGROUP**

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# WORKING TOWARDS A SUCCESSFUL DIVORCE PROCESS WITH YOUR CHILDREN

Announcing a separation to your children is difficult. Family therapist and counselor, Piyachat Finney, explains how to team up to support your children after a decision to divorce your partner.

**W**hether it's falling out of love, transforming into another stage of life, or a wrong match to begin with, you now have ONE thing in common: your love for the little one(s). Separation and divorce do not need to be a painful process. Yes; your children may feel sad, but they can get through it well if both parents cooperate and work together.

Once it has been decided that you do want to separate from your partner, your roles shift from being lovers to co-parents. Teaming up for the best interests of your children should be your number one goal. Most couples dread announcing to their children their decision to separate. If possible, it is best to be together when making the announcement so that you can answer genuinely and jointly explain things from both parents' perspectives. Children may cry because they feel sad and scared of change. It is alright to cry with them. The most important thing is to be a role model and be open in this vulnerable moment together. They may be angry and ask "why?" During this challenging transitional stage, be attentive to your children's needs and feelings. Allow a safe space for children to express themselves, even if it includes negative thoughts or feelings. Externalizing feelings by talking about them

is much healthier than suppressing feelings and pretending that things are normal. Comments that might be considered dismissive and avoidant, such as "You don't need to feel sad. Mummy is still here," can actually be more harmful than helpful. Acknowledge and validate their anger and sadness, for example, "I can see that you are sad and perhaps angry. We can feel these feelings together."

Clear and concise communication is also crucial. While children are feeling sad and disappointed, speak genuinely and explain that even though things will change, for example, one parent will move out, "Daddy loves you and Mummy loves you, that part will not change." During this period,

you may want to introduce some opportunities to take part in process art activities to help them express, reflect, and explore their feelings. They may have a lot of questions to ask, so try to reply honestly. When you attempt to protect them by denying their reality, it will confuse them even more and once the separation process begins, they may feel betrayed, "You said this will not happen."

Discuss with your partner a timeline of how things will change and when. Get a big piece of art paper, and write and/or draw the timeline. Along the timeline, each family member can draw how they anticipate what will happen and how they are feeling by using colors to identify different







feelings. Put this timeline where everyone can add more feelings as the process continues. Alternatively, parents can use a big calendar to mark down events, and everyone can fill it in with little drawings of how they are dealing with the process. It is important to make the timeline tangible and accessible to all. When children learn about the possibility of divorce, emotionally, they feel that they are no longer able to control the situation and may feel overwhelmed and jostled between households and schedules. At least the implementation of the timeline/calendar can help them to predict what and when things will happen. Not knowing at all can invoke more anxiety, and it can also increase their unimaginable fears.

While planning a move to a different location, plan to have a bedroom available for your children. Allow them to participate in choosing their bedsheets and decorating their new room. Again, this process is to help them regain that sense of internal control and the feeling that they do belong in the new apartment/house. Assist children in creating new routines, and try to keep things consistent during the transition. They need to feel grounded and not too vulnerable or disorganized. In the beginning stage of switching between the two

places (in the case of shared custody), allow the other parent to visit and help to settle the children into the new apartment or the house. Resentment, anger, and hatred between the couple can be worked out in therapy sessions.

At school, when there is a parent-teacher conference, both parents can make an effort to attend, so children can see that you are a team and that both of you are there for them. Some parents may want to keep a separation/divorce private but eventually, the school may find out through your children's behaviors. An option may be to keep the school in the loop, so they can act as extra eyes to observe the child's reactions. Children may be quiet, withdrawn, and subdued, or may appear irritable and aggressive in classes or on the playground. If the school is informed, they can help support children to appropriately regulate their emotions.

At some point, one or both parents may have a new partner. You may slowly introduce him/her to your children. Emphasize that new partner(s) will not be there to replace the other parent in the role of father/mother. Observe the children's reactions, but do not push to introduce the new partner too soon; wait until the child is ready.

From my clinical experience with families, the majority of children shared that they were much happier because they could have quality time with both parents in their two houses. Some even said they wished their parents could have split much sooner to avoid so many fights and negative experiences. Co-parenting can help reduce stress levels in children. This united sense of effort can be achieved by teaming up.

*Photos courtesy of Canva*

*This article was first published in the BAMBI Magazine October 2020 issue.*

### About the Author

Piyachat Ruengvisesh Finney is a US licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and a US licensed Mental Health Counselor. She also utilizes art psychotherapy and other creative processes to access an individual's internal resources to bring about changes. Investigations on intergenerational patterns can assist clients in gaining further insights. Contact: [saisilpcentre@gmail.com](mailto:saisilpcentre@gmail.com) and [creative\\_healing@yahoo.com](mailto:creative_healing@yahoo.com)

# CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS



BAMBI is run by a group of lovely volunteers. Want to have fun, work together with other great parents, brush up on your professional skills, and do something for the BAMBI community? This is your chance. As many of our current committee members are moving on from Bangkok, BAMBI has a number of critical roles to fill to ensure ongoing service to members. BAMBI is great fun and a welcoming community of like-minded parents trying to support and improve the parenting experience for all families in Bangkok. If you have some time and passion to spare, come and join us. To apply or if you have any questions about these volunteer opportunities, please email [vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org](mailto:vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org), detailing which position(s) you are interested in.

**We have a number of exciting opportunities currently available:**

## CHAIRWOMAN

The chair is our CEO, our liaison with CBFT and other volunteer groups in Bangkok, and acts as BAMBI's official representative in the wider community.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- coordinates the work of the committee and chairs the monthly committee meetings
- prepares annual reports for the AGM and CBFT
- together with the treasurer, sets the budget for each area of BAMBI
- is responsible for recruiting new volunteers and is the first contact for new people interested in volunteering
- writes a bi-monthly column for the magazine
- ensures compliance with accounting/bookkeeping

## TREASURER

The treasurer attends monthly committee meetings as a voting member and takes care of all day-to-day financial aspects of BAMBI.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- supports BAMBI volunteers on financial aspects
- processes payments and receipts
- together with the chair, sets the budget for each area of BAMBI
- ensures compliance with accounting/bookkeeping





## PHOTO EDITOR

The photo editor is the first point of contact for anything picture related in BAMBI Magazine.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- works directly with the BAMBI magazine and Bumps teams and Playgroups and Activities leaders to source photos for articles and photo feature pages in the magazine
- takes photos at events or coordinates with event staff and photographers to have photos taken
- organizes and oversees the magazine cover photo-shoot
- designs the magazine cover in coordination with the BAMBI Magazine editor and deputy editor

## ASSISTANT TREASURER

The assistant treasurer helps the treasurer take care of the financial aspects of BAMBI related to playgroups, activities, and events. Financial background is not mandatory, but preferred.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- receives and checks reports from playgroup leaders, activity leaders, and event managers
- organizes and forwards all paperwork to the book-keeper monthly
- may assist the treasurer with other financial duties

## PLAYGROUP LEADERS

The BAMBI playgroup leader runs a weekly 'free play' playgroup. Positions are available at various locations throughout Bangkok, Sukhumvit, Sathorn, and Silom.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- attends and manages the playgroup: collects entrance donations, welcomes new and current members
- takes photos of the playgroup for BAMBI Magazine
- can voluntarily introduce circle time or short activities to their playgroup at their own discretion

## EVENTS COORDINATOR

The events coordinator attends monthly committee meetings as a voting member and organizes and coordinates BAMBI's parties and events.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- coordinates the planning and delivery of BAMBI's large events such as our splash party and Halloween party. This includes sponsor solicitation, setting up and tidying up before and after the events, organizing volunteers to help during the event, and organizing kids' activities and food vendors.
- organizes internal team events



## EVENTS ASSISTANT

The events assistant supports the Events coordinator with the planning of events and organizing the BAMBI parties.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- assists the events coordinator with the planning and delivery of BAMBI's large events such as our splash party and Halloween party
- coordinates with other teams within BAMBI like media and website teams

## ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

The activities coordinator is in charge of setting up profitable activities for older kids (3-6 years)

### Responsibilities & Duties

- manages the bookings for each activity with the team
- efficiently communicates information on bookings and activities to activities leaders and the venues
- steps in and supports the running of an activity if needed
- attends monthly committee meetings as a voting committee member

## ACTIVITIES LEADERS

Our activities leaders help to organize and run activities for older children (3-6 years).

### Responsibilities & Duties

- attends and manages the activity: collects entrance donations and welcomes new and current members
- requires a minimum commitment of one afternoon per week

## ASSISTANT EDITORS—BAMBI MAGAZINE

Our assistant editors work remotely to revise articles following editorial guidelines to ensure that the magazine is free of inconsistencies and errors.

### Responsibilities & Duties

- completes copy editing and proofreading tasks; occasional writing tasks
- attends occasional team meetings
- must possess a great level of English, an eye for detail, and the ability to work to deadlines





# Little Maple

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# BANGKOK SUPPORT GROUPS

There are a range of support groups in Bangkok. Most are open to everyone, some ask for a small donation, and some require a reservation.

The groups listed here are run independently of BAMBI, except where otherwise noted.

This listing is provided for informational purposes only, and inclusion does not constitute endorsement by BAMBI. Please contact the respective groups for more information.

## PRE & POST NATAL SUPPORT

BAMBI BUMPS  
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## SUPPORT TO WOMEN

BEYOND  
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### **SCAN NOW TO READ MORE**

To find out more about some of these amazing support groups, please scan the QR code for more information.





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# BAMBI PLAYGROUPS & ACTIVITIES

BAMBI holds regular playgroups and activities around town, open to both BAMBI members and non-members. BAMBI playgroups are characterized by free play, and the use of venues' toys and playgrounds. BAMBI activities provide a wide range of activities for children ages 1 to 6 years old to develop their athletic, creative and cognitive skills.



**KIDDIEVILLE  
PLAYGROUP**



**SATHORN  
PLAYGROUP**



**THONGLOR  
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**KUNGFU**



**BAMBI PLAYGROUPS**

## SCAN NOW

To find out more about all of our Playgroups and Activities please scan the QR code to head to our website. We also have a non-BAMBI playgroup listing. We look forward to seeing you soon at one of our events.



**NON-BAMBI  
PLAYGROUPS**





# BAMBI

## THE TEAM

BAMBI is managed by an elected committee of volunteers and all BAMBI members are encouraged to volunteer. Vacancies can be found on the Call for Volunteers page in this magazine and are posted online; you are welcome to contact [vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org](mailto:vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org) with inquiries.

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**The views expressed in the articles in this magazine are not necessarily those of BAMBI committee members and we assume no responsibility for them or their effects.**

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