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**CULTIVATING  
INCLUSIVE KIDS**

**DIGITAL  
DIVERSITY AND  
BOUNDARIES**

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OCTOBER 2023

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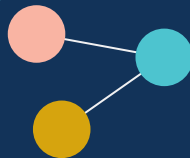
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Simran (Simmi) Rajkitkul

Dear members,

It's October and Global Diversity Awareness Month around the world. For this special month, I'd like to take the opportunity to shine a spotlight on our collective uniqueness and highlight our differences at BAMBI, as that's what makes us more interesting and so much better!

BAMBI takes pride in being a hub of diversity; a community where inclusion thrives. We are proud to be a place where we can all gather together and honor the vibrant cultures that represent the fabric of our organization. As we navigate the cultural mosaic of Thailand, it's important we remember to acknowledge and appreciate the colors that each culture adds to Thailand, to our lives, and to BAMBI.

I'd also like to point out that the spirit of Global Diversity Awareness Month is about embracing differences. With such embraces, we find beauty. Now more than ever, in our interconnected world, technology makes it easy to stay connected and gives us access to even more kinds of people—people of all faiths, cultures, abilities, genders, and ethnicities. It's important to keep embracing this diversity, as this sets a great example for our kids and gives them the invaluable lesson of acceptance, which helps to pave the way towards a more inclusive and harmonious future.

Isn't it wonderful that we can make a difference in our everyday lives? Each one of us, whether a parent, a teacher, or simply a caring individual, has the power to create an environment where diversity flourishes. Be it in our homes, schools, favorite hangouts, or food spots—let's make these spaces a reflection of how we want to feel and how we want to be treated.

So, as we dive into Global Diversity Awareness Month this October, let's not only celebrate the flavors of our differences, but also accept that while we have come a long way, there is still work to be done, and as far as possible, with a smile! I am proud to be part of such a diverse organization as BAMBI, and I'm happy to have you with me on this journey.

Simmi  
BAMBI honorary president



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**BAMBI**



Sanam Raisa Rahman

Growing up, there were kids in my class that didn't quite fit the definition of "normal", or what was accepted as "normal" in our society. There were boys who were mocked for being feminine, and girls who were made to feel conscious of their dark skin. There were kids who were socially anxious and bullied. Very few adults spoke openly about things like gender and sexual identity, neurodivergence, and mental health. I sometimes wonder if schools even had active inclusion policies in place back then.

We also had limited exposure to foreign cultures and lifestyles. Only some of us were lucky enough to travel on holidays, and if we ever had relatives visiting from abroad or a parent returning from a work trip, their suitcases would be a treasure trove of wonders for us ... what goodies from faraway lands we'd only read about in books and seen on TV would we find? Our curiosity knew no bounds, but sadly not all of it could be satisfied at that time.

Now, as a parent raising third culture kids in a cosmopolitan metropolis like Bangkok, I'm thrilled that their childhood is one where diversity is widely seen as the norm and so fostering inclusion is paramount. It's especially heartwarming that growing acceptance of diversity also gives them the confidence to embrace and share their own uniqueness with the world.

This month BAMBI Magazine delves into the theme of "diversity and inclusion" and brings to you a wealth of insights, advice, and stories that showcase the beauty of diverse perspectives and experiences.

First up, we have "Cultivating Inclusive Kids" by Sheena Low, which discusses how we can all raise thoughtful, global citizens who know how to embrace and celebrate diversity around them. Next we have "Living in a Diverse Community" in which Chinyere Nwachukwu addresses the challenges of multiculturalism and explains how, with some understanding and patience, these can be successfully overcome.

Rachel Ofo moves away from diversity in the physical world to that in today's digital settings. In "Digital Diversity and Boundaries", she gets into what this means for modern day parenting and why parents and caregivers ought to be vigilant about the exposure their children get online.

On our creative and culinary sides, Anelia Van Zyl brings Latin America and South Africa to our doorsteps. Get artistic with the kids and make one of the cultural symbols of the Huichol people in Mexico, "Ojo de Dios". It's also the perfect opportunity to learn about these indigenous people's beliefs and customs, as well as the wider country. And if this gets the wheels of curiosity turning in your homes, why not cook up some "Delicious Bobotie" and learn about South Africa, where the dish hails from, and Indonesia and the Netherlands, where it actually originates.

Readers' Corner also explores the topic of diversity with books "Skin Like Mine" by LaTashia M. Perry and "The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Life on the Move" by Sonia Shah. In the former, young readers are not only encouraged to take pride in their appearance, but also to appreciate how their friends look different, and in the latter adult readers are reminded of the power and strength that lies in embracing diversity.

We also have "Breathing Well Indoors" by Diane Archer and a poem, "Happiness is a Choice", by Cecilia Yu. Diane's article is a must-read for parents curious to know how to ensure the best indoor air quality for their family's well-being, and Cecilia's poem captures her thoughts on finding joy in the ordinary, yet extraordinary, moments in life. Joseph Barker also delights us with a hilarious and honest take on the complicated relationship between his son and food in "Food, Glorious Food". Do give it a read if you're looking for some laughs to brighten your day!

Overall, we hope this issue serves as a source of inspiration and guidance on your parenting journey and strengthens your commitment to nurturing the next generation of empathetic and inclusive minds. I'd like to thank my team for their hard work and our writers for contributing their time and voices. Have a happy October ahead filled with all the excitement and fun diversity adds to our lives!

Sanam  
Editor



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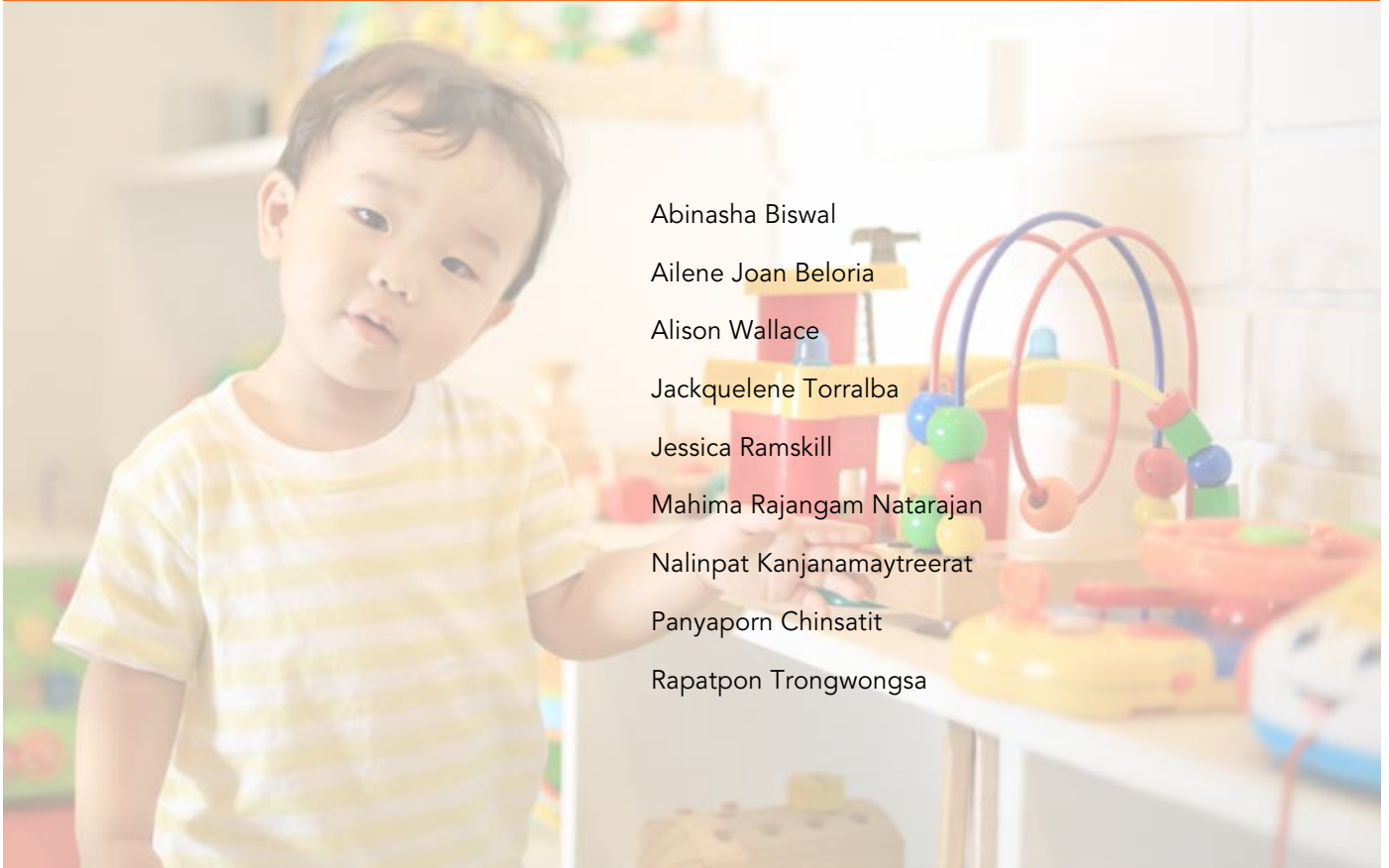
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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY FROM BAMBI!

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# CULTIVATING INCLUSIVE KIDS



We all want our children to be kind and considerate citizens of the world, welcoming of others, and comfortable in different cultures. Sheena shares her top tips for exploring, celebrating, and enjoying the diversity all around us.

Hey there, fellow globe-trotting parents in the wild and wonderful land of Thailand! We know what it's like to juggle Grab dinners, go on tuk-tuk adventures, and chase after little ones who seem to have more energy than a Muay Thai fighter. But amidst all the chaos, we have a crucial responsibility—to teach our mini adventurers about diversity and inclusion. Don't worry; we've got your back with 12 fun and slightly silly ways to get the job done! These can all be done from the comfort of your home or elsewhere in Thailand, so you don't need to hop on a plane to get on board with Global Diversity Awareness Month!

## 1. Embrace the rainbow

One of the joys of living in the Land of Smiles is the openly celebrated LGBTQ+ community! And trust us, this isn't just about colorful parades and flashy costumes—it's about accepting and loving people for who they are, no matter who they love, and it's a valuable lesson we can impart to our kids. Love is love, no matter its form, and by embracing the diversity in our community, we teach our children to love and respect everyone

regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Thailand hosts various LGBTQ+ events and Pride parades that embody the spirit of inclusivity. Attending these events as a family can be a powerful way to show support for the LGBTQ+ community and to encourage open, age-appropriate conversations about diversity, tailored to your child's age and understanding.

## 2. BAMBI: Where playdates turn into inclusive adventures

Alright, parents—it's time to unleash the power of playdates! And when

it comes to making connections, BAMBI events are where the magic happens—from soccer classes to kung fu, from music to big bashes for Halloween and Christmas (both coming up this year). Activities like these are the perfect chance for our little rockstars to share their ideas, cultures, languages, and joy, proving that friendship knows no borders.

## 3. Let's play "spot the difference: culture edition"

We're about to drop a secret parenting weapon on you—games! Turn your living room into a space where kids play "spot the difference: culture







edition". Gather pictures, books, or items from different cultures and let your tiny detectives find the unique details. Who can spot the Thai elephant amongst the Chinese dragons? The reward? High fives, hugs, and a big dose of cultural understanding!

#### **4. Dance, sing, and tumble —around the world**

Who said learning about diversity had to be boring? Crank up the tunes from different countries and have a dance party like no other. From traditional Thai music to Bollywood beats, your living room will host a dance floor extravaganza. Let your kids explore the sounds and sing songs from around the world—let's see who can rock the karaoke mic like a pro!

#### **5. World food Wednesday —an international feast**

Are you ready for a culinary adventure? It's time to introduce "world food Wednesday"—an international feast right in your kitchen! Each family member chooses a dish from a different country or picks a cuisine for their week. They need to do a bit of research on the cuisine or dish of their choice and share what they learn. It's

all about trying new flavors, expanding horizons, and maybe discovering that your little one's a pad Thai connoisseur or a sushi gastronome.

#### **6. Binge-watch the world**

Okay, I confess—I love a good Netflix binge. But instead of sticking to one show, let's binge-watch the world. From animated tales that highlight different cultures to documentaries about people from diverse backgrounds, your kids can become little globetrotters without leaving the couch.

#### **7. Visit temples and places of worship**

Thailand's rich tapestry of beliefs and religions provides an excellent opportunity for teaching inclusion. Take your children to visit temples, mosques, churches, and other places of worship. Emphasize the significance of these sites to different communities, and how they promote peace, love, and harmony. This experience will not only enhance their cultural understanding, but also reinforce the importance of respecting others' faiths.

#### **8. Engage with social initiatives**

Thailand's inclusive spirit extends beyond its borders to encompass various social initiatives that strive for equity and support marginalized communities. Get involved with these initiatives as a family, whether it's participating in awareness walks and fundraisers, or volunteering with charities that promote inclusion. This involvement will not only teach your children about diversity but will also instill in them the value of compassion and active engagement in creating positive change.

#### **9. Encourage cultural show and tell**

Create a space for your children to share their unique cultural experiences with others. Host a "cultural show and tell" playdate where children can share traditional clothing, customs, music, or stories from their native countries. This exchange of cultural knowledge will foster mutual respect and curiosity about one another's backgrounds. Schools in Thailand often have such activities, and if not, here's something for the suggestion box!



### 10. Practice empathy and active listening

Teach your children the art of empathy and active listening. Encourage them to express their feelings and opinions openly, while acknowledging that others' perspectives and needs may be different and that's OK. By practicing empathy, they'll learn to appreciate the challenges faced by people from different walks of life, fostering an inclusive and understanding mindset.

### 11. Toys and books: pick 'em wisely, peeps!

Choosing toys and books is like curating your kid's very own adventure map. Go for ones that show a cast of characters as diverse as a Bangkok street food market. When your kid's playtime posse includes dolls of different backgrounds and

abilities, and they read books that explore how different we all are, you're basically giving them a one-way ticket to becoming a certified diversity champion.

Storytime is an essential part of most bedtime routines, but why settle for the same old stories? Let's kick it up a notch with inclusive tales that celebrate diversity. Look for books featuring characters from various backgrounds, different abilities, and family structures.

### 12. Mind your biases ... because we all have 'em

Ah, biases—we all have them, like that favorite food stall you visit way too often. But here's the thing: kids are like sponges soaking everything up, including our quirky biases and unintentional stereotypes. It's like they have a radar for sniffing out

every eye roll and offhand comment. So, let's be aware of our own biases, check them at the door, and model the open-mindedness we want our tiny humans to embody.

### In a nutshell ... or maybe a coconut shell

So there you have it, dear expat comrades—12 tips to instill the values of diversity and inclusion in our kiddos. Global Diversity Awareness Month isn't just an opportunity to wear a sombrero on Monday, a kimono on Tuesday, and a kilt on Wednesday. It's about creating a colorful world for our kids, where differences aren't just tolerated—they're celebrated like the grand finale of a fireworks show.

*Photos courtesy of the author and Canva.*



#### About the Author

Sheena Low is an aspiring children's book author, mother to two-year-old August, and runs Super Fly Honey, a pole activewear brand. In December 2020, anticipating the need for a nanny following her surprise pregnancy, she moved from Amsterdam to Bangkok. When August was born, it turned out she wanted to swap her more-than-full-time working hours for life as a full-time mom. She's still baffled how that seismic shift of identity occurred.



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# LIVING IN A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Chinyere celebrates the joys of multiculturalism and reminds us that whilst differences between cultures can be challenging, we get to choose how we react to those challenges and build bridges instead of barriers.

When Miss Blossom relocated to the United Kingdom in January of 2021, she was excited for the life that lay ahead of her. That was until she realized she was living in a community with a mix of practices very different to those she was used to. Within days, she began to feel lonely and almost depressed. She would call in the middle of the night, lamenting her loneliness and saying how she would take any opportunity to come back home. This is the reality that a lot of people face when they live in a multicultural community. It has been over two years now, and Miss Blossom has fallen in love with her new home because she decided to learn about the people she was living with. Even though it took some effort on her part, she is now enjoying every bit of her new life.

They say that variety is the spice of life, and this is evident in a multicultural community. Imagine the beauty in living in a community of people who are different in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, language, religion, culture, ability, and even cuisine. While living in such a setting is not devoid of challenges, the experience is enriching for individuals and families alike.

The diversity of a community is a huge gold mine because each member brings their own unique experiences and background to the table. These differences create opportunities for

learning, understanding, growth, and connections that go beyond physical boundaries. And for parents, a setting such as this encourages your children to embrace a world far beyond their doorstep, teaching them the priceless values of tolerance and compassion, as well as giving them a healthy sense of belonging.

This is why we must be intentional about adapting to this dynamic and taking it further by teaching our children and communities to do the same. By doing this, you're not just raising children—you're producing a generation of global citizens who will prosper anywhere.

## Culture shock

Culture shock is a real thing. While it may be easier for us as adults to adapt to a new culture, it might be a struggle for our children. It is our responsibility to teach them how to respond when they encounter people who are different from them. For instance, I was raised to never call my elders by their names. Never! If you did, you were looked on as ignorant. Imagine my shock when I traveled and discovered that in some cultures it was okay to address older people by their first names. I struggled with this in the beginning and almost always felt like I was being rude and disrespectful. I started to feel better when I realized that these people did not mind at all. They even preferred

to be addressed by their first names.

Another event that stands out to me is when a friend got married to someone from a different culture. She was shocked to discover that her prospective in-laws expected her to lie flat on the ground in front of them as a form of greeting and respect. This was their culture. It didn't matter how formally dressed you were; if you were greeting an elder, it was expected of you. It was important to them, so she had to make up her mind to accept it and just do it.

Another advantage of living in a multicultural community is the opportunity to learn new languages. As a young child, my parents moved for work. So I grew up speaking the local dialect. This endeared me to the locals, and they were always surprised to learn that I was not a native. Even though I have long since moved away, every time I meet someone from there, I make sure to open a conversation with them in their own language, and the joy that lights up their faces makes it worth it every time. Learning and communicating in a new language opens doors for new job prospects, fosters lifelong friendships, and enhances the enjoyment of travel, both locally and internationally.

Furthermore, being part of a multicultural community can help reduce bias and discrimination. Living along-





side individuals from different backgrounds promotes compassion and empathy by challenging the stereotypes or preconceived notions we may have.

As a young girl, I was told never to consider marrying someone from a certain tribe because they were cannibals. I made up my mind not to marry there, and I made sure that everybody around me knew not to marry there. Fast forward a few years later; guess who I married? You guessed right: I discovered that the stories being peddled were false, and I was sorry that I had participated in telling them.

People need to understand that everybody is different, and it is important that children are taught this. As parents and guardians, we

must guide them carefully through this journey of discovery.

### **Challenges of living in a multicultural community**

As much as we celebrate diversity and the rewarding experiences it offers, we cannot ignore its challenges. Communication is one of the biggest challenges of living in a multicultural community. People communicate differently, and this can sometimes lead to squabbles. Even non-verbal gestures can be misinterpreted across different cultures. Yet in these moments lies a profound opportunity to learn how to communicate without making assumptions or having any biases. The same applies to norms, values, religious practices, and even the simplest of things like food and clothing. What may be considered accept-

able behavior in one culture may be frowned upon in another. This is why we should learn to be open-minded towards others and remember that these things can serve as bridges or barriers depending on how we approach them.

Isolation and loneliness are issues that are not talked about enough. People who come from different cultural backgrounds may find it difficult to fit in and may lean toward living alone out of concern that they won't be understood by others. This can lead to severe depression and social anxiety. People also gravitate towards those who share their beliefs and cultural background. This defeats the essence of community and undermines the benefits of coexistence and diversity.





## How to embrace and encourage inclusion

Creating an inclusive community is both an individual and collective responsibility. It requires deliberate effort. And while it may not be easy at the beginning, it gets easier with practice. Here are some tips to help you live and survive in a multicultural community:

- Understand that creating an inclusive community is a shared responsibility. We all have a duty to promote diversity and should get involved in educating ourselves and other people on its benefits. This can be done by organizing and participating in workshops, seminars, town hall meetings, and the like. We can also employ social media as a tool for encouraging diversity and harmonious living.
- Remember that living in a multicultural environment is not just about coexisting but about building lasting connections. You can start by embracing a healthy curiosity about other people. Be genuinely interested in their customs, their holidays, and even their stories. Take the time to understand the nuances and differences of each culture. And if you are a parent, remember that your children are learning how to engage with the world through watching you.
- Don't be too quick to judge a person just because they are different from you. Show respect for the traditions and beliefs of others. Toss stereotypes aside, keep an open mind, and avoid making assumptions and unfounded generalizations about others. Engage in meaningful conversations and ask appropriate questions to gain deeper insight into the values that shape people's lives. Appreciate the beauty of diversity and the fragrance that it adds to life. Imagine how boring life would be otherwise.
- Always speak up for the under-represented or marginalized members of the community, and ensure that you are doing your best to see that they have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and services.
- Don't be an island. Be social and friendly. You can share your stories and culture with other people. Participate in the celebrations and events of other members of the community. In this way, you become a bridge builder.
- Be patient and understanding when interacting with people from different cultures. Recognise that misunderstandings and friction may occur and be willing to work through them.

Living in a multicultural society can be a truly rich and rewarding experience. It helps you broaden your perspective, thereby becoming a more accepting and tolerant human being. This is not to say that it doesn't come with challenges. As long as some form of difference exists, friction and misunderstandings are bound to occur. However, the responsibility to foster peace and understanding lies squarely on our shoulders. By making the effort to be more accepting of others, we build stronger relationships and a more inclusive community.

*Photos from Canva.*



### About the Author

Chinyere Nwachukwu is a mom of three and an entrepreneur. She helps other moms start and scale their own businesses from home by leveraging digital skills. When she's not working, she's spending time trying out new recipes in the kitchen or reading a thriller novel.





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**BAMBI**



They say reading opens up the world to you, and we couldn't agree more. Hence for this month's cover we chose to shoot at the Neilson Hays Library where our cover models, representing some of the cultures, ethnicities, and faiths we see around us in Bangkok, spent some time browsing through the shelves and reading books that promote diversity and inclusion. The shoot was a fun and rewarding experience for everyone involved, and we just couldn't resist sharing some extras from the day. Aren't our models simply adorable?

# EXTRAS FROM OUR COVER SHOOT







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# DIGITAL DIVERSITY AND BOUNDARIES



Rachel delves into the realm of digital diversity and shows you how you can safeguard your kids by setting boundaries in the ever-expanding digital landscape.

The world as we see it today is one of screens, filters, and AI generations. The lines of authentic and altered have been blurred, and having a digital identity—that is, who we are online—is the new norm. In the future, this online presence will arguably be just as important as our physical self. Considering how widespread social media is globally, it's rare (or, dare I say, odd) to come across someone without at least one social media account. Facebook alone boasts nearly three billion active users (1). Of course, we must consider those who run multiple accounts; however, three billion accounts would mean nearly one-third of the population spends time scrolling through the digital world. From ten-second comedy skits to professional business profiles, there's a social media site for everyone. And if you're like me, you might have a few different sites, for who you may need to be at different points in time.

That brings us to our main point: identity. Identity is such a complex idea because humans are complex beings. Who we are to our boss is different to who we are to our children. Who our children are to us is probably different to who they are online. Even for our young children, the toddler who can't eat without making a mess may be a successful farmer in their Webkinz life. So how do we set up digital boundaries, allowing our children to embrace all versions of themselves,

without being sucked into the dangers that may come within the world of digital identity? As parents, it's important to understand who our children are, who they are interacting with, and what they wish to gain from social media.

Who we are is largely affected by who we surround ourselves with. The person we see in the mirror was formed by those we went to college with, the employee at the desk next to ours, and even minute factors, like the old man who gave us a candy when we were children—the candy that is now our favorite and reminds us of a time in our past.

Many of us are living in a country far away from home. One British, Bangkok-based mom, Kim\*, created a social media account for her child at a week old: not only for friends and family back home to follow, but for her child to have a digital diary to look back on when she's older. She states, "Living abroad means that we are away from a lot of friends and family, so having an online presence means that they can see her [child] developing and reaching her milestones; all the things that they miss in person!" This could lead to a very diverse online circle of friends on top of those we see in person. Every single puzzle piece that makes us who we are will trickle down to who and what we interact with on social media. That means who we follow, who we allow

to follow us, and which groups we request admission to are all dependent on a multitude of factors.

As daunting as it may seem, the best way to keep your child safe, while allowing them the privilege of using social media, is to either keep a private profile and accept only those you know, or vet every single person who your child wishes to follow or vice versa. Another mom, Anna\*, prefers to keep her life private. Although she follows a few influencers like chefs and parenting experts, her profile is private, and she rarely posts. She's also never shared her children's faces online. She plans on keeping it that way until they're around ten years old. She states, "I only share pictures of them with family members and close friends on WhatsApp. I have also asked our nanny not to post pictures of our children." The latter is something many moms must contend with, particularly in Bangkok, where nannies snapping photos of children at Kidzoonia is a common sight. However, keeping your child's identity off social media means there will be zero chance of attracting any unwanted online attention.

Child influencers are common. We like to watch that baby with the big personality. We enjoy seeing the young boy whose flavor palate is comparable to that of a Michelin chef. We love the child who forages and knows the difference between poisonous





and safe mushrooms. However, how comfortable are we with allowing others to follow our children's lives? This is a question that must be answered prior to setting up an account. This is because when followers come, the unwarranted advice, unwanted opinions, and unwelcome comments will follow. Unfortunately, because everyone has their own opinion—yay, diversity!—there is a belief that it should be shared online, regardless of the relevance or the negative impact it may have.

At this point, teaching our children to find validation within themselves and controlling the time they spend on social media will help foil some of the inevitable negatives. One thing about the digital world is that if

we're running a non-private account, we can only block so many accounts and delete so many comments. Most of the boundaries we set have to be between ourselves and our children and what we do, and less about what those that follow us do. Kim\* reveals how she monitors who follows her baby's page for any questionable followers or spam accounts. Once we know who we want interacting with our children, then we can set boundaries on who our children can be online.

No two children are the same. I think most parents can attest to this. The diversity among children, even within a home, is astounding. So you can imagine what can show up online. After spending her first five years in Bangkok, my daughter has friends

from all different backgrounds and cultures. So naturally, the same is true online, except on a grander scale. The number of profiles I've come across highlighting lifestyles I'd never even heard of—maximalist fashion, cooking in the woods, forensic pathology—is eye-opening, and it's never-ending, because, well, diversity is never-ending.

However, these profiles didn't come by chance. Because many social media platforms are controlled by algorithms—calculations made to control who sees what—what our children click on, like, share, and save—even if it's just once—will be incorporated into their feeds. So even though we appreciate our children being exposed to diverse people and ideas, we must remember that identity is ever changing, so what they see will affect who they become now and down the line. Anna\* stresses the importance of teaching her children to understand that "social media is not an accurate representation of people's lives", and she wouldn't want her children pretending to be someone else. This, of course, will boil down to how and how often the account is used.

Sharing, connecting, being a "ghost follower" and looking but not doing much else—there are various reasons to join the world of social media. The what, why, and how are important. Because just as every profile





differs, the motives behind the profile's creation differs. Identity theft, fake information, scams, and even catfishing run rampant throughout the digital world, and as more connections are made, the higher the risk of falling into these traps. So drawing boundaries on how your child will use their account is a step in keeping them safe.

Kim\* admits that although these dangers are out there, she hasn't put too much thought into them and has adopted a more relaxed attitude, as the dangers of things like photo theft seem to be more common with adults than with babies. However, as her daughter gets older and will most likely have her own account, she will be "looking over her shoulder". Because as with most parents, focussing on protecting the child here, napping next to us, is a priority. And with all that happens in the physical world around us, that's a task in itself. Anna\* agrees with the sentiment of keeping a close eye on her children if they

eventually open their own accounts, and she "would like to be able to see their posts". These are necessary boundaries to keep children safe.

Some see boundaries as a hindrance when they're actually a protection. Overall, one of the best things a parent can do is be open and honest with their children about the positives and negatives of social media use and what should and shouldn't be shared with the digital world. Just like we wouldn't share our home address with a random stranger on Sukhumvit Road, these safety measures must be taken with those we meet online as well. Social media has its benefits. At the end of the day, because of how diverse parents are in the raising of their children, there is no right or wrong way. Both Kim and Anna understandably want to utilize social media to stay in touch with people. Parents just need to set their boundaries from the beginning. What are hard "no's"? Which rules have some wiggle room? The point

is, as diverse and interesting as the world is, raising open and understanding children shouldn't be a mission. Where we are as a society allows for even the most niche group to find a community—on the other side of the world, across the seas. However, there are dangers online, and even the most skilled sailors must study the waters.

Don't be afraid to see what's out there. Check sites, screen users, verify site rules: become your child's personal detective. Don't be afraid to ask questions. The best way to keep our children safe is to prepare for the roughest storms, while allowing them to explore the waters of identity and social media.

*Photos from Canva.*

\*Names have been changed to respect the anonymity of interviewees.

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## About the Author

Rachel Ofo moved from the US to Bangkok in 2016 and spent six and a half years there. She has a daughter, whom she loves dragging around on various adventures like hikes and fishing trips. In her free time, she enjoys reading, watching movies, and trying new restaurants. She also enjoys being out in nature.



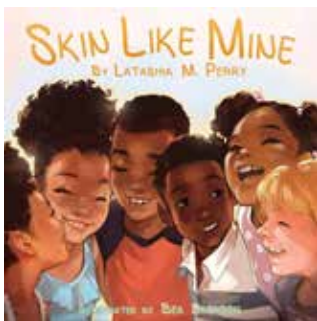
# BOOKS TO INSPIRE

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## SKIN LIKE MINE

by LaTashia M. Perry and Bea Jackson



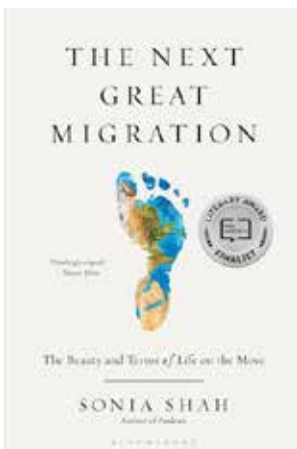
Using the hues of delicious treats to describe skin color, this is an adorably sweet introduction to the concepts of diversity and self-esteem. "Skin Like Mine" is the second book in the "Kids Like Me" series, the first of which is the popular book "Hair Like Mine". Both books celebrate differences and teach young children the important lesson of loving oneself without discriminating against others.

Author LaTashia M. Perry's positive affirmations, coupled with illustrator Bea Jackson's vibrant illustrations, are captivating and empowering. The illustrations of caramel, chocolate, and other sweets are eye-catching, while the rhyme "skin like mine is quite divine!" is especially catchy. This book is perfect for young children of any color to build awareness and affection for themselves and their friends.

*Published by G Publishing in November 2016. Author LaTashia M. Perry is the creator of the "Kids Like Me" series. Artist Bea Jackson has illustrated several bestselling children's books. "Skin Like Mine" is suitable for ages 3–7. A board book copy can be found in the Children's Corner of the Neilson Hays Library.*

## THE NEXT GREAT MIGRATION: THE BEAUTY AND TERROR OF LIFE ON THE MOVE

by Sonia Shah



Award-winning investigative journalist Sonia Shah challenges longstanding narratives about migration by examining history, science, and politics. The book dives into refugee crises, botany, and genealogy amongst other interesting topics. Shah contends that diversity and movement are not only a fact of life but the solution to our planet's climate change conundrum.

Shah's thorough research is enhanced by her compelling and compassionate storytelling. She can present complex subject matter in intriguing and relatable ways. This thought-provoking book will leave the reader reflecting on their own biases and experiences and the beautiful power of diversity and mobility in our ever-changing world.

*Published by Bloomsbury Publishing in June 2020. "The Next Great Migration" is the fifth book by journalist and author Sonia Shah. It can be found in the non-fiction section of the Neilson Hays Library.*

**Prepared by Angela Chen**, a Neilson Hays Library Board Member and the 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 club, 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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# FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD



Joseph (Joe) Barker tells us about his toddler's eating antics and how he continues to ensure his child has a (sort of) balanced diet.

Shortly before becoming a parent, I saw a Facebook post about the sugar-free pumpkin, carrot, and beetroot cakes someone had baked for their child. "Yuck," I thought. "That will never be me." How right I was, but as Martin devours another red velvet cake, whilst clutching a chocolate blondie, I do fear that I've gone a bit too far the other way!

Like so many people, I feel that my relationship with food should be better. So I intended to encourage my son to enjoy his fruit and vegetables, to look at cake and sweet things as an occasional treat rather than a necessity of daily life, and to avoid too many processed foods and refined sugars. Perhaps mommy and daddy would also learn to eat better at the same time?

Naturally, this healthy food would be lovingly and hygienically prepared and served, but we wouldn't be raising a fussy eater as he would be eating the same meals as mommy and daddy and at the same time too. Of course, I realized there would be challenges ahead. I imagined that as a teenager he was bound to rebel and want to try burgers or KFC, but in my imagination, the strong foundations of healthy eating built in his first decade of life would see us through that crisis when it came. Oh, the naivety! I blush at the thought of how little I knew then.

## Fine beginnings

It all started so well. After six months of nothing but milk, Martin started gobbling down mashed vegetables like they were the most exciting food on earth. In hindsight, I realized that after six months of nothing but milk, pureed vegetables—or indeed any non-milk item—were probably the most exciting thing on earth! After vegetables had gone so well, we started to slowly introduce other foods. By eight months, all my food ambitions seemed to have been achieved: He was happily eating a wide range of foods and sharing everything on mommy and daddy's plates. Why, we wondered, do people claim that feeding babies is so hard?

## Then it started to unravel

First to go was yogurt. "It was an old pot," we said. "Perhaps it had gone sour," we said. "We'll try again in a few days." Then in quick succession it was "no" to carrots, broccoli, and pumpkin. "But you liked it yesterday!" we'd cry, in futile despair, as the lovingly proffered food was spat out, ignored, or greeted with screams of protest. It's now been over a year since he ate any obvious vegetables. If he detects even a sliver of carrot or pumpkin in a mouthful of food, the whole lot is regurgitated and a reproachful eye fixed on his would-be poisoner. If it wasn't for curries, there

wouldn't be any vegetables in his diet, unless fries count, and I'm starting to believe they should count.

## A strong immune system

So much for my foolish assumption of a wide and varied diet, but what about the lovingly and hygienically prepared and served food? Again we started strong—everything was thoroughly cleaned and steamed between uses, and he ate only in his highchair. Then we realized that after every meal he would sit under the highchair eating the food he'd spilled on the floor. Well it's probably good for his immune system, we reasoned. When he started doing the same outside, we tried to stop him, but it soon became apparent that his desire to eat dirty things was far stronger than our ability to stop him. Now it seems that meals are as likely to be eaten off the floor as off a plate.

This is not his only source of presumably delicious dirt. We enjoyed going to the park to feed the fish, until we realized that Marty was working on the "one for you, one for me" principle. It doesn't seem to do him any harm, but I seem to spend more time taking fish food out of his mouth than actually feeding the fish.

Nor are fish the only animals he likes to share food with. Granny and Grandpa have two labrador puppies.





Marty used food to bribe his way into this little pack of hounds and spent happy hours chasing them, climbing on them, sleeping in their basket and, of course, sharing his food with them. A lick for Willow, a bite for Marty, a lick for Hazel—and so it would go until the food was finished. Then he'd hold out his hands for the dogs to lick clean, before sticking them back in his mouth. This didn't seem very hygienic, but separating boy, dogs, and food proved impossible.

### Daddy's diet

Marty has also affected daddy's diet. I don't just mean the month where I had to have chocolate for breakfast in a desperate attempt to sustain morale and energy after another 4am wake up, nor the frequent afternoon trips to the café for cake, and hopefully wine, which childcare so often seems to demand. Instead, I'm thinking about the quality of daddy's food and, in particular, how rarely in the past my food would be "second-hand". Now, rarely a meal goes by

where I don't find myself eating half-chewed mango or regurgitated curry that didn't quite meet the standards of our little gourmet. More often than not, my cheese on toast is just well-licked toast, and, most awful of all, my sausage sandwiches are just bread and brown sauce.

### His own boss

Martin expects regular trips to cafés and pubs for cake and soda water. In fact, any time we put him in his stroller, he'll ask hopefully, "Café, cake?" Or if he's being difficult, we'll promise him café and cake if he gets in the stroller, then push him, sniggering evilly, to the hospital or dentist. Recently, when we were staying next door to a pub, our morning walk would start with a mournful "pub not open" and finish with a hopeful "pub open?" Our afternoon walk, on the other hand, would rarely get further than a gleeful "pub open!" Followed by a rush through the door and a demand for "soda naam" (soda water). The things we do for our children!

Almost every afternoon, I was forced to have a pint or two of beer instead of going on a slide.

Developing character and independence is obviously an important part of growing up, but it appears that at two, Marty already has more character and independence than we can cope with. Not only has he got us well-trained in taking him for cake, ice cream, and soda naam, but he has also started helping himself to things from the fridge. Our butter has fingerprints in it, the pineapple has tooth marks, and the soda water bottles are scattered around the house. We should demand our money back on those childproof locks!

So not much success with those ambitious food plans of mine. Turns out the only thing that really matters to me is that he eats plenty and continues to grow and have boundless energy. Time for an ice cream. Bon appetit.

*Photos from Canva.*



### About the Author

Having enjoyed taking his son to BAMBI playgroups over the months, Joe is excited to volunteer with BAMBI. He and his wife moved to Thailand from the UK in 2018. In 2021 they were delighted to be joined by their son, Martin. They love exploring Thailand as a family, especially anywhere with a playground or sand!

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# BREATHING WELL INDOORS



Breathe healthy and be healthy. Social scientist Diane shares her perspective on air quality in Bangkok homes and schools as both a researcher and a mother, and suggests steps to ensure your indoor air is healthy for you and your family.

As the new school year starts, parents sending their little ones to kindergarten for the first time may be bracing themselves for a few months of illness as their toddler catches every infection going through the school. This is normal, right? Actually, it doesn't have to be the norm. We have come to expect constant illness as kids are packed into classrooms and sharing their germs, but if the COVID pandemic has taught us anything, it's that indoor air quality makes a huge difference to health.

In Thailand, we are all very aware of ambient (outdoor) air quality, with PM2.5 pollution being an unfortunate constant problem for a few months of the year. For those of us lucky enough to be able to afford them, we can protect ourselves with the use of quality pollution masks when outdoors and air purifiers and closed windows in indoor environments. Many schools also have air purifiers in classrooms, filtering the air to trap particulate matter and—if they include a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter—pollen, mold spores, and viruses.

However, another aspect of air quality that doesn't get as much visibility is indoor air quality, which can directly affect cognitive ability (through CO<sub>2</sub> levels) and health.

Many viruses, including COVID, the flu, RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) and whooping cough, are airborne—they travel on tiny particles in the air and can remain floating for many hours. Even an empty room can still harbor floating virus particles if a previous occupant was infected. If inhaled by another person, the virus can take hold and cause illness.

This is why ventilation is an important part of indoor air quality. Ventilation means bringing in outside air to dilute and flush out the air inside a room. A typical air conditioner doesn't provide external air but recycles indoor air. Open windows and doors are the best means of ensuring ventilation in a typical home or classroom, though many modern buildings have built-in ventilation systems that vent in outdoor air (hopefully with some form of filtration) and extract indoor air.

How can we assess ventilation? The best proxy is by monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> levels. Every human breathes out CO<sub>2</sub>, meaning levels can rise very quickly in enclosed spaces like classrooms, meeting rooms, and cars. Research has shown that high levels of CO<sub>2</sub> affect our cognitive abilities (1). If we want our children to perform well in school and remain alert and able to concentrate, CO<sub>2</sub> levels should be kept as low as possible.

Additionally, the more CO<sub>2</sub> present in a room, the higher your chances of breathing air that has already been through someone else's lungs—and if that person is ill, they will be breathing out virus particles. Outdoor CO<sub>2</sub> levels hover around 420 parts per million (ppm), and this is the gold standard to aim for indoors, though anything below 800 ppm is considered good indoor air quality (2). At 1200 ppm, 2% of the air you are breathing is rebreathed; at 3600 ppm, 8% of the air, or one in every 12–13 breaths you take, will be air that has already been exhaled (3).

My husband taught in a school with sealed windows and air conditioning, and the CO<sub>2</sub> level quickly reached 2500 ppm during his class. But the windows were locked so he couldn't ensure improved ventilation, and there was no air purifier. This was bad both for the students' concentration and ability, and for the risk of virus transmission if someone was sick.

A high CO<sub>2</sub> reading doesn't always mean that you will be inhaling virus particles. When filtration is available, via one or more well-functioning HEPA air purifiers of the appropriate power for the size of the room, it will be able to trap virus and other particles. However it won't affect CO<sub>2</sub> levels, so the cognitive impacts will remain.



Good ventilation combined with particle filtration can help to improve cognitive performance whilst keeping us healthy. Of course, this won't stop 100% of all virus transmission—as children often get in close contact with each other, and some viruses effectively spread through contact as well as through aerosols—but good indoor air can significantly help to reduce illness (4,5,6). Governments are increasingly moving to regulate indoor air. For example, France sets 800 ppm as the upper limit for safe air in schools and daycares (7), while Belgium will require CO<sub>2</sub> readings to be visible in public spaces (8).



### Practical tips for healthy indoor air

So, what practical actions can we take to ensure healthy indoor air for our children and ourselves? Here are some ideas:

- Replicate the outdoors as much as possible by opening windows and doors for good airflow in indoor spaces. Having at least two windows or doors open creates airflow.
- If PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels are high, close windows and doors and instead run a HEPA air purifier. Replace the filter regularly, and make sure the purifier is powerful enough for the size of the room—the more air changes per hour it offers, the better. More than one machine

might be required in larger or more crowded rooms. The US CDC recommends at least five air changes per hour (2).

- Talk to your child's school about what they are doing to both filter and ventilate the air in classrooms. Ask how often they check the filters on air purifiers. Make sure purifiers are running all year round and on a sufficiently powerful setting—not just to catch particulate matter during PM<sub>2.5</sub> season but also to catch viruses, mold, and pollen every day. Check whether they open windows to flush out the air between classes and overnight. Ask how they monitor indoor air quality—for both PM<sub>2.5</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub>. Are the lunchroom and gym well

ventilated and air filtered too?

- Don't forget the school bus! Does it have a portable air purifier or built-in HEPA filter in the air conditioning system? (Opening windows in Bangkok traffic is not advisable!)
- Avoid sending sick children to school, and make sure they are wearing KN94/N95 masks if they are still displaying symptoms when they return.
- Consider investing in a good quality CO<sub>2</sub> monitor so you can assess the quality of the air around you and take appropriate action to improve it.

*Photos from Canva.*

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### About the Author

Diane Archer is a social scientist researching sustainable development in Asia, including air pollution and its differentiated impacts on population groups. Her son, Martin, regularly enjoys BAMBI playgroups.

# OJO DE DIOS

Anelia shows us how to get culturally crafty with this little Latin American art piece. It's simple yet fun to make!

Main photo from Canva

# M

My heart beats to the rhythm of everything Latin American! This month, I've chosen a special craft that originates in Mexico and serves as a cultural symbol of the indigenous Huichol people. "Ojo de Dios", which means "God's Eye", provides protection and symbolizes spiritual importance in some beliefs. Furthermore, it's admired for its cultural importance in Mexican heritage and also in its artistry.

The Huichol people believed that crafting Ojo de Dios could protect them from harm and bring them good luck. The Ojo de Dios carries a special meaning: It represents the power of seeing and understanding the world—like a window to the soul. For the Huichol people, it was also a way to connect with their gods and ancestors, making it a significant part of their spiritual practices.

The version of Ojo de Dios we'll make here is basic, but I've seen some pretty impressive ones online. Also do yourself a favor and go read about Mexican arts—specifically Ojo de Dios!

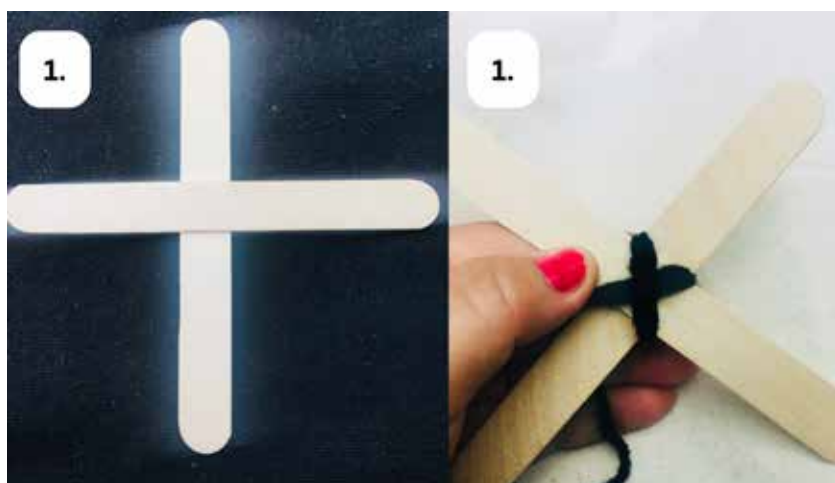
For this project, you can use a range of different things like sticks, straws, and even pencils as a cross. If you want to make tiny ones, you can use toothpicks and thread. Make your design more interesting by using different colors of yarn. Change to a new color by simply switching the previous color after it has been wrapped a few times. Have fun!

## SUPPLIES

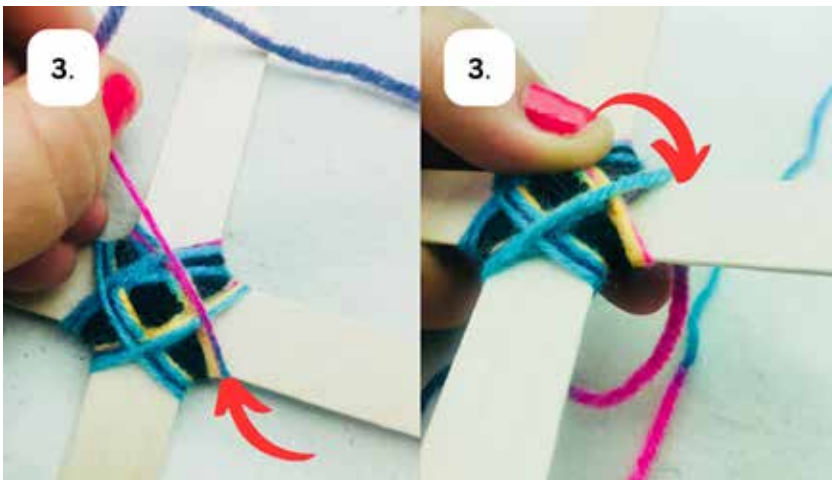
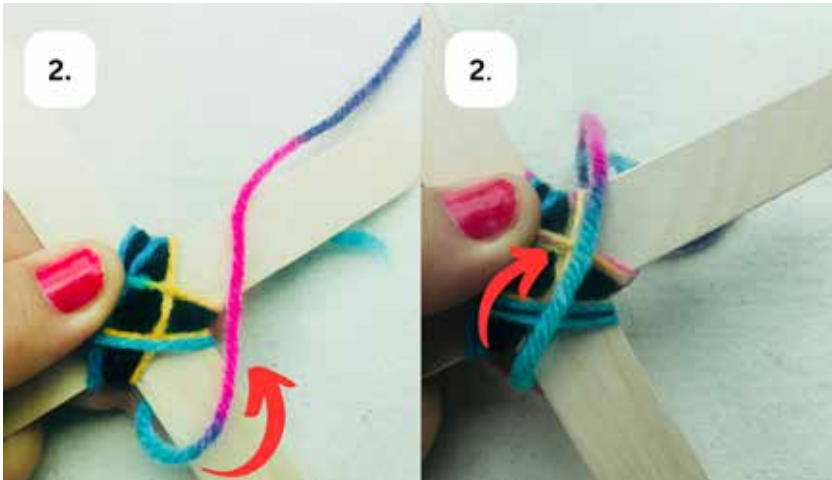
- Craft glue
- Two or three colors of yarn
- Two large craft sticks (popsicle sticks)
- Cross stitch or tapestry needle
- Scissors

## PROCESS

1. Put the sticks together to form an "X". Wind some yarn around the middle of the X a few times to keep the sticks together and create the eye (ojo). If little hands are making this craft, you can glue the sticks together before you start to make it easier for them to handle.







2. Now that the middle part is secure, it's time to start weaving. Firmly hold the end of one stick and wrap the yarn around it once.
3. Then, turning the X in a clockwise motion as you wrap, take the yarn over and around the next stick. Repeat the process—wrapping the yarn over and around each stick—until you want to change color.
4. Leave 5 cm of the starting yarn and tie the next color of yarn to it. Make sure that the knot is on the "backside" of the X as you continue weaving.
5. As you continue with the different colors, you will see the weave forming. Keep weaving until there is about 1 cm of stick left on each point of the X.
6. When you reach the end, cut the yarn to about 20 cm. Using a cross-stitching needle (adult supervision required), thread the remaining yarn through a few strands on the back of the cross to secure it.

Hang your Ojo de Dios on the wall to add some beauty to your room, or hang it by the window and see how the sunlight makes the colors pop. You can even give it to someone as a special gift. Either way, you'll enjoy making it!

*Photos courtesy of the author.*



### 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 @aneliazv.

# CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS



Want to have fun, work together with other great parents, brush up on your professional skills, and do something for the BAMBIs community? This is your chance.

BAMBIs is run by a group of lovely and dedicated volunteers, and from time to time, a number of critical roles need to be filled to ensure ongoing service to our members. BAMBIs is a fun and 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. Please note that as per BAMBIs constitution, interested candidates are required to have an active membership at the time of applying.

**The following opportunities are currently available:**

## CHAIRWOMAN

The chair is our CEO, our liaison with CBFT and other volunteer groups in Bangkok, and acts as BAMBIs'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 BAMBIs
- 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

## EVENTS COORDINATOR

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

### Responsibilities & duties

- coordinates the planning and delivery of BAMBIs'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





## NEW MEMBERS COORDINATOR

The new members coordinator attends monthly committee meetings as a voting member, and is the person responsible for welcoming and introducing BAMB! members and their families to the community.

### Responsibilities & duties

- arranges monthly New Members' Coffee Mornings (one weekday morning per month)
- arranges Pop Up Playgroups (usually one Saturday morning per month for 2–3 hours)
- maintains liaison with schools and other venues via email and site visits to arrange and host New Members' Coffee Mornings and Pop Up Playgroups

## ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

The activities coordinator attends monthly committee meetings as a voting member and is responsible for organizing and managing activities for older children between the ages of three and six.

### Responsibilities & duties

- plans and organizes profitable activities in coordination with venues and instructors
- ensures all activities are running to BAMB! standards
- recruits and trains activity leaders to assist in the management of activities and activity bookings
- steps in to support the running of an activity on the day if needed.







## EVENTS ASSISTANT

The events assistant supports the events coordinator with the planning of events and organizing 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 the media and website teams

## 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

# VOLUNTEER BENEFITS



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# DESPITE OUR DIFFERENCES

**THIS IS ME:**

**THIS IS: .....**

Ways ..... and I are the same:

Ways ..... and I are different:

**MY FAVORITE THING ABOUT ..... IS:**





# My Culture and Traditions



Foods that we eat:



Clothes worn in my culture:



Festivals in my culture:



My favorite tradition:



# DELICIOUS BOBOTIE

We're celebrating cultural diversity, and what better way to do that than with food! Let's get cooking with Anelia and feast on this multicultural favorite from South Africa.

Growing up on a beautiful farm in the Cederberg Mountains in South Africa, we always had fresh produce and good-quality meat to feast on. My mom was a master chef in my eyes and taught me all the things I know and love about cooking. I present to you her famous Bobotie! A Cape Malay favorite with origins in Indonesia and later the Netherlands, this classic dish is packed with flavor and will surely make you beg for more.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices of white bread, crusts removed
- 1 cup of milk
- 2 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp of curry powder
- 1 tsp of turmeric
- 1 tsp of ground cumin
- 1 tsp of ground coriander
- ½ tsp of ground cinnamon
- 450 g of ground beef
- 2 tbsp of white vinegar
- 2 tbsp of smooth apricot jam
- 2 medium eggs
- 5 fresh bay leaves
- ¼ cup of raisins (optional)
- Sliced almonds for topping (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste

## EQUIPMENT

- Cutting board and knife
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Fork
- 2 small bowls
- Medium-sized baking dish
- Measuring cups
- Frying pan

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 175°C.
2. Break the bread into small pieces and place them in a bowl. Pour the milk over the bread, put aside, and let it soak.
3. In a large frying pan, heat the oil over a medium-high heat. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until soft.
4. Add the curry powder, turmeric, cumin, coriander, and cinnamon to the mixture. Stir well and cook for a further 3 minutes.
5. Now add the ground beef and cook until it's browned and cooked through. Break it up into small pieces with a fork as it cooks.
6. In a cup, mix the vinegar and apricot jam, add to the beef and remove from heat.
7. Squeeze the excess milk from the soaked bread, and add the bread to the beef mixture. Should you use raisins, you can add them at this point.
8. Season the mixture with some salt and black pepper. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs, then pour ¾ of it over the meat mixture. Gently mix everything together.
9. Transfer the mixture to a greased ovenproof dish and smooth the top. Pour the rest of the egg mixture on top. If you're using sliced almonds, you can add them now. Place the bay leaves on top as well.
10. Bake the Bobotie for 30–40 minutes or until the top is golden brown and the Bobotie is set.
11. Remove from the oven and bon appetit! Traditionally, Bobotie is served with yellow rice and chutney. You can also serve it with dried coconut flakes, thinly sliced banana, or fresh tomato and onion sambal. Enjoy!



### 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 @aneliaz.





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# HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE

A woman with her arms raised in a gesture of joy or triumph stands in a field of fallen yellow autumn leaves. She is wearing a brown coat, a matching scarf, and brown boots. The background is a dense canopy of yellow leaves on trees, creating a warm and vibrant atmosphere.

Happiness is a choice. Bad days can be plenty, or so it feels at times. But with every bad day that glooms over us, there are always good moments within each. Seeking those moments is what makes some days, at the very least, bearable. I used the word “seeking” because it has an intentional ring to it. Happiness is intentional. Why leave happiness to chance? Why not take our days by the reins and choose to insert dosages of happiness that return heaps of smiles (for us and perhaps even for others)? And the best thing of all—happiness can be simplicity itself. Nothing fancy. Nothing expensive. Nothing time-consuming. Happiness asks only for us to pause, be present, and savor the extraordinary of the ordinary.



Every day is a choice  
to be happy.  
For I never want to let happiness happen by  
accident.  
Leave happiness to the roll of a dice,  
what are the odds?

Happiness, I want it to be intentional  
day to day.  
Not left to the arbitrary wind.  
Giving me only a breeze,  
a glimmer of hope  
when it happens to be near,  
or I am passing by.

Happiness, intentional,  
need not cost even a spare coin.  
Intentional, I include it  
in my day.  
In my breath.  
In my walks.

Sunny or cloudy.  
Rainy or stormy.  
I steep and sip my tea,  
cradling a warm, soothing amount within  
my throat.  
I savor the dark chocolate melting, filling the  
crevasses of my tastebuds.  
I gather and cuddle with my kids,  
stroking the tenderness of their cheeks.

I curl into a fetal position under my blanket,  
dozing off into the  
wonders of what ifs, even if for just a cat nap's  
length.

I curate a care package of knickknacks,  
assuring my friend she is loved and better days  
are here.

I read and frame book excerpts,  
reminding myself of my worth and paths that  
can be taken.

I walk through that forest trail, never with a  
destination intent  
but simply to walk and feel my breath.

I sit with the silence of silence, so that I can  
hear the answers  
that have always been there.

Piece by piece,  
moment by moment,  
I choose happy.  
For it is never an accident,  
never to be left to chance,  
the roll of a dice.

*Photos from Canva.*



### **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).





# 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

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BUMPS & BABIES  
BANGKOK

BAMBI  
NEW MOON

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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 aged one to six years old to develop their athletic, creative and cognitive skills.



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PLAYGROUP**



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PLAYGROUP**



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**TODDLER MUSIC &  
TODDLER TUNES**



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**BAMBI PLAYGROUPS**

## SCAN NOW

To find out more about all of our playgroups and activities, scan the QR code to visit 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.

### FOUNDER

Mel Habanananda

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Paula Young  
Anna Ingham (Bumps & Babies Founder)  
Kathy Leslie  
Ravit El-Bachar Daniel

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BAMBI Magazine is the non-profit monthly magazine of BAMBI. It is distributed free of charge to members. Editorial contributions are welcome. Where possible, please submit articles and photographs by email directly to our BAMBI Magazine editor: editor@bambiweb.org.

**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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