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**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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visit: [www.cbfthai.org](http://www.cbfthai.org) and [www.facebook.com/pages/ChildbirthBreastfeeding-Foundation-of-Thailand](https://www.facebook.com/pages/ChildbirthBreastfeeding-Foundation-of-Thailand)

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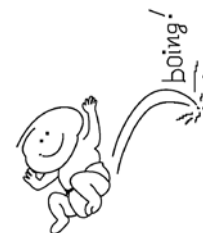
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*Hello!  
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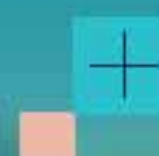
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Hello BAMBI families!

June is here and it's one of my favorite months of the year.

I still remember when I was in school how all my friends and teachers started to relax and chill toward the end of June, as well as the excitement in the last week before the summer break started. I loved the energy when everyone in school was so ready to have summer fun!

Now as a mom of two kids, I want to be ready for that enthusiasm, and I want us all to be involved in getting ready for it too! Meaning whenever we go on an adventure as a family, there are things we do together.

We start by looking at the calendar together and my kids write in when we are traveling, where we're going, and who we're meeting. Then I ask them what we should bring. Sometimes they tell me in a drawing, a scribble, or another way, but I like the fact we are planning, packing, and doing it together. This also prevents the "Why didn't you bring it for me, Mommy?!" problem. My son usually puts more than ten vehicles and a few dinosaurs in his backpack, saying they're a must...!

After that, learning a little about the place we're heading to helps keep us interested throughout the trip. For example, we have this children's book my kids love to read before every trip. It's all about the airport—the airplanes, the vehicles, the people who work there—and we have fun finding these things for real at the airport.

Lastly, going offline really makes a holiday! My husband and I were offline for five days during our last trip, and we saw more and felt more connected. It made for a much richer experience. As long as we tell our friends and family beforehand, who else do we need to be connected to when our loved ones are with us?

I hope your summer will be filled with lots of fun and happiness, and after the summer adventure you'll come join me for BAMBI Me-Time! We're doing Zumba/Bollywood every month as well as arts and crafts, coffee mornings, and more!

Aoi Nakazawa  
BAMBI Me-Time Coordinator



## WE ARE LOOKING FOR A ME-TIME ASSISTANT

**Do you love discovering new ways to relax and recharge—whether that's a spa day, a fun fitness class, or a creative art session? Do you enjoy connecting with like-minded parents and helping build a supportive community?**

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This is a great opportunity to meet new people, explore fun activities, and give back to the BAMBI community—all while supporting parents in prioritizing their well-being.

If this sounds like your kind of fun, we'd love to hear from you! Apply now at: [me-time@bambiweb.org](mailto:me-time@bambiweb.org).







We've all heard that we only get 18 summers with our kids—a sentimental exaggeration perhaps, but one that holds a grain of truth. Our lives are often marked by the summers we try to make magical before our children grow up and start making plans of their own. With summer holidays just around the corner, it's time to brace yourselves, folks!

Ever by your side, the BAMBI Magazine team is proud to present an issue that explores travel, transitions, and technology use during the summer months.

Rachel Ofo's "Big Fun With Microadventures" assures us that simple, local activities can be as engaging as elaborate adventures. It's equally rewarding to just go with the flow, says Archana Yadav in "The Unplanned Adventure". However you like to travel, packing well is always a good start, and Jeannie Kim's "Packing Like a Pro" has some top tips.

The summer break is often followed by big transitions, making it a good time to prepare your child for any emotional upheaval such changes may cause. Claudia Gomes breaks down the ins and outs of managing transitions in "All Change" while Anatta Zarchi uses her personal experiences to explain how parents can nurture resilience in children in "Helping Kids Thrive Through Life's Big Shifts".

Sonali Vongchusiri discusses ways to avoid technology battles when you're meant to be enjoying each other's company in "Summer Screen Time". On those technology-free summer days, you could try the Usborne Sticker Books that Kelly Patten's family favors—see her review in Things We Love, or you may enjoy the DIY bunting activities designed by Liz Ainsworth in Creation Station. If you'd prefer a good read, see Kit Lang's reviews in Readers' Corner.

This issue also offers some deeply personal stories that will tug at your heartstrings. Joe Barker reflects on the sweet moments of raising children in "The Joys of Parenting"; Shelka Sharma shares an emotionally powerful account of the heartbreak and healing she went through after the stillbirth of her first child in "Always His Mother"; and Shivangi Tripathi writes about choosing the right motherhood journey for her and her family in "My Approach to New Motherhood".

On behalf of the magazine team, have a happy and fun-filled summer break!

Sanam Rahman  
Editor





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# I CAN MAKE A RAINBOW!

Looking for an activity to engage the kids this summer? Get creative and brighten up your space with this colorful parent and child craft from Liz.

Bangkok is a city full of bright colors! Everywhere you look, there's something new to see—red buses, golden temples, green trees, and so much more.

All these colors can make us feel different feelings. Sometimes the city feels busy and noisy, and that might make you feel a little bit nervous. Other times it feels exciting and fun, and that can make you feel happy!

Let's try a color mixing activity to show the colors and feelings that Bangkok gives us. What colors do you think of when you think about Bangkok?



Photo by Africa Images

## Challenge:

- Can you make the following colors: green, orange, purple, brown, black?
- Which colors made new colors when mixed together?
- Can you match any of the colors to feelings?

## Materials:

- six pots
- paint brushes
- A4 paper
- scissors
- string
- red, yellow, and blue paint
- staples, glue, or tape

## ACTIVITY 1: COLOR MIXING

**Step 1.** First put out two colors, for example, red and yellow, in two separate pots. Ask your child to combine them in another pot.

**Step 2.** Repeat with new colors, for example, blue and yellow.

**Step 3.** Repeat again with new colors, for example, red and blue.

**Step 4.** Ask your child:

- What colors did we start with?
- What happened when you mixed them together?
- Which colors make green? Which colors make orange?
- Can you now paint the paper using the two colors and mixing them together?

**Step 5.** Ask your child to help you wash the pots and brushes. Ask them—what do you notice about the water when cleaning the pots and brushes?

You can make as many different combinations of colors as you wish to see what others you discover!

## ACTIVITY 2: BUNTING

**Step 1.** Once the paint is dry from the color-mixing activity, cut a few triangles from the paper.

**Step 2.** Fold the top of each triangle over (at least two centimetres) to create a flap.

**Step 3.** Lay the string along the fold, then fold the flap over so the string is sandwiched inside. Then use either staples, tape, or glue to secure the triangle to the string.

Repeat until you have attached all of your triangles to the string.

**Step 4.** Hang your bunting for all to see!



Photo by Stel Antic from corelens



## About the Author

Liz is an early years specialist from Scotland and mom of two with a passion for hands-on, creative learning. She believes in giving children access to creative outlets for learning and using their critical thinking in play, particularly in areas of science, art, and physical development.



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# HELPING KIDS THRIVE THROUGH LIFE'S BIG SHIFTS

Anna explains how parents can support their children through big life transitions and shares the lessons she learned from major changes in her childhood.

Photo by MART PRODUCTION from Pexels



## About the Author

Anna works for New Counseling Service (NCS), an internationally recognized mental health center in Bangkok with a diverse team of licensed counselors. NCS has provided counseling services in Thailand and surrounding regions for over 20 years, with therapists specializing in a wide variety of issues such as anxiety, depression, work stress, relationships, and more.





Photo by Ivan Samkov from Pexels

**D**uring my college interview in 2019, I was asked how I felt about change. I answered honestly that I hate it and I would probably spend the first few days to weeks at college crying and wanting to go home, but I would still go to classes and do my coursework to my usual standard. I also told them that change and uncertainty have always scared me, but that over the course of my adolescence, I built the resilience to get through it, even when everything felt unbearably overwhelming. I know I'm not alone in finding change challenging.

Change comes with uncertainty, something many people are apprehensive of, and something that can be especially unsettling for young children. Though change is sometimes welcome, there is often an element of doubt or fear associated with it, even when it's accompanied by excitement. Let's take a look at what change means for children, how parents can guide their children through these transitions, and how to foster resilience to make dealing with change easier.

### **WHY CAN CHANGE BE SO CHALLENGING FOR CHILDREN?**

Children going through big transitions are often dealing with

grief, fear, and confusion. NCS counselor Tatiana shares her experience of moving from Thailand to Canada and back, all before the age of nine, and how readjusting and dealing with counter culture shock impacted her. "Moving back to Thailand kickstarted the beginnings of a long relationship with anxiety," she explained. "Without adequate support, I reacted by strongly disliking anything remotely Thai because I associated Thainess with rejection, denial of identity, and loss of home. Instead of focusing on what I had in common with other people, and learning to expand my sense of self so that I could fit in better, I was focusing on how we weren't alike."

### **HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD THROUGH CHANGE?**

So what can you do to provide the support your children need? Let's start with how you should broach the subject of change.

**1. Be open and honest:** As a general rule, it's best to approach the topic calmly, openly, and gently—and not to keep change a secret prior to the transition happening. Hiding things and only announcing it when everything is finalized can come as a big shock, often making children feel helpless

or causing them to lose trust in you. If possible, broach the subject with them earlier, and be honest with them about the choices you are considering and the changes that might happen.

**2. Ask for their feedback:** Ask them what they think, and allow them to ask questions, and answer as honestly as you can about what this means for the future. Try to align your expectations with your children's—ask them what they think might happen to their friends, their routines, and their roles and responsibilities. This shows them you care about what they have to say and gives them space to come to terms with the possibility of change.

**3. Offer reassurance:** The emotional turmoil that comes with a big transition is more manageable with reassurance, which can look like hope, validation, and familiarity. Reinforce this by taking their opinion into account and validating their emotions. For example, tell them that you understand what they're feeling, that you'll take it into account, and that you can work together to find things that might help. Be sure to follow up these reassurances with actions that align in order to reinforce trust and stability.

## WHAT DO I DO IF THEY RESIST?

Resistance is often to be expected, so try not to get angry if your child puts up a fight. The angrier you get or the more you shut them down, the more likely they are to resist—and to fear the emotional turmoil that comes with transitions.

Let me give you an example: three weeks into my summer holiday following sixth grade, my parents suddenly told my sister and I that we would be starting at a new school in just one week's time. Everything was settled—there was no room for me to get used to the idea, or even to say goodbye to my childhood friends of nine years. Going from an international school to a holistic Thai school in rural Bangkok was the first big transition I experienced, and though I grew to appreciate this decision, the way my parents handled it caused me to become resistant at both home and school. This also put me on edge, as I now knew that they could suddenly uproot my life without telling me until it was about to happen.

Several years later they tried to move me again, and this time when I resisted, my mom asked me to explain why I felt this way. She listened and took what I said into account, and found that she agreed with my reasoning and changed her mind. Her willingness to listen made a difference in how we navigated this decision and how I learned to handle other transitions in the future.

## HOW CAN I FOSTER RESILIENCE?

When it comes to fostering resilience, this is Tatiana's first tip: "There's a saying—if you can't see it, you can't dream it. Children learn by watching and observing. It can be helpful to talk to your kids about their role models, which can come from stories, movies, sports, and even their peers. How did these role models overcome their challenges? It's also helpful to reflect back to them how they're the heroes of their own story.

"Children need confirmation that their understanding of the world



*Photo by Kampus Production from Pexels*

is correct; this is how we build confidence over self-doubt. We can do this by using the word 'and'. For example, parents can say, 'Yes, it is difficult to immerse yourself in a new culture that you are unfamiliar with, and you might be feeling very alone, and you also have the skills to learn to make new friends. Remember the time you [insert positive experience]? Look how you overcame that challenge. What did you learn from that?'

"Not all kids can or will immediately grasp the significance of discussions like this. In addition, sometimes their misgivings are valid. But in focusing on inclusion, parents can begin to foster a higher tolerance of the unexpected, which helps people shift from rigid, black-and-white thinking to a mindset that is flexible and curious, and ultimately more resilient to change."

By fostering a healthy environment around discussing change, reassuring them that you will be there to help them get through, and by adapting your own mentality, you can help children develop resilience.

## MY CHILD IS STILL STRUGGLING—WHAT CAN I DO?

Some children might really suffer through change and take longer to adjust than others. Being patient and giving children space to grieve helps them to foster resilience naturally and healthily as they adapt. Helping them brainstorm positive effects of

the change may provide some more positivity.

If your child is struggling during a transition then you'll want to find ways to help them cope better, but sometimes they simply have to stick it out. You could also consider making small accommodations for them as they adjust, before slowly reverting back to the norm. For example, when I first started at my new school, they allowed me to play the drums instead of the violin or cello, which was mandatory. They knew that I was very resistant to playing these instruments, and that I had played the snare drum at my old school, and so they made this exception for me until I was better-adjusted to switch to the violin.

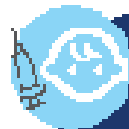
If your child will be away from you, discussing available support systems can be extremely helpful. Examples include, family, friends, neighbors, or counselors that they can speak to, or people they can contact by phone or Zoom. If you can't be there for them in person, it's always comforting to know that you'll help them find a support system.

All children will deal with transition differently; some may be more naturally attuned to it, while others might have an aversion to it like I did. Nevertheless, it's always helpful for parents to guide their children through the twists and turns of a transition. Healthy guidance increases long-term resilience and positivity, as well as their trust in you.





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# BIG FUN WITH MICROADVENTURES

Rachel and her family love outdoor adventures, and by thinking small, they fit big adventures into their everyday activities. With Rachel's guidance, we can all enjoy some microadventures this summer.



## 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





For anyone who's read through a few issues of BAMBI Magazine and come across my articles, you'll know that I love the outdoors. I can find the same amount of joy sitting in my backyard listening to my daughter splash in the pool that I would ziplining through jungles. And now that school will soon be finishing up for the summer, and the weather is warming up on my side of the world, my brain is constantly in "outdoor adventure" mode.

I'm always thinking of where I'm taking my daughter next, what we're going to see, or what we're going to experience. My phone is full of links to random parks. My laptop's download folder has plenty of scavenger hunts. My car's passenger seat is littered with flyers for various summer activities. One thing I try to do with all these plans, especially when I'm gearing up to fit as many adventures in as possible, is to make them quick, fun, and accessible for any friends who might want to join.

### WHAT ARE MICROADVENTURES?

To get into this, let's understand the core of a microadventure. As the name states, a microadventure is a small way to easily get outside and do something fun. It's meant to be a cheap and local—but super exciting and engaging—activity. The key is

finding what works for you and your family. It can be as simple as taking your kids for a walk through the market, and Bangkok isn't short of them. There are always sights to take in at an outdoor market. New snacks to try, new Thai words to learn, and new ways to find through the maze of stalls.

Microadventures are a way to weave excitement and learning into your daily life. There are even studies around the psychological benefits of stepping outside. Check out BAMBI's May 2025 article, "Nature Therapy", to learn just how healing nature can be (1). These little adventures make it easier to experience the outdoors and enjoy nature without extensive planning, arduous trips, or expensive equipment.

On the topic of equipment, another part of microadventures that some may appreciate is the fact that, since you're staying local, you won't have to worry about things like losing signal or power. I'm all for unplugging from modern technology, but sometimes it's nice to be able to research information on that rainbow-colored bird that just flew by. I have a habit of Google Lens-ing every single flower I pass on the road. I loved that about Thailand—the ability to spot flowers

and bushes growing out of the most random cracks in the road and learning something new about its history and role in the environment.

### MICROADVENTURES ARE EVERYWHERE!

Part of Thailand's charm, and one of the reasons I found myself grinning in the Land of Smiles, is the ease with which you can find enjoyment within whichever city you're living in. During my years in Thailand, I visited many provinces. In all these areas, I was always outside—unless the rain was torrential. There was always something to experience.

Thailand is a country that easily engages all the senses, so anyone can find enjoyment anywhere. In Bangkok, parks are always being updated, play areas are always opening, and immersive experiences are always popping up. The number of times I woke up, got my daughter dressed, and ran off to Bangkachao for a day's bike riding around the island is too many to count. My daughter and I would often walk to True Digital Park just to blow bubbles in their green space. Around every corner, adventure awaits. A few years ago, my family drove to Kanchanaburi with very little prep—just an Airbnb booked—and spent our evenings in a local hot



spring. Even my daughter, who was three years old at the time, enjoyed dipping her toe in the hot pools, then scurrying off to the cold pools to splash around with the other children.

### MAKING MICROADVENTURES WORK FOR YOU

Whisking my daughter away for a random microadventure is not something I'm intimidated by because I've been doing it since I learned how to babywear. So what if your child is a few years old or even a teenager and you'd like to start microadventuring now? Yes, it may be a bit intimidating, but again, find what works for you.

Because microadventures are meant to be bite-sized trips, find what your child loves to do and simply condense it. My family loves camping, but sometimes renting a car, filling it up with stuff, and driving eight hours isn't feasible. Sometimes we just find somewhere close enough to get to on a half tank of gas. Two weeks ago, we took a 90-minute drive to a nearby desert to catch a meteor shower and sleep

under the stars. My husband and I worked that day. In fact, I was still working while he packed my pillow and sleepwear into the car. We got there, set up the tent in a few minutes, started a fire, and watched the sky. The next morning, we hiked for a little, packed the few things we'd brought, and headed home. It was short and sweet. We got to experience shooting stars, a pack of coyotes in the middle of the night, and the largest palm trees I've ever seen in my life.

For our next adventure, I'm planning on taking my daughter to a local fair. We'll eat cookies and cotton candy, ride insanely fast rides (she will, not me), collect lots of free seeds (I will, not her), and do whatever else comes up, because why not? With these microadventures, knowing where you'll go and your budget, but not your exact plans, keeps the plans open but not chaotic. We go to the fair every year, and we always learn something new while having fun. And we'll continue doing it because it works for us, and we already know exactly what to expect.

It's all about finding rewards and bonding with your family without breaking the bank or causing unnecessary stress. Set specific boundaries and budgets and stick to them. Repeat adventures. And if there are hiccups in the plans, roll with them. It's honestly part of the experience. You get to learn not only about wherever you go but about yourself as well. The more you try going on these adventures, the easier you'll find them. Then everything will seem like an adventure. That Big C trip will look less intimidating with kids in tow when they see it as a fun activity where they get to check items off their scavenger hunt list. Let's use microadventures to find more joy in our lives with what we're given.

*Photos courtesy of the author*

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*Notice of correction: The article "Nature Therapy" published in BAMBI Magazine May 2025 featured references from the "Natural Library of Medicine"; however, it should read the "National Library of Medicine".*

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### References

1. Ofo, R. Nature Therapy, BAMBI, May 2025. [bambiweb.org/news/nature-therapy](https://bambiweb.org/news/nature-therapy)





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# THE UNPLANNED ADVENTURE

A magical pool party transformed the way Archna approached travel as she discovered the joy of spontaneous fun and the benefits of building flexibility into her carefully crafted holiday plans.

Photo by Sabina Kallari from Pexels



## About the Author

Archna Yadav is an IT professional, a devoted follower of Lord Radha Krishna, and a proud parent to a spirited, delightfully unpredictable three-year-old daughter. A passionate nature lover, she finds joy in travel, spiritual exploration, and life's little adventures—always embracing new experiences with curiosity, gratitude, and a smile. Hare Krishna!



**T**hey say the best adventures begin where the plans end, but for most of my life I didn't buy it. I believed in blueprints. For every vacation, I used to curate itineraries that mapped out every hour, right down to rest stops and snack breaks. Structure gave me peace of mind. Spontaneous travel? That was never for me. And then came parenting, where unpredictability is pretty much the default setting. As a parent, my need for a structured itinerary only deepened. Traveling with kids meant factoring in naps, mealtimes, kid-friendly activities, and backup plans for the backup plans.

But life—especially with kids—has a magical way of showing you that some of the best moments happen when you least expect them. I remember exactly when my travel philosophy started to shift. We were heading off on a last-minute family getaway, and I hadn't had time to map out our usual detailed itinerary. All I had was a rough list of "maybe we'll do this" ideas and figured I would fine-tune the plan during the drive.

Once we arrived and checked into the hotel, I was ready to explore the nearby town. But my daughter had other plans. "I want to swim!" she announced. I hesitated. Just a quick dip before we head out, I told myself. We changed into swimsuits and headed to the pool. What we found wasn't just a quiet swim—it was a full-blown pool party, complete with music, bubbles, and a crowd of giggling kids. My daughter was in the water within seconds, laughing with new friends. That "quick dip" turned into over an hour of splashing, dancing, and soaking up the joy of the moment: it was pure magic.

That unexpected detour wasn't a disruption—it was a revelation. For the first time, not sticking to the plan didn't feel like failure; it felt like freedom.

Later that day, we skipped the "must-see" beach on my list and went for a casual stroll near our resort. Along the way, we stumbled



upon a quiet little beach where a group of kids were building sandcastles. Naturally, my daughter joined them. What followed was a spontaneous hour of digging, laughing, and bonding with complete strangers. Then, while hunting for a restroom, we ducked into a quirky café and ended up staying for what might have been the best chocolate cake we've ever had.

That day became one of our most memorable travel experiences—not because it was planned, but because it wasn't.

Children are naturally adventurous. They don't care about timelines or checklists. They follow what fascinates them in the moment—a weird-looking bug, or a puddle that's begging to be jumped in. When we force them into rigid schedules, we miss out on seeing the world through their curious eyes, but when we slow down and let them lead, we discover the kind of joy you can't plan for. Don't get me wrong—I'm not advocating for pure chaos. A loose framework is still helpful. But building in flexibility, like unscheduled afternoons, "choose your own adventure" mornings, or even a free day to just explore, can be the difference between stress and surprise joy.

We've made a few changes to how we travel these days. Instead of

packing the day, we pick one or two anchor activities and leave the rest open so we can say yes more often. Want to stop for a roadside ice cream? Sure. Curious about a park we didn't research? Let's check it out.

Most importantly, we stay present. We've let go of the constant clock-watching and started experiencing our trips in real time. And in doing so, we've found something priceless: connection. To each other. To the moment. To the world around us.

Our new travel style has transformed our vacations. We're learning to embrace the detours and that sometimes, not knowing what comes next is the best part of the story. And with this, my daughter is developing resilience, curiosity, and a deeper sense of wonder. And me? I'm learning to breathe. To notice. To feel the journey instead of managing it.

When I look back at our travels, it's not the landmark visits or perfectly posed photos that stay with me. It's the silly, unplanned moments and adventures that wove themselves into our hearts.

So next time you're packing for a family getaway, leave some space for the unknown. Let go a little. Trust the moment. Because sometimes, the best stories aren't the ones we planned but the ones that found us.

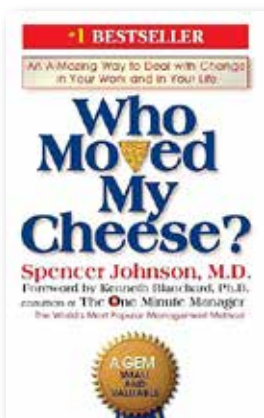
# BOOKS TO INSPIRE

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## WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?

By Spencer Johnson



"Who Moved My Cheese?" by Spencer Johnson is a simple yet powerful parable about navigating change. The story follows four characters—Sniff, Scurry, Hem, and Haw—as they react to their cheese (representing what we desire in life) disappearing. While some adapt and move forward, others resist change, leading to valuable lessons about flexibility, fear, and growth.

Summer often brings change, whether through travel, moving, or starting something new.

"Who Moved My Cheese?" encourages us to embrace change rather than fear it, and reminds us that growth comes from stepping out of our comfort zones. Just like the characters in the book, we can choose to adapt proactively and seek new opportunities during transitional moments. Whether navigating a trip or life shift, the book offers essential lessons on staying adaptable, open-minded, and positive when faced with the unknown.

*"Who Moved My Cheese?" by Spencer Johnson has sold over 28 million copies since it was originally published in 1998. You can find a paperback copy in the non-fiction section of the Neilson Hays Library.*

## THE THREE QUESTIONS

Written and illustrated by Jon J. Muth



"The Three Questions" by Jon J. Muth is a beautifully illustrated, thought-provoking children's book that explores the quest for meaning and self-discovery through the story of a young boy named Nikolai. The book is based on a story by Leo Tolstoy and revolves around three essential questions: "What is the best time to do things?", "Who is the most important one?", and "What is the right thing to do?". Through the guidance of a wise turtle, Nikolai learns that the answers lie within everyday moments and relationships.

In times of transition—whether in our personal life or when relocating, starting something new, or traveling—this book offers profound insights. It reminds us to focus on the present, cherish meaningful connections, and act with kindness and compassion. "The Three Questions" encourages readers, young and old, to navigate transitions with mindfulness and a deeper understanding of what truly matters in life.

*"The Three Questions", based on Leo Tolstoy's story and illustrated by Jon J. Muth, was first published by Scholastic Press in 2002. A hardcover copy of this Caldecott Honor Book can be found in the Children's Corner of the library.*



Prepared by Kit lang @mskitlang for The Neilson Hays Library, 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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# THE JOYS OF PARENTING

This month, Joe is back to remind us to look for the joy in all things parenting—even while sleep deprived, coping with tantrums, and cleaning up after mealtime messes.



## About the Author

Joe and his wife Diane moved to Thailand in 2018. Since the arrival of their son Martin in 2021 and daughter Alice in 2024, Joe has been a stay-at-home father. The whole family enjoys BAMBI playgroups and Thai beach holidays.



Alice tries to look innocent—not that hard for a ten-month-old baby—but I’m not easily fooled. The look of intense concentration, the explosive noise, and the sudden smell tell a clear enough story: another dirty diaper has been made. “But I’ve just changed you, you irksome child,” I growl in exasperation at the adorable poop-fiend in baby form that stands before me. She giggles as I grumpily carry her to the bathroom and begin to clean her. Then, as she struggles mightily to reach the soap, making cute cooing noises while I curse her poop-smearing wriggling, my irritation starts to melt, and by the time she’s sitting in the sink splashing water everywhere, her giggling has turned to delighted laughter, and I’m soaked but full of joy at getting to spend so much time with my occasionally loveable children.

Every day of childcare is filled with these moments of joy, but I realize that this year the days have felt so long, and the childcare so intense and overwhelming that I haven’t been seeing those moments. I’ve been so focused on reaching the end of each day—a chance to sit down and rest, a moment for myself—while dreaming of September and the spare time I’ll have once Marty starts school, that I’ve stopped fully enjoying spending time with Alice and Marty and have started wishing away these magical moments. So in this month’s article, I’ve decided to focus on those daily moments of love and joy. Those moments that, when they’re disagreeable teenagers or unreachable students, will make my heart ache and yearn for them to be babies again. In the process, I hope I’ll remind myself of how lucky I am to get to spend so much time with my occasionally foul but oh-so-adorable offspring. Obviously, I’ll still feel overwhelmed, exhausted, and fed up, but hopefully I’ll also be a bit more present in the giggling games and amazing adventures rather than ruining this time imagining a rosier future.

## FEEDING FRENZY

Watching Alice eat is to watch someone doing what they truly love. She hammers her table in excitement as the food approaches, then dives head first into her plate and smears food all over her face. Yet hers is not a selfish love: she delights in sharing her joy with others. The tastiest morsels are hurled around the room, tossed to favored family members, or simply lost among the riotous excitement of eating. All of this is done with the widest of smiles, little jumps, and cries of delight. Now, I could watch this and focus on the mess; the need to clean the highchair, walls, and floor; and the upcoming struggle to change and wash Alice without covering myself in part-chewed food. I could (and do) curse the fool who gave her a mango stone to chew and paint herself with, or, I could relish the joy. A joy that naturally continues as we move to the bathroom where she once again strives to eat the soap while wriggling and splashing to her heart’s content. If I let it, there is joy to be found in even the messiest moments.





## MARTY MINCING TIME

While at times all I want is a chance to lie down and digest my lunch, and maybe catch up on a few minutes sleep, Marty has very different ideas. He loves to be chased around the kitchen table by a variety of monsters, ranging from the usually friendly tickle monster to the terrifying mincing machine which wants to make a shrieking Marty into meat pies. Sleepily, grouchy, I drag my aching legs up from the couch and start to hobble after Marty. "Surely I'm too old for this," I mutter to myself. But soon the thrill of the chase starts to work its magic. How can I regret spending my time running in this nauseatingly small circle when it makes Marty scream with such delight, a huge grin plastered on his face?

If that wasn't enough to loosen my limbs, there is the reaction of our number-one fan who sits bouncing up and down with excitement, squawking and clapping in amazement as we speed past on our dizzying little circuit. Alice loves watching us run, and as soon as she could crawl, she wanted to join in, setting off in determined, smiling pursuit each time we passed her.

## TV TANTRUMS

Once he discovered TV, Marty became a big fan. His constant demands to watch TV can swiftly drive me to infuriated and unrealistic threats to throw the TV away or never let him watch it again. Yet much as I hate the constant queries as to whether or not it's time to watch TV, I do enjoy watching TV with Marty. There is the blessed hour or two without questions or demands to build Lego castles, and the tantalizing possibility that I may get to doze on the sofa for a few minutes.

Having said that, Marty is not a peaceful TV watcher, and sleeping can be hard as Marty jumps up and down shrieking in amazement at Winnie the Pooh's latest adventures.

My disappointment at not getting to nap is compensated for by the sheer joy of watching Marty experience TV. There is dancing and jumping in exuberant celebration of the sheer thrill of it all. There is hiding behind the couch when Heffalumps or Woozles threaten. There are seated jumps and standing jumps, cartwheels, and skipping. In short, it's a full body workout and emotional roller coaster rolled into one, and it's a joy to observe.

There are then many joys to be found even when childcare feels overwhelming. Joys that make my heart melt and remind me how much I love my children, even as they seem intent on driving me to despair. But of course I cannot pretend that the greatest joy isn't the moment each day that they finally fall asleep and I can sink back into the couch, safe in the knowledge that we've made it through another day and that all being well, it will be ten hours before they bother me again.

*Photos courtesy of the author*







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# ALWAYS HIS MOTHER

The birth of a first child should be a time of joy, but for Shelka it was a time of grief, a grief that she felt no one wanted her to talk about. She shares her experience and tells us how she remembers and loves her stillborn son.

Photo by Jonathan Borba from Pexels



## About the Author

Hola! I'm Shelka, an Indian who found a second home in Bangkok three years ago. I'm a Spanish teacher and proud BAMBI committee member, devoted to family and guided by good karma and the values of humanity. I aim to nurture a warm, balanced, and supportive personal and professional life.





*Photo by Kaboompics.com from Pexels*

We often talk about children, but only those who are visible and present. However, no one wants to mention our angels in heaven. Parents who lose their children find that others avoid the topic, thinking it might make them sad. Yet we forget that they are parents too, just like everyone else, and they want to talk about their children.

My name is Shelka, and I am the mother of two kids: my son in heaven and my daughter, who is my life here on earth.

In 2021, I gave birth to a stillborn baby at 38 weeks. This devastating event turned our lives upside down. As the saying goes, when you give birth to a child, a mother is born as well. In my case, however, a sad and depressed mother emerged after losing my son—a mother, wife, daughter, and lost human being.

My husband, family, and friends stood by me like pillars, supporting me through this mourning, yet no

one mentioned my son or allowed me to talk much about him. They thought that discussing him might push me further into sadness. But all I wanted to do was talk about my son, the nine months I carried him, the night before my delivery, the last kick I felt, and everything I experienced with him.

Whenever I saw other children, I longed to share my experience with other mothers, to express that I am a mother too. Everyone kept asking if I was feeling better, but they seldom let me speak about my baby, thinking it would deepen my grief. All the while, my heart was screaming, "I am OK, hear me—I want to talk about my baby! I am a mother too."

After two years of sadness, our daughter entered our lives, filling it with immense love, joy, and light. Finally, the world saw me and called me "mother". But am I just a mother of my daughter? No. Every time someone asks me if she is my only

child, I hesitate before answering. I hear this often from fellow moms of sons who say, "You have a daughter; you don't know how naughty sons are." In response, the mother within me insists, "No, I have a son too." Yet to the world, I smile and remember my son.

Through this platform, I want to reach out to fellow parents who have their angels in heaven. Feel free to talk about your babies if you wish, and know that it is absolutely OK to cry while remembering them: that's our right, after all. Do not lose hope in your babies. Gather your strength and welcome them back into your hearts. They want us just as much as we want them. Talk to your baby as you did while they were in your womb, and invite them back with love and joy. Believe in yourself and have faith. There is always light at the end of the road.

Remember, it is only you who can change your world—no one else can.

# THINGS WE LOVE

## USBORNE STICKER BOOKS

By Kelly Patten, mom of Freya (4) and Daisy (1)

Expat life is full of awe-inducing experiences—holidays on tropical islands, colorful cultural festivals, and indulging in exotic new cuisines. However, there is one aspect of expat life that most parents dread—the summer flights home. Our extended family is scattered across two continents, which means this summer I'll be taking my four-year-old and my one-year-old to Edinburgh and Philadelphia, plus a few days' holiday in Dubai over the course of five weeks. Every time we fly, my anxiety builds, and I find myself googling travel hacks for international flights with toddlers. Alas, despite the many hacks I've found, I know I'll ultimately just have to suck it up for however many hours, pack loads of snacks, and hope for the best!

That being said, I will of course need to prepare a variety of toys, books, or games that just might entertain them for 20 minutes of our journey. While my one-year-old will happily play with a plastic water bottle, my four-year-old has more refined tastes. Her current favorite quiet activity is working on Usborne sticker books, and we will definitely be packing a few for our summer travels!

Usborne is an independent British publishing company, and I guarantee you've read some of their books. Their sticker books are excellent and come in an assortment of topics and age



*Photo courtesy of the author*

ranges. I like that the stickers are easy to peel—even my one-year-old can peel them like a champ—and that most books have perforated pages. Some of our current favorites include the Sticker Dolly Dressing series, which includes books like "Rainbow Fairies" and "Fashion Designer". For slightly younger sticker fans, they have a My First Sticker Book series, with classic choices such as "On the Farm", "At the Airport",

or "Under the Sea". Have a look for the Build Your Own series which includes exciting titles such as "Monster Trucks" and "Superheroes". You can find some of them at Asia Books, but have a search on Lazada and you will find some amazing prices! Will sticker books prevent the inevitable airport meltdowns? Probably not, but they will provide much needed quiet entertainment on our tour of the continents this summer!

### Share with us and spread more joy!

Send your short reviews of places, things, food, etc. you enjoyed as a family to [editor@bambiweb.org](mailto:editor@bambiweb.org), and we might feature them here!



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# ALL CHANGE

Things always change and we want our children to know how to deal with the emotional challenges that change can bring. Claudia explores the process of transitions and shares some advice on how to support our children through change.

Photo by Mikhail Nilov from Pexels



## About the Author

Claudia Gomes is an expert in emotional intelligence and intercultural awareness, and an ICF-certified Level 2 transformative coach. With 19 years of international experience in Spain and Thailand, Claudia is an expert in bridging cultures and fostering global collaboration. She has spent the last 15 years in Bangkok. [contact@claudiagomes.coach](mailto:contact@claudiagomes.coach); [linkedin.com/in/claudiagomes-coach/](https://linkedin.com/in/claudiagomes-coach/)





Photo by Monstera Production from Pexels

Change is not easy for adults, so it's fair to imagine it's not easy for kids either. However, change is inevitable and natural, and at some point, we all have to navigate it. For kids, it could be moving homes, starting a new school, making new friends, parents divorcing, illness, or any other major event. Having to go through something like this at a young age can be challenging. Parents play a big role in supporting kids when they are going through emotional processes and when they need to boost their resilience.

## CHANGE AND TRANSITION

According to the Bridges Transition Model, change brings a space of transition into people's lives (1). Here change is defined as an external event or situation that takes place, and it can happen quickly. Examples include moving house or starting a new school. Transition is the inner psychological process that people go through as they internalize and come to terms with change. Change can only be positive if the process of transition is experienced and supported.

The Bridges Transition Model describes three stages to transitions:

**Endings:** a change starts when something comes to an end. It's the moment when people are dealing

with what they have to leave behind.

**Neutral Zone:** this is the in-between, when the old is gone but the new isn't yet fully operational. It's when the transitions happen—when you can create new processes and new roles. It's the nurturing space for the new beginning.

**New Beginnings:** this stage involves new understandings, values, and attitudes. When the process of transition is well-managed, people understand the purpose of the change, the part they play, and how they can participate most effectively. It becomes a positive part of their lives when the new is an expression of a fresh identity.

## SUPPORTING KIDS THROUGH CHANGE

The following are reactions that are common for children in moments of change:

**Emotional:** they might experience anxiety, anger, sadness, or even withdrawal.

**Physical:** they may have sleep disruptions, stomachaches, or show regression in behaviors.

**Behavioral:** they might act out, become clingy, or show signs of defiance.

I want to emphasize that these are normal responses during the transition period, although each child will behave differently depending on how they experience the process.

I believe you might be asking yourself what you can do to support your kids during periods of transition, so here are some guidelines:

**Connection and presence:** children need adults to self-regulate. Adults need to be available to assist children in understanding their emotions and the stages they are going through. Kids need to feel that you are there, listening, caring, and validating what they are feeling. They need to know they are not alone in the process.

**Structure and predictability:** kids need to count on what they know. When changes come, what supports them is knowing that some things haven't changed. Keeping routines, like mealtimes, bedtime rituals, and so on, is incredibly helpful. Help them see what is changing, how it is changing, and help them understand how they want to manage the change. Use visuals, schedules, and anything else that facilitates their thought process.

**Narrative and meaning-making:**

when change happens, kids need to make sense of it. Our brains process what's happening more easily when we can relate it to something familiar, so use age-appropriate stories or explanations. Encourage them to express themselves and their understanding of the change through art, play, or journaling.

**Empowerment and participation:**

kids need to create a sense of control over what is happening. When someone solves problems for them, they retain the feeling that they are not capable of handling things themselves. They internalize the idea that they always need someone to rescue them.

As parents, our job is to help kids find their own way of navigating emotions and building their ground during transitions. So involve them in planning aspects of the change. For example, when moving to a new house, let them choose what items to keep for their new room. It's natural to want to jump in and fix everything for them, but remind yourself: you are supporting them now so that they can thrive later as healthy adults.

**Role models and emotional**

**literacy:** kids copy behaviors and strategies all the time, so parents and other people involved in raising a child need to be aware of their role as role models. Kids need help understanding what they are feeling, and reassurance that it's OK to feel that way. Teach them that it's possible to go through emotions and learn from them. You can say something like: "It's OK to feel anxious. I also feel anxious sometimes." They need your support to learn how to name their emotions and how to manage them.

**TOOLS FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS, AND CAREGIVERS**

**Emotion coaching:** notice and tune into your child's emotions. See their expressions of emotion as opportunities to connect with them and guide them. Listen with understanding and show them that their feelings matter. Help them give a name to their emotions, and set clear limits and boundaries as you help them solve problems or deal with challenging situations in an appropriate way (2).

**Transitional objects:** provide something that gives them a sense of stability, like a favorite photo, a toy, or any comforting item.

**Books and media:** share books, movies, or resources that help explain change or build resilience in a way that's accessible to them.

**WHEN TO SEEK EXTRA SUPPORT**

Sometimes, extra help is needed, and it may be helpful to consult a professional or the school for extra support. Seek help if your children display any of the following:

- Persistent problems with eating or sleeping
- Major behavioral shifts
- Ongoing sadness or anxiety

We cannot prevent change, but we can support our kids when they need us, walking alongside them during the process. I understand that for some parents this is a tough task—especially if they don't know how to manage their own emotions because they were never taught how to. It's important to remember: this is not anyone's fault. We can only teach what we know.

You can only support your child if you have already supported yourself first. The famous analogy, "Put your own oxygen mask on first," reminds us that self-care is essential. Take care of yourself so you can care for others with energy and presence.

Open yourself up to reaching out to a professional if needed. Open up about your difficulties and insecurities. Your kids will be eternally grateful for your openness, your attitude, and your growth.

Resilience is built through the process of self-discovery and understanding one's own strength. Guide your kids to be resilient, courageous, flexible, and kind—to themselves and to others.



Photo by studioroma

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# PACKING LIKE A PRO

Years of practice have made Jeannie a packing pro. She shares her innovative packing tips for families who want to travel light and stay organized while minimizing the travel stress and maximizing the fun.

Photo by Ketut Subiyanto from Pexels

## About the Author

Jeannie is currently pursuing an honors degree in psychology with a focus on clinical applications. Prior to this, she was an acupuncturist specializing in fertility, stress management, and pain relief in Sydney for 12 years. With her unique blend of Eastern and Western therapeutic approaches and maternal perspective, as feature writer, Jeannie promises a valuable contribution to BAMBI Magazine







*Photo by Vlada Karpovich from Pexels*

Family holidays are all about adventure, discovery, and making lifelong memories—but when it comes to packing, the experience can quickly become overwhelming. Juggling clothes, toiletries, baby gear, and the unexpected “just in case” items often leaves families bogged down with excess baggage and stress. After years of traveling as a family, we’ve fine-tuned our packing strategies to keep things simple, organized, and stress-free. Here are our tried-and-tested top tips for minimalist family travel, so you can focus less on your luggage and more on the fun.

### **USE PACKING CELLS OF VARIOUS SIZES**

Packing cells are a game-changer when it comes to organizing family suitcases. Using different colours and sizes allows you to easily separate clothing and belongings by person or occasion. In our family, our son’s clothes go into a yellow Winnie the Pooh cell, my husband’s into a blue one, and mine into a pink one. It makes unpacking and locating items effortless, especially on multi-destination trips.

### **BRING LAUNDRY BAGS AND WASHING NETS**

A simple laundry bag has saved us countless times, especially when repacking at the end of a holiday. Instead of mixing worn clothes

with clean ones, we toss all our used clothing straight into laundry bags—often the complimentary ones from hotels—making it easy to throw everything into the wash once we get home. For longer trips, we also bring washing nets to protect delicate items when doing laundry on the go.

### **PACK SNAP-LOCK BAGS IN VARIOUS SIZES**

Snap-lock bags are another must-have. They’re perfect for containing wet clothes after an impromptu swim on the last day of a holiday or keeping damp items separated from dry ones. Having a variety of sizes means you’re ready for anything—from storing leftover snacks to keeping electronics safe from sand and water.

### **USE SMALL, REFILLABLE CONTAINERS FOR TOILETRIES**

Rather than lugging around full-sized bottles, we decant toiletries into small, refillable containers. These take up less space and help keep luggage under weight limits—an easy win for both carry-on and checked bags.

### **CONSIDER A BABY TRAVEL TENT FOR CHILDREN UNDER ONE**

When our son was five months old, we invested in a second-hand baby travel tent—and it became one of

our best travel decisions. Baby tents are significantly smaller and lighter than travel cots. Ours weighs less than 1 kg and fits easily into our luggage. Plus, it has eliminated the stress of relying on hotel cots, which are sometimes unavailable or not up to standard. Pro tip: if folding it back down feels impossible, YouTube tutorials are your friend!

### **CREATE A PACKING LIST—AND KEEP IT UPDATED**

While you might not physically pack a checklist, it’s one of the most valuable tools you can have. My husband, the master of organization in our household, swears by his detailed lists. He breaks them down by compartments—for example, one section for toiletries, another for day clothes, another for first aid—and rather than deleting items, he strikes them through. This way, when our second baby arrives, we’ll simply update our list instead of starting from scratch.

Mastering minimalist packing takes a little practice, but the payoff is huge: smoother travels, lighter luggage, and more energy to enjoy the journey. Whether it’s your first trip with kids or your tenth, these strategies can help make family holidays less stressful and a lot more fun. Happy travels—and happy packing!

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# SUMMER SCREEN TIME

If your kids are constantly glued to technology and it's a fight to get them to put their devices down, then Sonali has some top tips to ease that process and help you enjoy some memorable family moments this summer.

Photo by Julia M Cameron from Pexels



## About the Author

Sonali is a parent coach, speaker, and founder of Forward Together Parenting. She's been where you are with her own sensitive, strong-willed kids and has worked with thousands of parents worldwide. Her work is dedicated to sharing how you can confidently parent, have fun, and create lasting change that feels good



# W

When I speak with parents as we gear up for the summer months, one of the things they get concerned about is their children's use of devices. With the additional free time their children have, they want them to enjoy outdoor adventures, meet friends in person, and play a game of tag at the playground. What they don't want is for their children to get buried in a device.

Parents may want their children off their devices for meals, but they also don't want them whining about not getting to use iPads at the table. Parents may want their children to go for a morning walk, but they also don't want to be repeatedly asked on the walk about when they can get back on their devices.

Let's take a closer look at what's going on here.

## WHY IS IT SO HARD TO GET MY KIDS OFF THEIR DEVICES?

Let's consider your kids' perspective. If you and your partner have an amazing date night but don't plan the next one, you're left anxiously wondering if you'll ever do it again. However, if you plan your next date, even if it's a month away, you can rest and enjoy other aspects of your life without worrying about your next date night.

It's the same for your child. Their repeated requests to use their devices or whining when they're off them is often due to anxiety at not knowing when they'll get to use their device again.

Clarity and focus soothe anxiety, which means we can engage securely with the world because we know when we're going to have "the thing" we want again.

## SO, WHAT CAN I DO?

### Option 1: Refocus from "stop" to "pause"

Instead of focusing on the "get", focus on "giving". This means instead of trying to get them off technology, focus on giving them the information they need to feel



*Photo by August de Richelieu from Pexels*

secure. I call this concept "From Stop to Pause" because we're not stopping them from using their devices—we're simply pausing their use of them.

When it's time to come off technology, tell them exactly when they can get back on and for how long. For example, at dinner time instead of saying, "Turn off your tablet, now!" say, "It's time to turn off your tablet. You can play again after dinner for half an hour."

### Option 2: Ask for their ideas

Another option is to ask them, given that it's now dinner time, when they think it's reasonable to get back on their devices and for how long. This is a great option for kids who get stuck, because without them realizing, we are focusing them on the solution instead of focusing them on having to get off their technology. The key word here is reasonable, so if they come back with "four hours after dinner", you can say, "OK, you're coming up with ideas. That's great. Now, let's find something reasonable." You can also ask, "Hmmm...what do you think I'll say to that idea?" or "Can you come up with a plan you think I'll say 'yes' to?" Remember that it's OK for you to have a different perspective than them, and for you to hold your perspective.

### Option 3: Engage them

Another way to focus them on something other than putting their

devices down is to ask them to demonstrate or explain something from their device. For example, if they're playing a game, maybe ask them to show you how their player jumps and then challenge them to jump like their character all the way to the table.

## WHY DOES THIS WORK?

Many kids struggle to get off tech because they fear they'll never be allowed to get back on. Boundaries are about safety, clarity, and focus. When we have all three, even if we don't like the boundary, we can rest. So your job is to bring the safety, clarity, and focus.

Don't be afraid to have a little fun, and be playful around getting off devices. Kids respond to our energy, so if we're light-hearted, it's easier for them to do what we're asking. Laughter and play build safety. Also, if you and your child share a laugh about technology, it breaks that awkward tension and reminds both of you that you are on the same team.

Once in a while, when it's time for your child to get off a game, go up to them and say, "Shhh... don't tell your mom...take five more minutes," when you're the mom. Ham it up with a wink and watch how they happily come off at the five-minute mark because of the playful connection you brought, and give yourself a pat on the back!



# PLAYGROUPS & ACTIVITIES

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



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BAMBI Committee, 2025

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.

BAMBI 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. BAMBI 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 BAMBI's constitution, interested candidates are required to have an active membership at the time of applying.

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Please scan for more details about the available positions.

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# MY APPROACH TO NEW MOTHERHOOD

How we respond to becoming a parent for the first time can take us by surprise. Shivangi discusses how she approached the challenges motherhood dealt her, leading to a happier, healthier life for her whole family.

Photo by Katie E. from Pexels



## About the Author

Hi, I'm Shivangi! I'm a proud mom to a joyful two-year-old girl and live in vibrant Bangkok. My journey with BAMBI began nearly a year ago, and I currently serve as a playgroup leader and the BAMBI secretary. Being part of this warm, supportive community has been a truly fulfilling experience.



Seeing my beautiful baby girl filled me with joy, but feeling overwhelmed all the time soon became part of my parenting journey. Countless sleepless nights and constant emotions took a toll on my body, mind, and soul—to the point that questioning my actions and decisions as a mother became routine.

I was a strong individual in the corporate world and in my personal life, but first-time motherhood hit on a different level. I was surrounded by my loved ones, and my husband tried his best, but constantly heightened emotions were taking me for a ride.

Finally, I decided to seek professional help. I spoke with a therapist online, and started working with a nutritionist named Deepali. With their guidance, I added eight core activities into my daily routine.

### 1. Engaging in activities

The first activity I engaged with was cooking, which does not come naturally to me. My mother-in-law has been my biggest supporter in this transition as she loves to cook. Cooking for my daughter now brings me immense joy.

Life started taking shape and we moved to Bangkok to be with my husband. Bangkok is very cosmopolitan, but it takes time to discover your tribe. I got introduced to BAMBI and I loved it from the start. The joy of being with kids and playing with them is second to none.

### 2. Journaling

I found that journaling was a powerful tool to keep my emotions in check. I started writing down whatever came into my head, slowly decluttering my mind and my heart. It's tough to find time to write with a baby, but it's possible. Journaling became my go-to strategy to get things off my chest.

### 3. Eating healthily

Body, mind, and soul operate in unison, and I found that eating healthily is the first step to making sure they operate in sync. Deepali

became my mentor and guide. Being Indian and vegetarian, we used to eat lots of starchy, fatty foods. Now we eat lots of vegetables, millets, and pulses, and we make healthy eating part of our routine. I soon started feeling a change in my body and mind.

### 4. Feeding the mind

The next step was food for the mind. We stopped reading negative news and rekindled our love of cartoons and comedies. My baby girl is my partner in this pursuit. In the process, cricket went out of the window, which did not go down so well with my beloved husband.

### 5. Meditating

I am a spiritual person, so I started using a quick hack to sync my energy and spirit with my mind and body: chanting "OM" with deep breaths. I also participated in the "Art of Living" under the guidance of a guru.

### 6. Connecting with nature

We love traveling, and when we travel, we plan our days in ways that allow us to rest and disconnect from our daily routines while reconnecting with nature. Thailand is perfect for this. From beautiful beaches to serene mountains, we are trying to explore everything this country has to offer. The icing on the cake is meeting beautiful and gentle people during these trips who help us, without hesitation, restoring our faith in humanity.

### 7. Connecting with people with a healthy mindset

The most important thing for me is sharing experiences. I started to realize that I'm not the only person dealing with an emotional roller coaster ride. We can relate to and help each other. Some of my best advice has come from talking to a friend who said I should react to difficult thoughts by asking "why". Then I would know either why something was happening, or that I needed to make peace with not knowing why this was happening. It worked for me and changed my entire perspective towards dealing with difficult thoughts.

### 8. Exercising

Finally, I started doing yoga and walking every day. Moving my body makes a difference to both my body and my mind.

Change starts small and builds into a whole ecosystem. These eight things seem simple, but scheduling them into my daily routine was challenging, and it took time for me to adjust. But now my husband and mother-in-law follow the same routine and regimen as me, and it has created a much better environment in our house. We dance, sing, and laugh together. The atmosphere we have created allows my child to grow up in a better, healthier environment.

I feel that in the end, life is not about not having issues but about how you approach them.



Photo by studioroman

# **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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University of Oregon (3)  
University of Pittsburgh (14)  
University of Rochester  
University of San Diego (3)  
University of South Florida  
University of Southern California (7)  
University of Tampa  
University of Texas, Austin  
University of Utah (2)  
University of Vermont (3)  
University of Virginia (6)  
University of Washington (7)  
University of Wisconsin, Madison (10)  
Villanova University  
Virginia Commonwealth University (2)  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute (5)  
Virginia State University  
Warburg College  
Washington College (3)  
Washington State University  
Western Carolina University  
Western Michigan University  
Woodbury University  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (3)  
Xavier University (3)  
York College of Pennsylvania (3)

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