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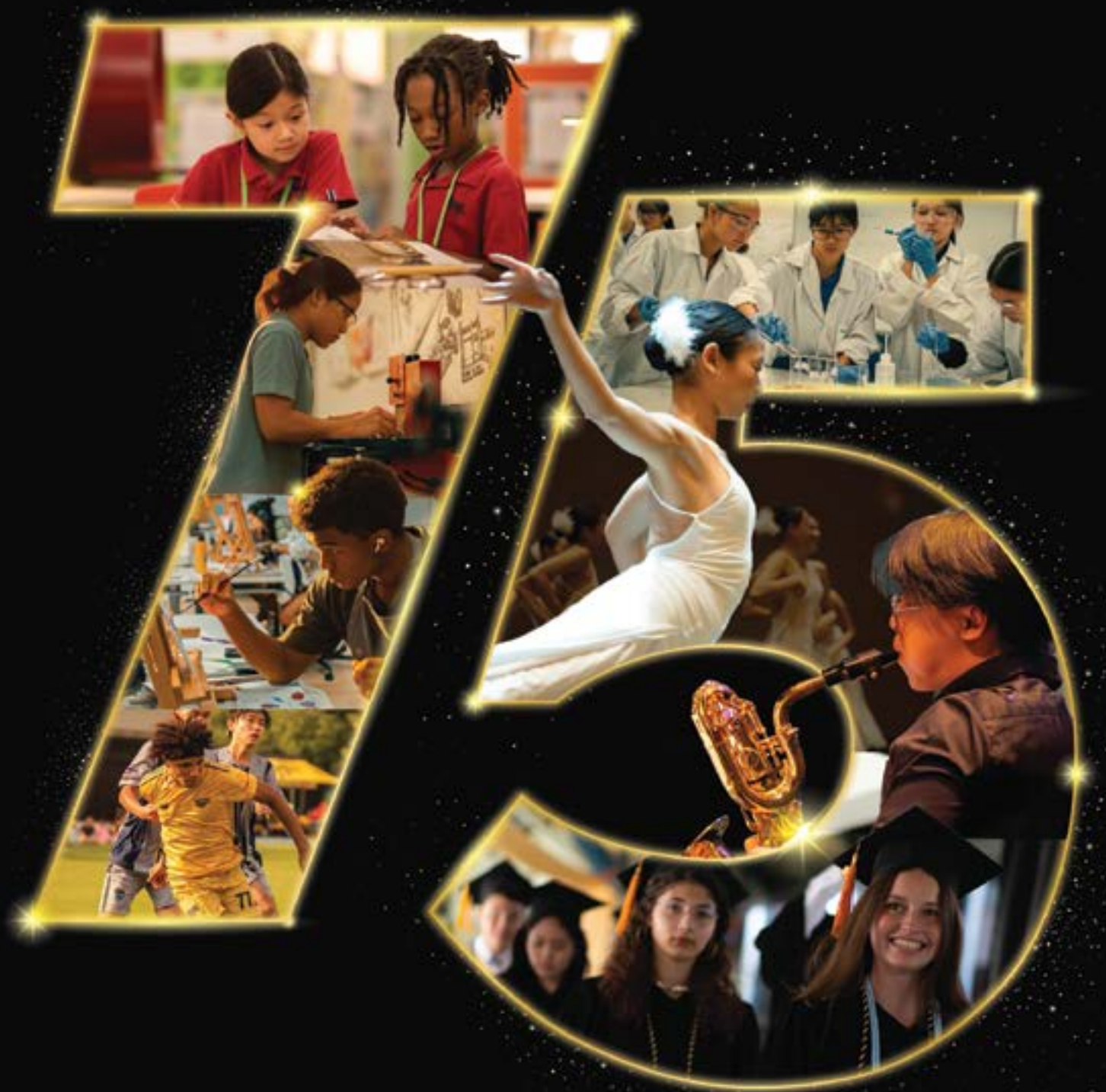
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BAMBI is a project of the Childbirth & Breastfeeding Foundation of Thailand (CBFT).

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monrada.srasamran@regents-pattaya.co.th

Dear Members,



This month's magazine focuses on parenting in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI). There was a time when my biggest concern about technology and parenting was simply how much screen-time my son was getting. The solution seemed straightforward: set limits, put the screens away, and spend more time talking, playing, exploring, and simply being together. I believed that creating a nurturing environment was, in many ways, enough.

Then came school. Suddenly, there were devices in the hands of his peers, school-assigned apps that became part of his homework, and now, personal devices are required for school. What once felt like a parenting choice has become an increasingly difficult balancing act. On one hand, I worry about the impact of growing up surrounded by screens. On the other hand, technology is now an unavoidable part of the world and the answer cannot be to simply keep it away, but instead to teach him how to use it responsibly and develop a sense of control over it from an early age.

And just as we are learning to navigate this new normal, the questions grow bigger. Research is raising concerns about the effects of screen-time on children. Sweden has reconsidered its digital-first classrooms. Countries are drawing boundaries around social media access. And now, AI is reshaping how we think, learn, work, and interact, sometimes at the expense of our own critical thinking. I often wonder what kind of world my son will inherit, and how I can prepare him for jobs that may not even exist yet.

Perhaps more than ever, parenting calls us to be intentional: to stay informed, question what we are told, and make discerning choices within our means and values. We may not be able to predict the future, but we can shape the environment in which our children grow, learn, and discover who they are.

And perhaps, that is where it all begins.

Warm Regards,
Frances Billones
Executive Board and Website Coordinator



JANA CAPEK
PHOTOGRAPHY





I am that mom—the one who is online at midnight, quietly asking Google questions about a particular child-related matter, hoping to find an answer before morning. Like many parents, I have found myself navigating a world of information that simply didn't exist when I was growing up. Having been brought up in a traditional household, I often find myself having to unlearn some of what I was taught and consciously adopt more modern approaches to parenting. But how does one actually do that?

Luckily for me, and for parents everywhere, information and technology are now quite literally at our fingertips. With AI, we can ask questions, explore different perspectives, find resources, and access information within seconds. But with this incredible convenience comes a downside. Having direct access to an almost unlimited amount of information can also be overwhelming. Sometimes, there is simply too much to process, and as a parent, knowing what information to trust can be just as challenging as finding the information itself.

I often think about what this means for our children, particularly during their vulnerable adolescent years. They are growing up in a world where answers are always available, social media is constantly influencing how they see themselves, and technology is becoming increasingly integrated into everyday life. This is why sensory regulation, emotional regulation, and learning how to switch off are so important. Children need opportunities to step away from the constant stimulation of screens and reconnect with themselves, their surroundings, and the people around them.

As a Millennial mom, I find myself trying my best to embrace all things new. After all, ours is a generation that has witnessed an extraordinary range of technological change. We have gone from the humble Walkman and arcade games to smartphones, social media, ChatGPT, and other AI tools that can seemingly answer almost any question. Sometimes I have to stop and think about just how quickly this transformation has happened.

As my mind struggles to imagine that one day my child might prefer an AI bot as a friend, I feel compelled to understand why this could happen and how it might affect her in the long run. What can AI provide, and what can it never truly replace? For me, this is where parents still firmly hold the reins: emotional regulation, empathy, compassion, communication, resilience, and the ability to build complex human relationships. These are skills that develop through real-world experiences and meaningful connections with other people.

In this month's issue, our writers share their perspective and give us tools to better understand what it means to parent in this rapidly changing environment. Their insightful articles explore everything from learning beyond screens and creating mindful technology habits to understanding how children interact with the digital world and how we can support them.

I hope to help my child understand that what you research and read online, just as with social media, should always be approached with caution unless it is supported by a trusted professional or reliable source. We don't have to fear technology, but we do need to understand it.

For me, that is the key takeaway from this month's theme, Parenting in the Age of Algorithms: technology can be an incredibly useful tool when used at the right time and place in our modern lives. I hope this perspective and the information shared throughout this month's issue offer something useful and meaningful to you as a reader.

Kim Narrandes
Editor

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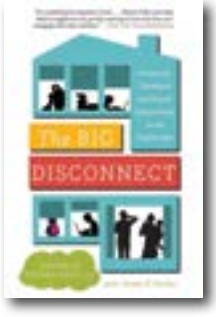
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THE BIG DISCONNECT



By Catherine Steiner-Adair and Teresa H. Barker

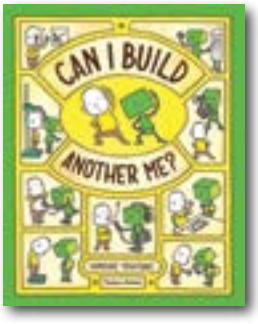
How do we stay truly connected to our children when technology is always within reach? And how do we know when our phones, screens, and digital lives are starting to get in the way? These are some of the questions at the heart of "The Big Disconnect" by Catherine Steiner-Adair and Teresa H. Barker.

The book goes beyond the usual conversation about screen time and asks us to look more closely at our own habits. How often do we check our phones while our children are talking to us? What are we teaching them, without even realizing it, through the way we use technology ourselves? What feels especially relevant today is the reminder that raising children in a digital world isn't only about setting limits for them. It also means being honest about the role technology plays in family life.

Thought-provoking and practical, "The Big Disconnect" is a timely reminder that while it is easy to be connected to everything, being present for the people right in front of us is something we can all work on.

"The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age" by Catherine Steiner-Adair and Teresa H. Barker was published in the United States by Harper in 2013. A copy can be found in the nonfiction section of Neilson Hays Library.

CAN I BUILD ANOTHER ME?



Written and illustrated by Shinsuke Yoshitake

"Can I Build Another Me?" by Shinsuke Yoshitake is a wonderfully imaginative picture book that explores what makes us who we are. If we could create another version of ourselves, would it really be the same person? "Can I Build Another Me?" takes on this playful but surprisingly big question through the story of a child who wonders what it would be like to make another version of himself.

With Yoshitake's characteristic humor and imagination, the book invites children to think about identity, individuality, and all the little things that make each of us unique. It also opens the door to a bigger conversation about technology: as machines become increasingly capable of copying our voices, faces, preferences, and even ways of communicating, what is it that makes us truly ourselves?

Rather than offering simple answers, the book encourages children to be curious and think for themselves. In a world shaped by algorithms and artificial intelligence, "Can I Build Another Me?" is a gentle and thoughtful reminder that being human is about much more than what technology can replicate.

"Can I Build Another Me?" by Shinsuke Yoshitake was published in the United States by Chronicle Books in 2016. Yoshitake is a Japanese children's author and illustrator known for his playful, imaginative books. A copy can be found in the children's section at Neilson Hays Library.



About the Author

Prepared by Kit Lang, IG @mskitlang for 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 clubs, and book sales. The library is located in a beautiful historic building with a garden and café on site: 195 Surawong Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand. Follow the library on IG @neilson.hays.library and FB @NeilsonHaysLibrary.

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By Anatta (Anna) Zarchi

WHEN YOUR CHILD'S FRIEND IS A BOT

A New York City ban on AI in elementary and middle schools has reignited a bigger question: what happens when children turn to chatbots for emotional support instead of people? Anna offers a closer look at validation, dependence, and how parents can guide kids through AI without just taking it away.



Photo by Boris Hamer 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. For more information visit ncsbkk.com/ncs/

"AI is here to stay–we might as well use it."
"AI is reducing our critical-thinking skills!"
"AI helps me so much."

"I don't like AI, but I use it for…"
These are all things we now hear, as conflicting opinions about AI float around the internet. For those following the news, you may have seen that Mayor Mamdani recently announced a ban on generative AI for elementary and middle school students in New York, and on AI critical-thinking modules for high school students.

This ban follows much discussion on how AI affects children when introduced at an early age, including their ability to learn, their critical-thinking and social skills, and, the topic I'll focus on today, how AI companions impact children emotionally.

Let's start by defining AI companion as an AI chatbot or tool that people can talk to for advice or to vent their frustrations and feelings. NCS Counselor Savinee shares that children and teens often use AI to talk about friendships, relationships, and other personal feelings or worries.

A DIARY THAT WRITES BACK

Something that reminds me a lot of AI companions is Tom Riddle's diary in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. Normally, you can write in a diary and it won't write back, but when Ginny Weasley wrote in this magical diary, it wrote back, soothing her fears and validating her emotions to earn her trust. Similarly, AI is trained to sympathize with each user and it grants instant gratification: there's no need to wait for someone to reply, work through something on your own, or risk judgment.

NCS Director Laiyoung Cheng explains that this can be especially problematic during the teen years, when kids experience a lot of confusion and uncertainty about their own feelings. "AI provides constant validation and confirms for them what they might like to hear most. The younger generation is growing up in a world where internal feelings and AI feedback are integrated into their views of life, while the older generation still has a separation between our identities."

WHEN VALIDATION BECOMES DEPENDENCE

Validation isn't negative on its own. We all want to be acknowledged and understood, and sometimes that makes things easier to cope with. The issue lies more deeply in when validation is appropriate, and how much is too much.

Some children and teens depend heavily on AI to cope with doubt, uncertainty, fears, or other things we'd usually learn to navigate ourselves. Instead, the instant gratification and validation AI provides alleviates that stress. This doesn't mean what AI tells your child is always wrong, but it does mean children may not get the opportunity to build emotional resilience by processing


Photo by Roses_Street from pixabay

their own feelings and resolving them through human connection.

LEARNING TO PROCESS EMOTIONS

Brooke Macnamara, PhD, an associate professor of psychological sciences at Purdue University studying skill acquisition, says, "There's clear evidence that people can perform many tasks better with AI. The question is: what happens to our skills if we start relying on it regularly?"

This question is also relevant to emotional processing and regulation. These are important skills that affect our identity, how we handle challenges, and our relationships. When we rely on AI to do the heavy lifting of processing our emotions, we don't get the opportunity to learn how to do it ourselves. Researchers call this cognitive offloading—the use of external tools to reduce mental effort.

AI can be an easy solution, but sometimes we need to hear difficult things, or figure them out for ourselves. Not every emotion requires validation. Sometimes we do mess up and owe someone an apology. AI's tendency to over-sympathize can decrease our ability to realize that, especially for children who are just learning about their emotions. In this way, AI can validate and encourage unhealthy behaviors and emotions.

A REPEATING CYCLE

There is now abundant research indicating that some patterns of AI use are associated with higher rates of



Photo by Katerina Holmes from Pexels

depression, anxiety, and isolation. You might think: if kids are using AI to help with their emotions, wouldn't that lower the risk of these things?

That's the contradiction in how AI "helps." It can alleviate difficult emotions in the moment, but it doesn't necessarily teach us how to process and cope with those emotions effectively in the long term. Because of this, people can get caught in loops with AI: they feel better for a while, but because no inner work was done, they may quickly feel bad again and turn to AI for comfort. This can become a repeating cycle.

AI can momentarily make us feel better by telling us what we want to hear, and it can also try to tell us how to process and cope with difficult emotions effectively. Because users don't have to do the inner work themselves, they don't build the skill. What sticks is the short-term feeling of being understood, not the lesson in building coping mechanisms.

Recently, there have also been cases of AI-induced psychosis. This doesn't mean AI causes psychosis, but it may exacerbate symptoms in those already at risk.

GUIDING CHILDREN THROUGH AI

This isn't to say we don't understand why many children and teens turn to AI. Who wouldn't want a diary that writes back? Or one that mostly tells you what you want to hear? After all, there's a reason Ginny kept writing in that diary.

Children who feel left out might also turn to AI in place of a friend. Childhood and adolescence can be emotionally tumultuous times, and many kids crave a safe space where they feel understood and can talk to someone outside their real lives.

This isn't to say AI companions can't help at all, but it's important to help your child understand what AI is on a deeper level. Laiyoung shares that a lot of kids think AI is actually a person, because of its social aspect. Simply taking it away doesn't help them understand how AI can affect them, nor does it prepare them to use it responsibly once they're older.

As parents, one of the most important things you can do is model that behavior. How are you using AI at home? If you don't use it, what conversations are you having with your children about it?

BUILDING EMOTIONAL STRENGTH

Finally, I'd like to end by saying AI isn't inherently negative. Like most tools, how it affects us depends largely on how we use it. It's not surprising how heavily people have come to rely on it, even adults who have lived most of their lives without it.

That's why it's important for parents to help children understand how this tool can affect them, both now and later in life. We also encourage you to look into the other ways AI can impact your children, so you can develop your own understanding of these tools. That way, you can guide your children through this new era while helping them build emotional strength and other important skills.

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By Sarah Russell

LEARNING BEYOND SCREENS

Why do so many capable, curious children shut down at a desk but come alive outdoors? Sarah breaks down what the science says about connection, sensory input, and using technology as a tool rather than a substitute for hands-on discovery.

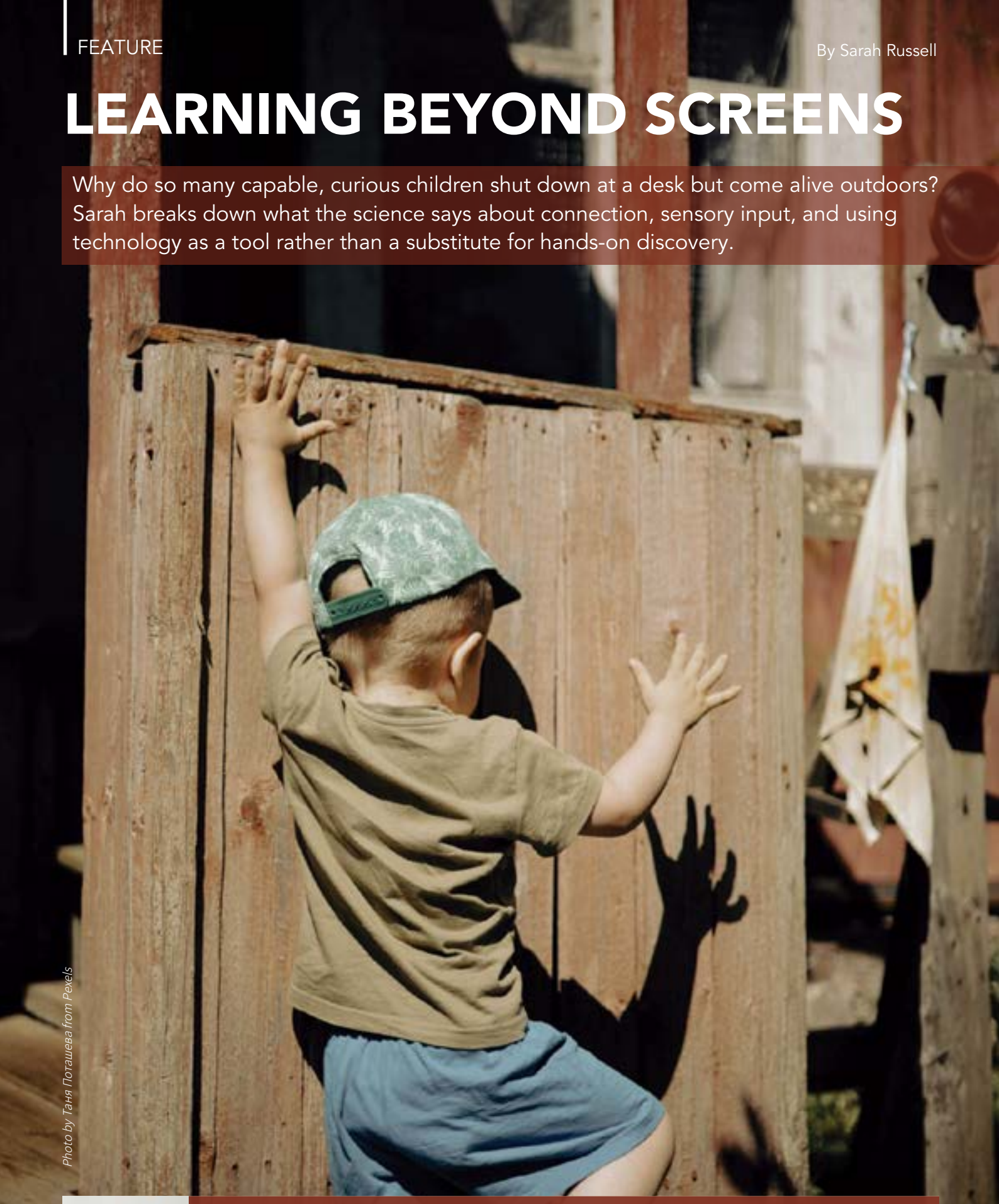


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About the Author

Sarah Russell is a school-based occupational therapist and founder of Spring for Kids, providing occupational therapy and speech and language therapy to children and schools across Bangkok. Learn more at springforkids.com

Think about the last time you saw a child completely absorbed in something. That moment when they are regulated, deeply engaged, and in a state of flow where they seem genuinely happy and connected. It is such a joy to observe.

As an occupational therapist who has spent decades working with children, whenever I ask parents, "When is your child feeling at their best?", I usually hear: when they are at the beach, playing in water, at the playground, outside building, exploring, and moving. That same child who finds it difficult to sit still during circle time or independently complete their work in the classroom flourishes in these rich, active environments. It always sparks my curiosity: how can we harness this natural drive in school settings to enhance learning, behavior, and overall engagement?

Specializing in school-based occupational therapy support, I see a growing number of referrals year after year for challenges with attention, organization, and completing school work. These are brilliantly capable, curious, and creative children who struggle to connect, regulate, and learn in otherwise highly equipped environments filled with the latest gizmos, gadgets, and digital tools. All that a school could want, but seemingly still not what the child actually needs.

WHY TECHNOLOGY ALONE ISN'T THE ANSWER

My background in child development roots me deeply in a well-established truth: children learn best when they are active, hands-on, play-based, and deeply connected to their interests. The inclusion of educational technology promised enhanced learning and efficient ways to connect children to maximize productivity. However, research demonstrates that technology alone does not automatically translate to improved academic performance or productivity (1). Truthfully, it was never about choosing for or against technology; our world is evolving,



Photo by Steph Quernemoen from Pexels

and children need to learn how to safely and meaningfully exist in a digital world. The key is ensuring our curriculum is rich in the foundational opportunities children need to thrive in their own unique ways. Honoring individual differences and supporting individual learning journeys is a far more productive conversation to explore and integrate.

Which leaves me with a question I keep thinking over: how do we leverage the best of technology alongside whole-body, child-led, play-based learning?

TWO CHILDREN, TWO BREAKTHROUGHS

When I ponder this, my mind goes back to a young boy who found handwriting at a desk immensely difficult. Yet, he came alive molding playdough into letters during therapy sessions, using speech-to-text to draft his ideas in the classroom, and then taking a photo on a tablet to share his work with his family. I remember this child beaming with pride.

Then there was the girl who felt too overwhelmed to step into the classroom, dysregulated by bright fluorescent lights and wall-to-wall posters. Yet, she blossomed during lessons where she used a tablet to research, navigate her day via a visual schedule, and watch video clips to supplement instructional learning when needed.

Each of these children highlight how effective teaching initiatives can honor the whole child at their core while using digital resources as a supportive partner in their learning journey. This kind of learning is purposeful, relational, and deeply meaningful.

CONNECTION IS THE BEDROCK OF LEARNING

Connection truly is the bedrock of all learning. From a neurobiological perspective, without a felt sense of safety and relational connection, the nervous system shifts into defense or survival mode, rendering the higher-order processing regions of the brain unavailable for academic intake (2).

Furthermore, when a child engages multiple sensory modalities at once, such as their tactile, proprioceptive, vestibular, visual, and auditory sensory systems, the brain constructs denser, more resilient neural pathways than any single sensory system can produce alone (3).

So perhaps the path forward is to more playfully explore mixed digital media in a relational way that drives motivation, purpose, and intention, deliberately blending physical and digital tools to create learning experiences that feel genuinely relevant to children.



Photo by CDC Dawn Arlotta, Cade Martin, 2009 from CDC CC0 Images

TECHNOLOGY AS A TOOL, NOT A METHOD

How, then, can technology enhance connection and productivity alongside the curriculum?

Used intentionally, technology becomes the vehicle for research, drafting, modeling, and documenting. It is a flexible learning resource rather than the learning methodology itself:

- The camera to document process and progress
- The spreadsheet to organize and track data
- The search tool to explore curiosity
- The vessel to record audio notes
- The platform to edit a creative video
- The canvas to design a flyer or presentation

In each of these scenarios, technology isn't replacing hands-on discovery; instead, we see how it can coexist with and support learning without overshadowing the whole-brain, connected learning we know is fundamentally important. This is the blend I advocate for: a deliberate, thoughtful mix of technology and hands-on exploration that reflects how we operate in the real world, grounded in clarity, child-centered intention, and purpose.

SUPPORTING NEURODIVERGENT LEARNERS

For neurodivergent children, including those with ADHD, autism, dysgraphia, or sensory processing differences, this blended approach can be an integral accommodation, supporting inclusive access to education. From an occupational therapy perspective, our goal is to maximize the student's ability to access the curriculum so they can demonstrate their capacity and capabilities. By intentionally pairing tech with hands-on learning, we can:

Provide agency: Empower students to learn in ways that feel meaningful and engaging. Additional sensory feedback through hands-on learning supports absorption, making abstract concepts visible and tangible.

Remove functional barriers: Utilize speech-to-text, voice memos, or digital mind-mapping so a student's ideas aren't constrained by developmental differences like handwriting challenges, processing speed, or working memory.

Use video modeling for sequencing: Use short video clips or digital visual schedules to preview steps (such as those for a craft or science experiment) before handling materials, significantly lowering cognitive load.

Diversify how learning is demonstrated: Empower students to showcase physical projects through photo stories, stop-motion animation, or audio tours rather than traditional paper-and-pencil tasks.

Support sensory regulation: Pair digital planning tools with sensory-friendly environments, allowing a student to wear noise-canceling headphones, access sensory provisions like music, or utilize tech-assisted sensory tools to enhance participation and performance.

This brings me to a core value I ask educators and parents to hold on to: always anchor a concept in a physical, tactile, multisensory experience before bringing in a digital tool to capture, extend, or present it.

Countless children are communicating a need for us to rethink how we engage them. I would love for our classrooms to be places that truly hear them.

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By Sanam R Rahman

AI CLASSROOMS AND THE LEARNERS OF TODAY

Our children may be growing up fluent in technology, but digital fluency doesn't automatically mean digital literacy. As AI enters the classroom, here's what parents need to know about helping children use and critically think about it.



Photo by Thành Đỗ from Pexels

About the Author

Sanam is a writer and former editor of BAMBI Magazine. A Bangkok resident for over a decade and mum to two girls, she enjoys writing about parenting, education and the everyday questions that come with raising children. She loves good books, good conversations and ideas that make you think.

As a millennial mother raising Gen Alpha kids, I'm simultaneously baffled and awed by how effortlessly they navigate a technological world that's evolving at a dizzying pace. At the age when I barely knew how to use the family desktop, my almost eight-year-old can confidently differentiate between AI images and real ones. Our children are already digital natives, but what happens when artificial intelligence (AI) becomes part of the classroom itself? What does AI actually add to their education, and are we, as parents, ready to embrace it?


Photo by Gustavo Fring from Pexels

FROM DIGITAL LEARNING TO AI

Technology-assisted learning has been part of education for decades, with computer-assisted instruction emerging as early as the 1960s (1) and early intelligent tutoring systems dating back to the 1970s (2). What has changed dramatically is the sophistication and accessibility of these tools, particularly with the arrival of generative AI.

AI is increasingly finding its way into classrooms, particularly in Bangkok where international schools are often at the forefront of educational technology. With globally diverse student bodies and an emphasis on future-ready skills, these schools use AI to tailor coursework to individual needs, overcome language barriers, reduce teachers' workloads, and build digital literacy. The question is no longer, "Does my school use AI?" but rather, "What does my school use AI for?"

My own questions began with a much simpler tool. When my elder daughter was in Year 2, her class practiced math on Topmarks, a website offering free educational resources. Questions would pop up on the screen and she would select an answer, but there was no explanation when she got one wrong. Was this simply memorization dressed up as digital learning?

Her teacher explained that Topmarks was there to build mental recall of math facts, supplementing regular lessons rather than replacing teaching. It gave me my first lesson in how to think about technology in education: as a parent you don't necessarily have to understand every technology your child uses; rather you should know how and why it's being used. And as AI becomes more embedded in education, there's another question: are our children being taught how to use it?

FROM "USING AI" TO "LEARNING ABOUT AI"

My undergraduate program offered first-year students a "Study Skills" elective. We learned that Wikipedia could not be relied upon as an academic source and that anything taken from it had to be fact-checked. We learned what counted as plagiarism and how serious the consequences could be. Running an essay through Turnitin became almost second nature.

That was back in 2008, when students arrived at a university with little exposure to digital learning tools. According to the OECD, close to half of middle- and high-school students were already using AI tools in 2024, particularly for homework, ideas, and explaining difficult concepts (3). This has brought in a fresh set of concerns. A friend once shared that many of her 14-year-old daughter's classmates used ChatGPT to do their homework. "This by itself is not the issue," she said. "But when it generates poems and essays for them, how are they learning to apply their own understanding of the topics and their creativity?"

My own experience was an eye-opener. In Year 4, my animal-loving daughter used Google to research baboons for her science presentation. Her slides were beautifully designed, but a quick read revealed that much of the language wasn't her own. She had copied and pasted directly from websites, having no understanding of plagiarism and why it mattered.

What followed was a sobering conversation with a disheartened child, and 20 minutes rephrasing sentences together. But I realized I had expected her to understand something she had never actually been taught. Children need to be explicitly taught how to use online sources for research: how to identify useful information, assess whether a source is reliable, put information into their own words, and acknowledge where it comes from. These skills need to be taught, modelled and reinforced—not simply assumed.

And this brings us back to the use of AI. If children are encountering AI platforms long before they reach university, the onus cannot fall on them alone to use it responsibly. Just as we were once taught how to research, reference, and avoid plagiarism, today's students need explicit teaching on using AI: how to question its answers, verify information, recognize its limitations,



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and use AI to support rather than replace their own thinking. The question for our schools is whether they are teaching this.

DOES AI ACTUALLY HELP CHILDREN?

Not all adults like analyzing datasets, writing reports or taking notes during meetings. Many of us appreciate instant answers and complex topics broken into language we can understand. We want our lives faster and more convenient, so it's no surprise our children want the same. However, are speed and convenience always better when it comes to learning?

Learning takes time, effort and repetition for a reason. Every time we solve a problem, we strengthen the neural connections involved (4), and the more we do it, the easier it becomes. Productive struggle is part of learning, and it helps build the persistence we need to keep going. In primary school, I had to write out the times tables and read them aloud three to five times a week. The task was dull, but by the age of 11, they were at the tip of my tongue. I do wonder what happens when technological convenience takes away the very effort that makes learning stick.

Recently, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani and Schools Chancellor Kamar H. Samuels announced a one-year moratorium on student-facing generative AI for children in 2-K through eighth grade in the 2026-2027 academic year (5). One of the reasons given is that younger children need to learn to solve difficult problems without relying on technology. If AI immediately supplies answers or explanations, children risk missing out on the process of figuring out how to approach something—breaking a problem into parts, drawing on what they know, and testing different strategies.

Children also need to learn how to recognize the limits of their own knowledge. Brainstorming, sifting through information to decide what matters, and finding the right words are all cognitive work. When AI routinely brainstorms, structures, or rewrites children's work, they get less practice doing it themselves.

FINAL THOUGHTS

AI is not going away, nor should our goal be to keep children away from it altogether. Used well, it can make learning more accessible, personalized, and engaging. But embracing AI should not mean accepting its use without question. We do not need to understand every new tool our children encounter, but we do need to raise young people who can use these tools without depending on them, and who know how to question, create, persevere, and think for themselves. So the next time your child looks for answers on ChatGPT, ask why they need it and what they have tried on their own first. And when you next speak to their teacher, ask not simply whether AI is being used in the classroom, but why and how.

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By Robb Falls

HOW I WENT FROM BABY-AVERSE TO BABY-OBSESSED IN NINE MONTHS

A first-time dad on leaving the hospital clueless, drowning in Instagram advice, and falling harder than expected for his favorite baby.



About the Author

Robb Falls is a child behavior consultant with 15 years' experience working with families and schools worldwide. He helps parents tackle tantrums, end daily battles, and create calm at home, by treating behavior as a skill children can learn, not a fixed trait. Find him at robbfalls.com and IG @robbfalls.behavior



As we packed up to leave hospital with our brand-new, surprisingly puffy first-born child, I looked at my partner Rebecca and asked, "So that's it, we just leave with this baby as if we know what we're doing?" In hindsight, there were probably more reassuring things a sleep-deprived new mom who had just been through the most traumatic experience of her life, needed to hear.

Even when the doctor asked if we had any questions before we set off, instead of admitting that yes obviously, we had an endless list of queries—like whether that terrifying gargling noise he makes at night is normal—all I mustered was, "Do you think he'll have curly hair?" She said no. She was wrong, by the way.

Now that we've been through our first year, it is shocking how little information you get in preparation for caring for a newborn. Cars are much less precious, but you have months of practice before someone trusts you with one. Not babies, though. Off you go and work it out with a handful of corrupted memories from friends and family, and 3.4 million different opinions on Instagram.

Friends and family do their best to tell you all the trade secrets in the run-up to delivery day, but it seems our brains wipe the traumatic phases of those first six months—probably so people have more than one kid. It's at those 3am moments, bouncing on a Swiss exercise ball to shift some wind, when you realize this new life is quite surreal.

As for social media, I'm still undecided if it's a net benefit. There's just too much. You look up one little thing about naps, and next thing you're trying to convince yourself to buy the remote controlled, swinging, musical bouncer that one person said was magical. You'd have thought it was lined with thorns based on the way our boy screamed when I put him in it.

To everyone's credit though, the one thing they got right was that having a child unlocks a new feeling you didn't realize existed. The downside is that a baby's cry never really bothered me before. Now, with the realization that I'm the one actually responsible, that primal need to solve all their problems immediately is intense.

My good friend and twin-girl dad summed it up when he suggested I make the most of my free time before the baby arrives. "Play golf, go to the cinema, see friends. Because from next month your time will evaporate. It's not that you can't do all these things but you'll realize when they're born, you just won't want to. You'll prefer to be at home."

Regardless, I was far too optimistic about how little a mini-me would affect these things. Time is an illusion. Any breaks are taken up doing life admin and things (like sleeping) that an awake baby prevents. Quick, he's asleep; time to eat, sleep, and clean the house in seven minutes.

Also, I just didn't expect to find my baby so interesting. As a fairly stereotypical bloke, I never had much time for babies. If one was passed to me, I panicked until they inevitably cried and I could pass them back. Come back in a couple of years, I thought, when this boring phase is over. My baby is different. He's my favorite baby. It's hard to think of anything I'd rather do than watch this confused-looking, slimy alien turn into a somewhat functioning mini-human.

"How's your baby doing?" asks a random colleague. "So glad you asked, here are seven videos of him failing to crawl with full commentary and analysis," says me, as a new dad.

Even movies hit differently now. Any that involve something bad happening to a child are horrific. "Can you imagine?" we'll say to each other. Or, "How could you do that to a child?" It's not like it wasn't there before, but it's gone from an interesting twist to affecting the rest of my week.

So, if there are any expectant parents reading: you will get through each phase. You forget the traumatic stuff anyway and it really is a lot of fun. Lap it all up.

Photos courtesy of the author

By Ting Sue

MEET TING SUE

Actor, athlete, and mom Ting shares her journey from growing up across Thailand, Malaysia, and the United States to building a family life in Bangkok and finding a community through BAMBI.

Where are you from and what's your nationality? Can you tell us about your life back home?
I'm half Thai and half Taiwanese. I grew up in southern Thailand, Malaysia, and the United States. I went to boarding school in Penang, Malaysia—a beautiful beach city with a great mix of nationalities and amazing food! In the United States, Seattle was where I spent my teens and college years. Thailand is home now and we love it here!

Can you tell us something about your career and work? And what about your spouse?
I'm an actor here in Bangkok, working mostly in commercials and films. My most recent commercial was for an insurance company in Singapore. I also recently finished a Thai TV series where I play a baddy who is out to assassinate the good guy. It will air on Mono29 in 2027. Steve, my husband, works as a teacher at Bangkok Prep International School.

Please tell us a little bit about your family.
We are a Thai, British, and Taiwanese family. We are also a sporty family, so you can often find us playing football, basketball, or volleyball and sometimes competing in tournaments too!

When did you come to Thailand? What do you miss the most about your country?
I moved back to Thailand in 2016. Outside of Thailand, I miss all the parks, scenery, and the typical four seasons instead of the year-round heat and humidity.

Can you tell us a bit about your routine here in Bangkok?
Steve and I play a lot of sports. I'm currently playing women's football and basketball with the Bangkok Prep parents' team. On weekends, we take our son Koza to a lot of playdates, spend a day out with his grandparents and uncle, or go out exploring Bangkok and beyond.

What do you love most about Thailand? Which parts of Thailand have you traveled to, and which did you enjoy the most?
We love how convenient life is here and how everything is easily accessible. Whatever you want to do, you can find it here. We also enjoy going to the beaches, visiting Chiang Rai to see Koza's grandpa, and exploring the mountains.



What were your main challenges when you first arrived in Thailand?
The heat, traffic, and pollution can be quite challenging here. We slowly got used to the heat. To avoid traffic, Steve and I eventually got scooters to get around Bangkok, but we always take a car with Koza. During the pollution season we wear masks, just like everyone else.

How did you find out about BAMBI?
I think I found BAMBI on Google and it has truly been a godsend. It has made having a child in Bangkok a much more wholesome experience.

Are there any specific suggestions you can give to BAMBI's new members here in Bangkok?
BAMBI's a great place to meet other families, and more importantly the playgroups and activities have been life-changing for us. Our experience would have been very different had we not known about BAMBI!



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Where Care Meets Excellence — Since 1990

By Keren Granit

FOOD AND MOOD: HOW NUTRITION SHAPES CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

Iron, zinc, and gut bacteria may have more to do with your child's next meltdown than sugar does. Keren breaks down the nutritional gaps behind mood swings and outbursts, and explains two simple mealtime shifts that can help.

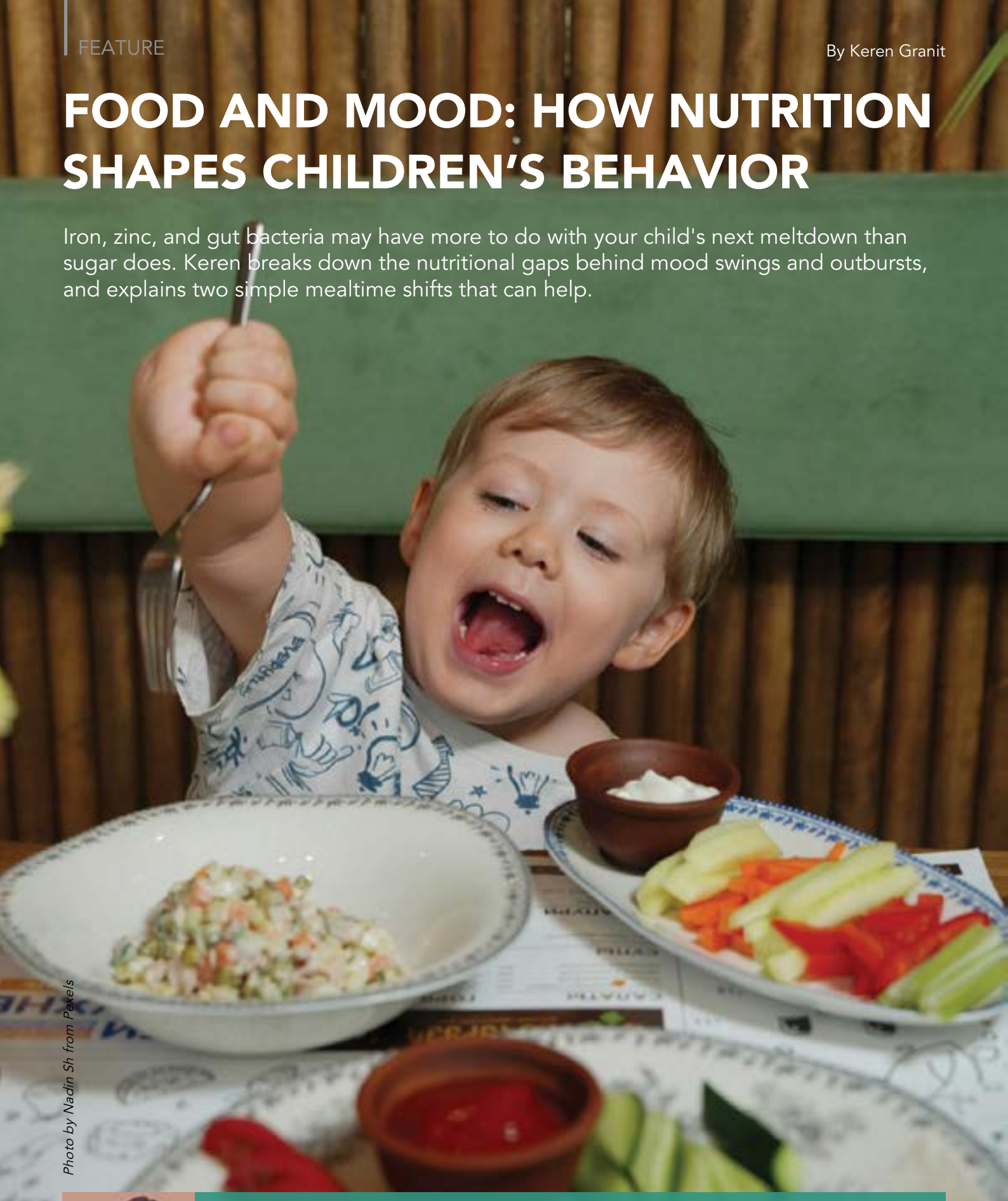


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About the Author

Keren Granit is a Registered Dietitian and founder of Eat With Keren. Specializing in pediatric nutrition, women's health, and midlife transitions, she delivers evidence-based guidance to help families build healthy, stress-free relationships with food. Connect with her at eatwithkeren.com or IG @eatwithkeren.

Every parent knows the scene: a post-birthday party explosion of hyperactive energy, followed closely by a tearful, emotional breakdown. It is easy to point fingers at the cupcakes and fruit juice. However, focusing only on sugar and artificial colors leaves out the most important part of the puzzle. Emerging science shows that a child's daily mood, frustration tolerance, and focus depend just as much on what is missing from their plate as what is on it.



Photo by Yan Krukau from Pexels

THE MISSING NUTRIENTS BETWEEN MOOD SWINGS

When children experience sudden mood swings, brain fog, or low frustration tolerance, we often look first to poor sleep or screen time. While those matter, subtle nutritional gaps are frequently driving the tension. Take iron, for example. Inside the brain, iron helps produce dopamine which is the chemical messenger responsible for impulse control, focus, and emotional regulation. Even without clinical anemia, low iron stores can leave a child easily overwhelmed and quick to snap.

A similar pattern occurs with zinc and B-vitamins. Zinc acts as a natural traffic controller in the brain, helping balance the chemical signals that rev up nervous energy with those that calm it down. Meanwhile, B-vitamins turn the protein in a child's diet into serotonin, the body's natural mood stabilizer. When a child's diet runs low on these crucial building blocks, their nervous system simply has a harder time resetting after stress, leaving them prone to persistent irritability.

THE GUT-BRAIN CONNECTION

The connection between food and mood becomes clearer when we look at the gut. The digestive system acts as a second brain, containing roughly 90% of the body's serotonin receptors. Trillions of friendly gut microbes feed on natural plant fibers, producing soothing chemical compounds that signal the brain to lower stress levels. Conversely, a diet dominated by ultra-processed snacks and lacking fiber starves these helpful microbes. The resulting imbalance sends distress signals directly to the brain, showing up at home as sudden anxiety, restlessness, or unpredictable outbursts.

BLOOD SUGAR AND THE ADDITIVE EFFECT

It isn't just sugary treats causing rapid blood sugar crashes that leave kids feeling shaky and irritable. Modern packaged foods often contain additives like emulsifiers and heavily refined oils that irritate the gut lining over time. Furthermore, when children continuously graze on simple carbs like crackers, chips, or juice boxes without balancing fats or proteins, their blood sugar rides an endless rollercoaster, starving their brain of steady, calm energy.

BRINGING SCIENCE TO THE DINNER TABLE

Yet, translating this science to the dinner table is where most parents hit a wall. Attempting to change a child's eating habits often triggers intense resistance, turning mealtimes into an exhausting battleground of power struggles. The key to breaking this cycle lies in the division of responsibility at mealtimes: as parents, our job is to decide what, when, and where food is served, while our children decide whether and how much to eat. Rebuilding a child's diet is a marathon, not a sprint. Real progress happens gradually as we lead by example, consistently offering nourishing foods without pressure, bribery, or force.

SIMPLE CHANGES TO START WITH

Two things to remove (or scale back):

Sugary drinks and fruit juices: Swap these for water to stop severe blood sugar spikes.

Ultra-processed packaged snacks with long ingredient lists: Reduce reliance on boxed crackers and pre-packaged treats made with refined oils and emulsifiers.

Two things to add:

"Carbohydrate Anchor": Always pair carbohydrates with a protein or healthy fat, such as apple slices with peanut butter or toast with eggs, to keep blood sugar and mood stable.

Daily gut-nourishing fiber: Introduce one simple source of prebiotic fiber each day, such as oats, berries, or plain yogurt, to feed the beneficial gut bacteria that support a calm mind.

By taking the pressure off mealtimes and making steady, small shifts, we give our children the biological foundation they need to feel calm, resilient, and balanced throughout the day.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS



BAMBI Committee, 2026

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, 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.

BAMBI

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MEMBER OF DMS

By Deshna Bhansali

WHAT AI CAN'T TEACH MY DAUGHTER

Deshna's daughter already knows that ChatGPT can answer all the hard questions, but what, Deshna wonders, about the things AI will never be able to teach her daughter?



Photo by Karola G from Pexels

About the Author

Deshna Bhansali is a finance professional and mother to five-year-old Avira. Originally from India, she finds herself navigating the wonderfully messy space between spreadsheets, school runs, multicultural friendships, and raising a child away from home. She writes about the little moments of motherhood that stay with us long after the moment has passed.

My daughter, Avira, belongs to Generation Alpha. By the time she is old enough to work, the world will look completely different from the one I grew up in. Some jobs will disappear. New ones will exist that we cannot even imagine today. She will probably grow up with AI the way I grew up with Google: always there; always ready; always answering. And that makes me wonder: what will she still need from me?

I sometimes get a glimpse of the answer in the most ordinary moments. "Mom, why does…?" She pauses. "Actually, we can ask GPT." She says it so naturally that I smile. But sometimes I find myself saying, "Let's think about it first." Not because I don't want her to know, but because I want to know what she thinks. I want to hear her five-year-old explanation before a machine gives her the perfect one.

And her explanations are often much more interesting. A few weeks ago, she was trying to do something on her own and became frustrated, "Mom, I can't do it." I was already getting up to help, but then I stopped. "Try again." "I tried," she replied. "Try once more." She wasn't happy with me. But she tried and eventually, she got it. She looked at me with that little smile children have when they surprise themselves.

That moment had nothing to do with getting the right answer. It was about discovering, "I can do difficult things." And I think that is something I want to protect for her, because technology will make so many things easier for her generation. If she doesn't know something, she can ask. If she can't write something, she can get help. If she wants to learn something new, information is waiting.

But life is full of things that cannot simply be solved: a friend who doesn't want to play with you; a mistake you wish you hadn't made; someone who is having a bad day; a time when you have to wait for something you really want. There isn't always an answer. Sometimes there is just a feeling and you have to learn what to do with it.



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I think about this when I see children together: one child has something another child wants; or someone gets picked first, or someone doesn't get picked at all. There are tears, jealousy, an apology, and eventually a hug. None of these moments look important while they are happening.

But perhaps this is where children learn the things that will stay with them much longer than anything they memorize: how to share, wait, lose, say sorry, or notice that someone else is hurting. These are the things I cannot outsource.

When I think about the future I want for Avira, I still want her to have a good education. I want her to discover work she loves, travel, make friends, be independent, and have the confidence to build a life of her own.

But I also want something much simpler: I want her to remember to say thank you to the people who help her; to notice when someone is sitting alone; to be comfortable saying "I don't know;" to try again when something doesn't work; to be kind even when nobody is watching. Because being intelligent will help her navigate the future. But knowing how to treat people will shape the person she becomes.

And maybe that is what parenting in the age of AI really means. Not keeping our children away from technology. Not pretending that the world is going back to the way it was. But making sure that, alongside all the things technology can teach them, they still experience the things only life can teach. Waiting for something; getting something wrong; figuring something out; being disappointed; helping someone; saying sorry; being there for a friend without knowing exactly what to say.

One day, Avira will know how to use AI far better than me. She may ask it questions I would never think to ask. She may create things I cannot imagine. And I hope she does. But I also hope that, when something really matters, she doesn't always look for the fastest answer. I hope she sometimes looks around, thinks, asks another person, and perhaps, sometimes, still comes to me.

Not because I know the answer. But because some of the most important things in life were never about finding the answer quickly. They were about learning how to live with the question. And learning how to be a good human while you do.

By Janya Phlaphongphanich

WHAT MAKES US IRREPLACEABLE?

At just 17, Janya Phlaphongphanich is asking a question that may define her generation: what makes us irreplaceably human? As artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes how young people learn, create and imagine their futures, Janya is turning that uncertainty into action. After AI made her first business obsolete overnight she built LivLit, a space for her peers to think, feel, create, and connect in an increasingly AI-powered world. We asked her to tell us about her understanding of AI and its impact on her generation.

1. You're 17 and building a business around a technology that is transforming the world you're growing up in. When did AI stop feeling futuristic and start feeling personal to you?

One of my first businesses was Brown Girls' Brush, a graphic design service that I launched when I was 13. I was so passionate about using Canva and Procreate, spending hours creating the perfect birthday invites, flyers, and more for my clients. AI disrupted that pretty quickly, as most people turned to ChatGPT for graphic generation, which was quite a disappointment, but also very eye-opening. It showed me how quickly things could change: what if I built a career on something that was disrupted overnight? It was no longer something that could happen; it was already happening!

2. When you look at your generation, what do you think young people are quietly outsourcing to AI without realizing it?

A lot of people use AI for mundane tasks, and along with it they hand over the thinking and the process that used to come attached to that work. The biggest thing we're outsourcing is creativity itself, specifically that moment of frustration right before a breakthrough. That's where I think growth actually happens, when we push through the barrier of frustration and actually learn something. The second a task gets hard, it's so easy to turn to AI and let it solve the problem for you or write it for you, but it's that challenge where learning happens that we're giving away without realizing it.

3. LivLit is built around the question, "What makes us irreplaceable?" What was happening in your own life when that question became important to you?

On the first day back at school after a summer away at Stanford, I was sitting in our Year 12 assembly. A slide on the impact of AI on the job market had the whole room buzzing with tension. The reality of certain jobs no longer existing, or being "replaced" by AI, felt very real; the uncertainty with which the discussions were framed felt like a stark contrast to the excitement with which AI was discussed at Stanford. I realized that my peers and I are entering an era of rapid change and uncertainty—the jobs and industries we are being educated and prepared for may no longer exist by the time we enter the workforce. I believe that while we can't control what happens to us, we can choose to navigate how we respond to it. I built LivLit with this premise: I could either let this narrative built on uncertainty and anxiety shape my generation's relationship with our future, or I could contribute to rewriting the narrative to make it work for us.

4. You encountered the Irreplaceable Institute during your time at Stanford. What idea from that experience stayed with you, and how did you turn it into something that felt relevant to young people in your own community?

The Irreplaceable Institute is built for college students trying to break into a brutal job market, and the thing they emphasized most was the importance of building relationships with people who genuinely want to see



About the Author

Janya Phlaphongphanich, 17, is the founder of LivLit and a student at Bangkok Patana School. Through workshops reaching 500+ students internationally, she's teaching the generation growing up alongside AI how to think critically about it and stay human in this technology driven world.



you win. That reframed how I think about relationships entirely—as something you can engineer and build a skill for. Ultimately, who wants to see you succeed comes down to who you are as a person, not just who you know. That's the core lesson of the course: your skills can be taught, but who you are can't be, and that's what actually matters most. I wanted my peers to hear that years before college, while they still have time to build those relationships on purpose, and engineer the person they want to become.

5. When did LivLit shift from being an idea you were exploring personally into something you felt you needed to build?

During the summer program at Stanford, I took a class called Redefining Creativity in an AI World by Prof. Rebeca Hwang and Noah Berkson, who has since become my mentor. I felt that the ideas, concepts and frameworks that I learnt from there were valuable enough to share with the wider community—my peers and other young adults entering this new world at such a critical time. At first I wasn't sure how to go about it, but when I realized that everyone was plugged into the "AI-induced anxiety," it was clear that there was an opportunity for me to share how I was implementing what I was learning to reshape my mindset around AI and the uncertainty surrounding it. After all, conversations can become movements, ultimately shifting mindsets and transforming the way we navigate our world. My intention was simply to use social media as a platform to share my thoughts, but that organically grew into requests from schools to come and speak to students, which then expanded into workshops.

6. Why was it important to you that this conversation about AI and being human came from a young person speaking to their peers?

I think it is important to hear LivLit's message from a peer as I want it to be understood as a revelation someone their age has had, not an outsider's perspective on what our generation should focus on. This is especially important as I know from first-hand experience that people tend to listen more carefully when someone their own age is talking. On top of that, I wanted to create an intimate community where people feel comfortable sharing their worries, learning about how to stay human, and growing beyond limiting beliefs—and that can only happen if they resonate with me first.

7. With AI increasingly able to write, research, design and create, what do you think young people should be investing in now to prepare for the future?

The number one thing we should all protect is our curiosity—it's what drives our thinking, creativity, emotion, and connection. We all have a natural propensity for it: as children, we always ask: "Why?" "How?" Then at school we learn that the value is in being able to give the right answer, not asking questions. Well, now it's clear that we are going to have to unlearn this focus on right answers, and relearn the ability to ask critical questions. Young people should invest more in being human, developing strong interpersonal skills to build meaningful connections, and staying creative!



8. If you could change one thing about the way your generation thinks about AI, what would it be, and what do you hope LivLit can contribute to that change?

I'd want us to feel empowered instead of uncertain. There's so much fear wrapped around AI right now, and I understand where it comes from, but fear isn't the only honest response to this moment. There's real excitement available too, about the possibilities AI opens up and about what it can help unlock within us as people. For example, if we only think about how many jobs AI will replace, we will never be able to think about how many jobs it will create. That's what I hope LivLit contributes to: a shift from feeling like AI is happening to us, toward feeling like we get to decide what we do with it.

9. Any advice for parents who are still on the path to learning about the pros and cons of AI for themselves and their children?

At the end of the day, I believe that the fundamentals of a child's upbringing should remain as focused on human connection, curiosity, and emotion as possible. If those things are solid, figuring out everything else about this shift gets a lot easier. It's important to remember that in a world focused on optimisation, output and results, we are still humans—fueled by love, connection, and trust. AI is a great amplifier, but before we can amplify, we have to become something worth amplifying.

10. You began experimenting with entrepreneurship at a very young age. How has your understanding of what it means to be a founder changed as you've grown from 10 to 17, and what advice would you give an aspiring young entrepreneur like yourself?

At 10, I was doing this as a hobby. At 17, I'm doing it because I've witnessed a problem I want to solve. My perspective of a founder has changed drastically; when I was younger, I loved the idea of owning my own business but never took complete responsibility for it, but now I have stepped into the role of a founder with much more maturity and passion.

For aspiring entrepreneurs: It's easy to overthink the end goal, worry about being "good enough", and so on, but you learn quickly that this is just internal noise. You're never going to feel 100 per cent ready. Just start somewhere! And be kind to yourself along the way: you're still learning and figuring everything out. It's good to make mistakes, and it's okay to ask for help along the way.

Photos courtesy of the author



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By Emily Rogers

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MANAGING PEOPLE AND RAISING PEOPLE

As an HR executive Emily spent 15 years managing people and then she tried the same techniques on her own children. What Emily learned was that kids don't need better systems, instead they need to feel truly known.



Photo by cottonbro studio from Pexels

About the Author

Emily Rogers is a transition and leadership coach and the founder of The Leap to Lead. A farmer's daughter from South Australia, she has spent more than 20 years living and working across seven countries, and moved to Bangkok in April 2026 with her husband and two teenage daughters. Find out more on theleaptolead.com



Photo by charliepix from charliepix

I was kneeling in the hallway holding a shoe, negotiating with a three-year-old who had strong views about that shoe. "We're late," I heard myself say in a very reasonable voice, "we agreed about this yesterday; help me understand what's changed?" It took a moment to register that I was running a performance conversation with a toddler, and worse still, that I'd been doing it for months.

I'd spent over 15 years in human resources and executive coaching before I had children. Performance reviews, restructures, succession plans, and more difficult conversations than I could count. I thought I understood people and I assumed at least some of it would transfer to parenting. Almost none of it did, or at least not in the way I expected.

Management is a contract. You set expectations, you give feedback, you measure, you adjust. It works because both people choose to be in the room and either of them can leave, and it's that last part that matters. A child agreed to nothing and a child can't leave. Every tool I had was built for a relationship with an exit and I was now in one that had none.

I got this wrong for a good while. I ran my girls' childhoods a little like projects, with outcomes and timeframes. I tracked their early weeks on a spreadsheet with feeds, nappy changes, and sleep, and I had sticker charts for potty training. You name it, I tracked it. There was a version of them I was quietly working towards and I could've described it to you in detail. Children can feel that. They know when they're being developed rather than enjoyed, and even when mine were very small, they still knew.

What did transfer surprised me. The best managers I worked with weren't the ones with the tightest systems, they were the ones who noticed. They could tell when somebody's work had changed before that person said a word, and they'd ask about it without turning it into a performance issue. That's most of the job at home too, because behavior is almost always information.

The other thing human resources trains you early is not to take it personally. When an employee is being difficult, a good manager asks what's going on for them rather than what's wrong with them, and that small shift in the question changes what happens next.

Then it ran in the other direction, which I didn't expect at all. Raising two girls has made me considerably better at leading adults. I understood in theory that development doesn't happen on a timeline you set, and that people go backwards under stress without it meaning they've failed. But I didn't know it in my body until I'd spent the better part of a year on that hallway floor dealing with shoes.

It also made me careful with the word "potential." In corporate life we talk about a person's potential constantly, which sounds generous and is often a polite way of being disappointed in who somebody is right now. The same trap is set at home and it does more damage there, because a child has nowhere else to go for a second opinion on themselves.

We've moved countries many times since that hallway. My girls are teenagers now and I've watched them walk into a new school knowing nobody, over and over again. These days we're out the door at 6:40am for a school run that's over an hour each way, and they manage it without much complaint. What's held them steady through all of it has never been the systems, it's whether they've felt known.

So if you're in the early years, deep in the routines and the charts and the advice, the structure is fine and it genuinely helps. Frankly there's no virtue in chaos, just don't mistake it for the job. You manage what a person produces and you raise who a person understands themselves to be, and only one of those will still matter in 20 years time.

By Fiona Morgan

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU ASK AI ABOUT YOUR CHILD

Artificial Intelligence will answer any question about your child instantly and with total confidence. AI advisor and former math teacher, Fiona, explains how much of that confidence is earned and how to get more out of it.



Photo by Karola G from Pexels



About the Author

Fiona Morgan has spent over ten years working in AI, advising businesses on how they use it, and taught secondary school math before that. She co-hosts "Raising Generation AI," a podcast for parents, and writes a weekly email explaining current AI news stories and what they mean for families. Visit raisinggenerationai.com



Photo by Aflo Images from アフロ (Aflo)

It's 2 am and everyone in the house is fast asleep except your four-year-old, who is having yet another nightmare. It's the third night in a row and the parents' WhatsApp group didn't have any helpful advice last night, so this time you turn to ChatGPT. Everyone has done it. In fact, many other parents will be doing the same thing at 2 am, right alongside you. And there's nothing wrong with asking Artificial Intelligence (AI) questions about your children, if you do it the right way.

I'm going to talk you through the five things that I think parents should know about using AI.

1. WRITE YOUR QUESTION IN A NEUTRAL WAY

AI companies improve chatbot responses by having humans rate them, and they feed their ratings back into the AI so it gets better at giving higher-rated answers. This is called "reinforcement learning."

This might sound like I'm heading into a technical explanation, but reinforcement learning actually explains something about AI that all parents should be aware of: the agreeableness of AI.

Turns out that the real humans rating the AI answers gave higher ratings to answers that aligned with their opinions, so the AI learned that agreeing is better than pushing back. So when asking questions, try to remove your feelings and any suggestion of what you think you should do, and you'll get a more neutral answer.

For example, try "what is this rash?" instead of "I'm really worried about this rash. Do I need to take my daughter to the ER?" or "This is just heat rash, right?"

2. BE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

The information that the AI "knows," or can access, comes from its training data and the internet. It is well-reported that this data doesn't represent all cultures and languages equally, so AI will often default to the information it has most of, which tends to be American.

If you are looking for an answer specific to your own culture or situation, then include that in your question. Specify that you're interested in vaccinations given in Thailand or details on the UK school curriculum, and you'll get a far more targeted and useful response instead of something built from assumptions.

You can even specify the output structure you want. So if you're using the response to write an email and want some bullet points, just ask for them in your question.

3. DON'T PUT PRIVATE INFORMATION INTO AI

In point number two, I said to be more specific, but don't be too specific. Unless you change the settings, some AI tools use the messages you type to train future AI models. A few years ago, we saw no real issues with uploading our children's pictures to Facebook, but these days it's considered a significant privacy risk. So it's best to be cautious.

It's difficult to know exactly what kinds of risks there are, or will be, if



Photo by Arshad Ahammad from pixabay

AI knows all the details about your family. But what I do know is that most of the time your question can be worded in a way that shields the most private information. There's never any need to use your child's name or school information; locations can be vague, medical details anonymous.

If you've got an AI account that you are logged into, you may also find that it has a memory. So it can very easily start to piece together information about your family and make assumptions. ChatGPT has a feature called "Temporary Chat" and Claude has "Incognito Mode." These don't save anything to the account memory, so it's best to use them if you're using the tools casually.

4. ALWAYS REVIEW THE SOURCE

As well as being skewed toward particular cultures, AI's source material includes online forums such as Mumsnet and Reddit. There's nothing wrong with these websites—I visit them myself all the time—but literally anyone can post. I could write a long piece about how crispy pork is healthier than Som Tam and AI could pick this up and present it as truth. It is, right?

AI is better than it used to be at showing you the source of the information, but if it doesn't do this, then ask for it. Adding "include website links for the source of all information" to your message will really help. Oh, and read them: I often find that the "sources" AI presents are broken links or misrepresented.



Photo by Iwaria from Pexels

So now you've got a beautifully written message to send to AI. It includes no identifiable information, it's got a neutral tone, you've been clear about wanting a response relevant to being an immigrant in Bangkok, and you've asked for sources. Time to send it.

And this leads me to my final point. The most important one.

5. CRITICALLY EVALUATE THE ANSWER AND THINK FOR YOURSELF

AI does not "understand" what it says. It doesn't care, nor does it not care; it's not a human. So if you get poor advice from AI, no one will be held responsible. And I really can't stress this enough. Humans have morals guiding the advice they give. Computers don't. And sometimes AI makes stuff up.

Read the response and take the time to think about it for yourself. You can try asking another AI tool and comparing the answers. You can get a second opinion from someone you trust. But please don't just follow the response blindly.

You and the other adults in your child's life are the ones best placed to make decisions about what is right, even if it goes against what AI suggests.


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By Susan Saxtorph

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GROWING UP WITH AI PART 1

With AI playing an increasingly dominant role in our children's lives and education we decided to ask Social educator Susan Saxtorph to share her ideas on how to raise curious, connected kids in an AI-shaped world. In the first of her two-part interview with BAMBI magazine Susan focuses on AI and education. Next month, in part 2, she'll talk about the social and emotional impacts of AI.

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming part of children's everyday lives remarkably quickly. From your perspective, how might growing up alongside AI shape the way children learn, think, communicate, and understand the world?

AI is fundamentally changing the conditions children grow up under. Previous generations learned to search for answers slowly through books and trial and error. Children today can often get an answer instantly, and that can be a strength: curiosity can be followed in real time. But it also changes the learning process itself. Patience, persistence, and the ability to sit with uncertainty until you find an answer yourself are skills that develop through the process of searching, and AI can shorten that process considerably. I see it as a shift from knowing something to knowing how to ask the right question, which creates new demands on what adults need to teach children: to think for themselves before turning to AI and to evaluate the answers they receive critically.

AI can also change the way children communicate. Children accustomed to AI's endless patience and availability may find it harder to navigate the natural challenges of human relationships, including waiting, disagreement, and misunderstanding. Those experiences are uncomfortable, but they are an important part of social development.

2. When we talk about AI and child development, what do you think parents and educators should be paying the most attention to right now?

In my view, the most important question is whether AI is supporting a child's own thinking or replacing it. Is the child using AI to explore ideas and get help moving forward, or has it become a shortcut that delivers the finished result without requiring much thought? That distinction determines whether AI becomes a tool for development or an obstacle to it.

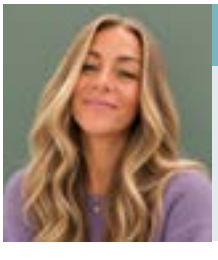
Adults should also pay close attention to the emotional dimension. Children, particularly younger ones, can struggle to distinguish simulated empathy from a genuine relationship. They may also develop attachments to chatbots and AI companions before they are cognitively mature enough to understand what they are actually interacting with. Parents and educators need to talk openly with children about what AI is and what it is not.

3. Are there particular stages of childhood when children may be more sensitive to the influence of AI? Should our approach to AI change as a child grows?

Yes, and the differences are significant, but the type of AI matters just as much. A math tutoring tool and an anthropomorphic AI companion designed to feel like a friend carry very different risks, even for children of the same age.

For children from birth to age four, my professional judgment is that AI has very little to offer. Attachment theory is well established. Responsive human interaction—eye contact, tone of voice, and being emotionally mirrored by a caregiver—is central to brain development, language acquisition, and secure attachment during this period. There isn't yet direct research on AI use in this age group. However, given how important embodied human presence is, I'd argue that AI should not be part of a young child's daily life.

From around age five through middle childhood, children are learning what is real and what is make-believe. Research has shown that younger children



About the Author

Susan Saxtorph is the founder of Little Humans Abroad. She is a trained social educator with a BA in Psychology and is deeply passionate about supporting Third Culture Kids. Having lived abroad with her family, she creates children's books and resources that help young children build resilience, process big feelings, and feel at home wherever they are in the world.



Photo by studioroman

are more likely than older children to personify AI and attribute feelings, intentions, and even friendship to it. This is also a period when problem-solving and persistence are developing rapidly. Overreliance on quick answers can undermine those skills.

By adolescence, children are generally more capable of critical and analytical thinking about AI, but emotional dependency can become a greater concern. Research suggests that some teenagers are choosing AI companions for serious conversations at a stage when identity and social-emotional development still depend heavily on real relationships.

My approach changes with age accordingly: human interaction at the center and minimal direct AI use for the youngest; AI as a supervised tool, alongside conversations about what it is and what it isn't, for school-aged children; and guided independence for teenagers, with an emphasis on critical evaluation and emotional awareness rather than restriction alone.

A useful rule of thumb for parents: the more human-like and emotionally available an AI tool is designed to be, the older a child should be before using it independently, and the more carefully its use should be supervised.

4. AI can provide children with instant answers, explanations and personalized learning. What opportunities do you see for AI to support children's curiosity, education, and development?

Used well, AI genuinely has something valuable to offer. One of the clearest opportunities is personalization. AI can adapt explanations to a child's level in a way that is difficult to replicate individually in a classroom of 25 students. A child who is struggling with a math concept can ask for another explanation without feeling embarrassed about asking again.

There is also real potential for accessibility. Children with learning differences, language barriers, or specific support needs may benefit from tools that adjust the pace, repeat information patiently, or present information in different formats, including text, audio, and simplified language. And curiosity can be extended: a child who asks why the sky is blue can follow that question as far as their interest takes them, rather than forgetting it before an adult has time to look it up.

Importantly, these opportunities depend on how AI is used. The tool should encourage further thinking, questioning, and reflection, rather than provide an answer that simply ends the process. My honest answer is that the opportunity is real, but it is not automatic.

5. If children can ask AI to solve a problem, write a story or provide an answer immediately, could this affect skills such as problem-solving, patience, creativity, or independent thinking? How can we encourage children to use AI without allowing it to do the thinking for them?

Yes, and the concern is increasingly supported by evidence rather than intuition alone. A recent fMRI study of children using ChatGPT found lower engagement in areas associated with cognitive control, attention, and creativity compared with children working without it. More broadly, research suggests overreliance on AI for assignments may affect critical thinking, creativity, and autonomy.

Problem solving and creativity are not skills children develop by receiving correct answers. They are built through the experience of struggling with a question, getting something wrong, and trying again. That struggle can be uncomfortable, but it is productive. When AI removes too much of it, it can unintentionally undermine the learning process it appears to support.

At the same time, AI can support creativity and persistence when children collaborate with it rather than simply defer to it. For example, they can use it for prompts or guiding questions instead of finished answers. The deciding factor is therefore not simply whether a child uses AI, but how the child uses it.

6. What role could AI play in the classroom, and how might it change the role of teachers in the years ahead?

I think AI is more likely to change the teacher's function than replace the teacher.

Teachers have traditionally spent a significant amount of time delivering information and explaining concepts to groups of children at roughly the same pace. AI can take over some of that repetitive work. That could allow teachers to focus more on what they are uniquely well-placed to do, including facilitating discussion, mentoring, noticing when a particular child is struggling emotionally or academically, and building relationships that help children feel safe enough to take risks and make mistakes.

Personalized AI tools may also give teachers insight into which children need support and where. This could be particularly valuable for children who might otherwise be overlooked in a standardized classroom.

The risk is that the relationship itself becomes diluted. Teaching is not simply about transmitting information. A child's motivation, resilience, and social development are strongly influenced by relationships with caring adults who know them. If schools use AI primarily as an efficiency tool without protecting time for human connection, they risk weakening one of the most important elements of effective teaching.

My hope is that AI takes over some repetitive tasks so teachers have more time for relationships, not less. Whether that happens will depend on how schools choose to implement it.

7. AI can sometimes provide inaccurate, biased or inappropriate information. How can parents and educators teach children to question what AI tells them and develop strong digital literacy skills?

One useful habit is teaching children to ask AI the same question they might ask a classmate who makes a surprising claim: "How do you know that?"

AI can present information with confidence regardless of whether it is correct. Younger children in particular may interpret confidence as accuracy. Teaching children to pause, question the source, and check information rather than simply accepting the first answer is therefore an important digital literacy skill.

This works best when parents do it with children rather than simply lecturing them about it. When a child receives an AI-generated answer, parents can help them compare it with another source, such as a book, a trusted website or information from an adult. Over time, checking information can become an instinctive habit.

8. If you could give parents one guiding principle for raising children in an AI-shaped world, what would it be, and what is one thing you hope we never lose as technology becomes more sophisticated?

AI can support a child's learning, but connection is still built by people. Whenever you are deciding whether to let AI step in—whether for an answer, comfort or conversation—ask whether it is leading your child toward people, physical experience and the real world or away from them. That question cuts through much of the complexity.

The thing I hope we never lose is a child's tolerance for not knowing and their capacity for genuine connection. The patience to sit with a difficult question. The resilience that comes from struggling and eventually figuring something out. The empathy developed through a friend's disappointment, a sibling's anger or a conflict that has to be worked through face to face. The joy of moving, building, falling down, and getting back up.

These are not inefficiencies to be optimized away. They are where real development happens: cognitively, emotionally, socially and physically. My hope is that as AI becomes more capable and more present in children's lives, we become more deliberate, not less, about protecting the spaces where children can still struggle, play, move, connect and grow through the slow, sometimes frustrating and deeply human process of figuring things out for themselves.



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By Laura Devos

MINDFUL TECH HABITS FOR PARENTS

Parent educator Laura shares three simple, doable steps to help you reconnect with your kids and reclaim a little peace for yourself in the digital age.



Photo by mark-zamora-mFqAeaZgWO8-unsplash



About the Author

Laura Devos is a certified Parent Educator, former teacher, mama of three, and founder of Extra Roots, where she helps parents and teachers build greater connection with themselves and the children in their lives through workshops, online courses and parent circles. Learn more at extraroots.com, email her at laura@extraroots.com, or follow her on IG @ExtraRoots_global for more tips, tricks, and insights.

Many will say that technology makes parenting harder than it has ever been. There is so much to manage, so many more boundaries to hold, so many more demands to handle. And they are right, technology is a challenge. Admitting this is the first step: awareness.

Then comes the self-compassion, give yourself some love as you recognize the challenges of the digital age. But remember with awareness and self-compassion, you can do this. You can find that healthy medium where you model balance and presence in the digital age. And you'll feel a newfound freedom as you set healthy boundaries and barriers for both you and your children. Here are three simple steps to take towards mindful tech habits.



Photo by picsea-EQITyDZRx7U-unsplash

STEP ONE: NO DEVICES AT THE TABLE

Mealtimes are for sharing, eye contact, and reflecting on the day. Digestion is impacted when we're distracted by screens. This rule doesn't just mean no iPads for the kids, but also no phones for parents. This might be tough for you. But remember, we have to practice what we preach. You'll discover that you feel less stressed when you're off your screen, and you'll find how lovely it is to enjoy your child's presence over a meal.

If your child is used to having their iPad during meals when you announce the new rule, there will be pushback: tears, anger, or resentment. That's okay. You can tell them you're sorry, but that you want to promote healthy mealtimes. Explain that it's important to have no screens at the table, and that you're following the rule too. You can model vulnerability and tell your child that it's hard for you as well

STEP TWO: NO SCREENS IN BEDROOMS

Keep all phones, tablets, and personal screens out of children's bedrooms, especially overnight. Charge devices in shared family spaces to protect sleep habits and prevent private, late-night use. A screen-free room means fewer distractions and fewer power struggles over devices. We all know waking up for school is chaotic in its own right and we don't need screen time to get in the way. Meanwhile, bedtime should be a sacred time for connecting with your child—reading, cuddling, and hearing their day's stories.

STEP THREE: KEEP DEVICES OUT OF REACH AFTER WORK

When you get home, leave your phone in your bag by the door or in your home office. Out of sight, out of mind. You can get to that work email, that reply about the playdate, or any other notification after the bedtime rush. Consecrating "prime time"—from 5pm to 8pm, or whenever dinner and bedtime happen in your home—to spending time with your child is vital.

Making these three changes will be a difficult transition, but they will not only help you build a greater connection with your child, but also reduce your stress, your need to multitask, and ultimately your worries. If you are one of the many parents who are uncomfortable with your craving to scroll, then these steps can help guide you in the direction you want to go.

And beyond the hard part of transitioning into a home with stronger boundaries on screens, you will find happier and healthier children. When we reach for our phones around our kids, they notice, and it shows up as real anger, real sadness. Worse, over time, they stop trying to get our attention at all. A longitudinal study released last year found that when children don't have to compete with screens and devices for their parents' attention, they are happier and healthier in the long term.

And this isn't only about amplified emotions in the moment. The lack of attention, of being seen and heard, is cumulative. When kids keep reacting negatively to our phone use, it chips away at their overall life satisfaction. Over time, those small disrupted moments add up to something bigger: family relationships that feel less connected, and children who feel less content in their lives.

Childhood is composed of many small moments, memories, and lived experiences. They add up, both the good and the bad. And as this longitudinal study shows, they influence long-term life satisfaction.

This is big. Children need to feel loved, seen, heard, and worthy of attention. Unhealthy technology habits don't support this. So, take these steps to be mindful and model balance and presence in today's digital age. Everyone will benefit. Good luck, dear parents! We're in this together.

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Kiddieville	Playville
Little Steps	Future Steps International School Bangkok
Little Panda	Nancy Language School
Little Treehouse	Little Treehouse Nursery
Saturday Nana	Storytime Preschool Bangkok
Little Tots	Tiny Tots International Learning Centre
Niko Niko	The Prestige 49 (Sukhumvit Soi 49)
Kira Kira	KiraKira kids international kindergarten school
Little Gaia new!	Little Gaia, One Bangkok Mall (5th floor)
Mini Andrews new!	St Andrews Primary School, Sukhumvit 71







ACTIVITIES

Name	Location
Toddler Music	Skyview Hotel Bangkok Sukhumvit24
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Little Athletes	The Racquet Club (RQ49)
Lego Construction STEM	Bricks4Kidz - K Village
Junior Tennis	See registration for details
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Please note: the processing time for new and renewal membership applications is 6-10 days. We recommend submitting your application a minimum of one week before attending a BAMBI event to ensure your membership is active on the day. If your membership is not active, you will be required to pay the non-member ticket price for the event.

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Want to know more?
For more information about joining us, visit our website:

WWW.BAMBIWEB.ORG/FAQ

If you have any membership issues, please email: database@bambiweb.org

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 as well as on our website. You are welcome to contact vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org with inquiries.

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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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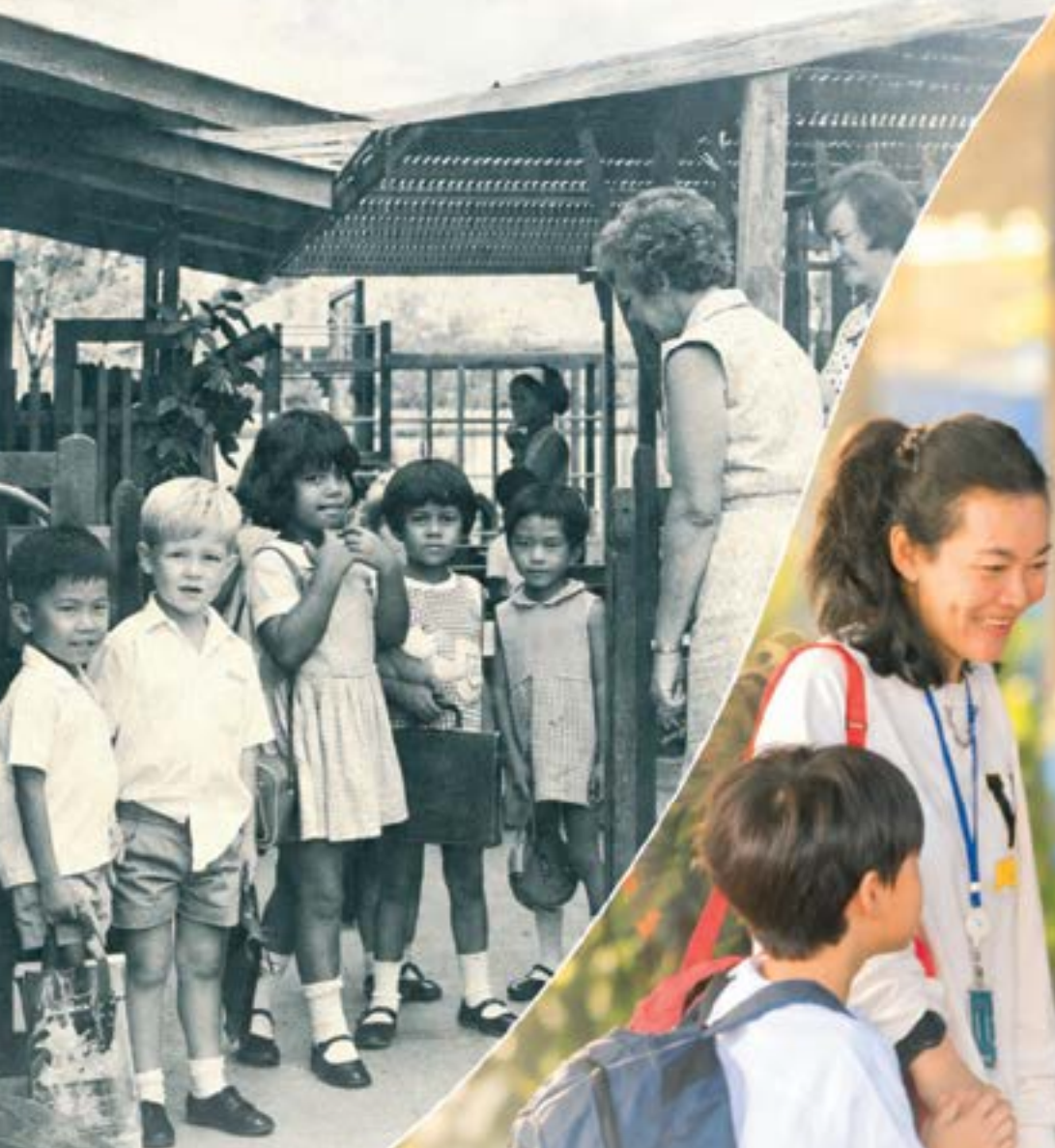
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