

FEBRUARY 2014

BAMBI NEWS

**TOP TIPS TO
ACHIEVE**
an Active Birth

**MORE
LANGUAGES,
MORE
OPPORTUNITIES?**
We hear from
our multilingual
mommas.

**Change
Your
Life With
HYPNOTHERAPY**

SUKHUMVIT WIFE SYNDROME:
Learning to relax into life, Bangkok and
loving a child on the autism spectrum.

Divine Intervention and Therapy will Solve any Problem

By Becky Horace

This BAMBI mom shares the ups and the downs, in working through ESDM Therapy for her son, who is on the autism spectrum.

Week 4: Divine Intervention

“I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.”
-Psalms 63:4

I am a Christian. I am a Christian, who believes that if we give ourselves over to God's plan we will prosper. There will always be hard times but those hard times mold us into better people and followers of Christ.

I now see my reason for following my husband to Bangkok and following God's call here was to be the mother that I could have never have been in the US. I know there are moms that can do this but I personally could not have balanced work, home life and the needs of my special child. This is why I am here in Thailand, a world away from everything and everyone I know, to get my son the best help money can buy from the best professionals here in Bangkok! Listen to this amazing display of divine intervention that took place this weekend.

When at therapy on Friday, I was asking the doc what I should do about swim class. Let me back up a little, when we first arrived in Bangkok I signed Killi up for every activity and class you can think of for the simple reason that we needed human contact. We were taking classes at Little Gym, which he loved but could not follow directions. He just ran around like a fool playing. They are so kind there and would tell me not to worry kids will be kids. We would do playgroups and as you know play groups are structured and again this didn't work for my son, he refused



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to do activities and it was really just more stressful than enjoyable for either of us. We also signed up for swim class at Bangkok Dolphins.

My son grew to love the pool and swim class then all of a sudden it all went to hell in a hand basket. Swimming class turned into a huge stressful disaster of Killi fighting the activities and just wanting to run around the pool and he just didn't want to participate with what they had planned... Again

another structured activity that my special boy would not cooperate with. We moved to the Saturday class with teacher Tom so that Chris could be in the pool because it was honestly too much for me to handle after an entire week of our normal (pre therapy) tantrums and stress. It went a little better but he still fought us in the pool. In case you were thinking, no it's not that he was afraid of the pool or water it is simply because of his special needs and how he needs a different structure and direction than other children.

Okay back to what happened this weekend. When asking our doc about swim lessons, he suggested to stop all lessons of any kind until we get Killi to where he needs to be to actually participate in structured play. I was a little bummed since he loves the pool, it's a great time to see our friends and I had already paid...

We go to class on Saturday and I am already stressing out because I have to do the class with Killi because of Christopher's broken finger (he can't get his splint wet). We get in the pool and I basically lay it all out for teacher Tom. (Why keep our situation a secret? My kid has special needs and I don't care who knows it, we aren't ashamed or too proud to ask for help and neither should you-you never know how

someone can help you!) I explain how my son is on the autism spectrum, our doc says this structured play could hurt our efforts and I ask if we can come back next term when the doc says it is okay. Teacher Tom smiles and says he is trained to work with autistic children! He was and is a special needs teacher and has had extensive training in how to structure the play to enhance our therapy that we are already doing. He knew all about what we were currently

“I had hit another breaking point as the mom.”

doing with our ESDM therapy, how to make Killi want to be in the pool with giving him what he wants and still getting in the lesson.

He sets up the rest of the class with the lesson and comes and grabs Killi and we begin our lesson, which is doing the same activities but in a less structured way that keeps my son happy and engaged to where he doesn't want to leave the pool. This was the first class we have been to where my son was happy, he

didn't cry and he participated! Teacher Tom is going to work on a special lesson plan for my son and it will be one that we can continue in our pool at home to help him maintain the routine that will greatly help our therapy efforts!

There isn't a doubt in my mind that God set this all up for a reason with us switching swim class to the weekend and in turn being with teacher Tom. He is putting the perfect professionals for the job on our path to help my son succeed! (Tell me you don't have goose bumps right now!)

I went home and cried my eyes out. These were tears of joy. I sobbed and thanked God for this amazing gift. At times I wish I was home but then I realize that if I were home we would have missed all of this. My son would have slipped through the cracks at daycare, while I was at work and we would have caught all of this too late. I made a promise to God through my tears that I would always praise him in the good and in the bad. This weekend was good and I am forever grateful.

Week 5: "They Call Me Mellow Yellow"

After five weeks of therapy, my son has completely mellowed out. Before he had the attention span of a gnat, flitting around from place to place. We couldn't keep him engaged on anything. He would run around like a mad man doing laps in the therapy room and spend about a minute with each toy.

I noticed this week that he seemed much more calm and was spending more time with the different toys and I asked our doc if this is a result of what we have been doing and he said "most definitely!". Since Killi's preference has moved from being object oriented to more social/people oriented, he has found that there is no need for him to run around and act like a fool. He now sees that he can slow down, check out what others are doing and still get the same excitement and joy that he would have had before. It's amazing to see the difference. My son wants to show me the different toy he is playing with and will look to me to see if I think it is as fun as he thinks it is.



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Divine Intervention and Therapy will Solve any Problem

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The calm (well as calm as a toddler can be) behavior has been a much needed change of pace in our household. I figure I will be totally honest with this story so that if you are reading this you can know you aren't alone. I had hit another breaking point as the mom and as the only one that Killi needs all of the time. With the previous opposition to other people, I was the only one my son would interact with in that no one could help me with him. Not that they didn't offer but he would not allow it if I was within reach. Keep in mind this is a more extreme form of clingy toddler even recognized by our doctor so being the only person that could touch my child, I never had a moment to breathe without him crying for me.

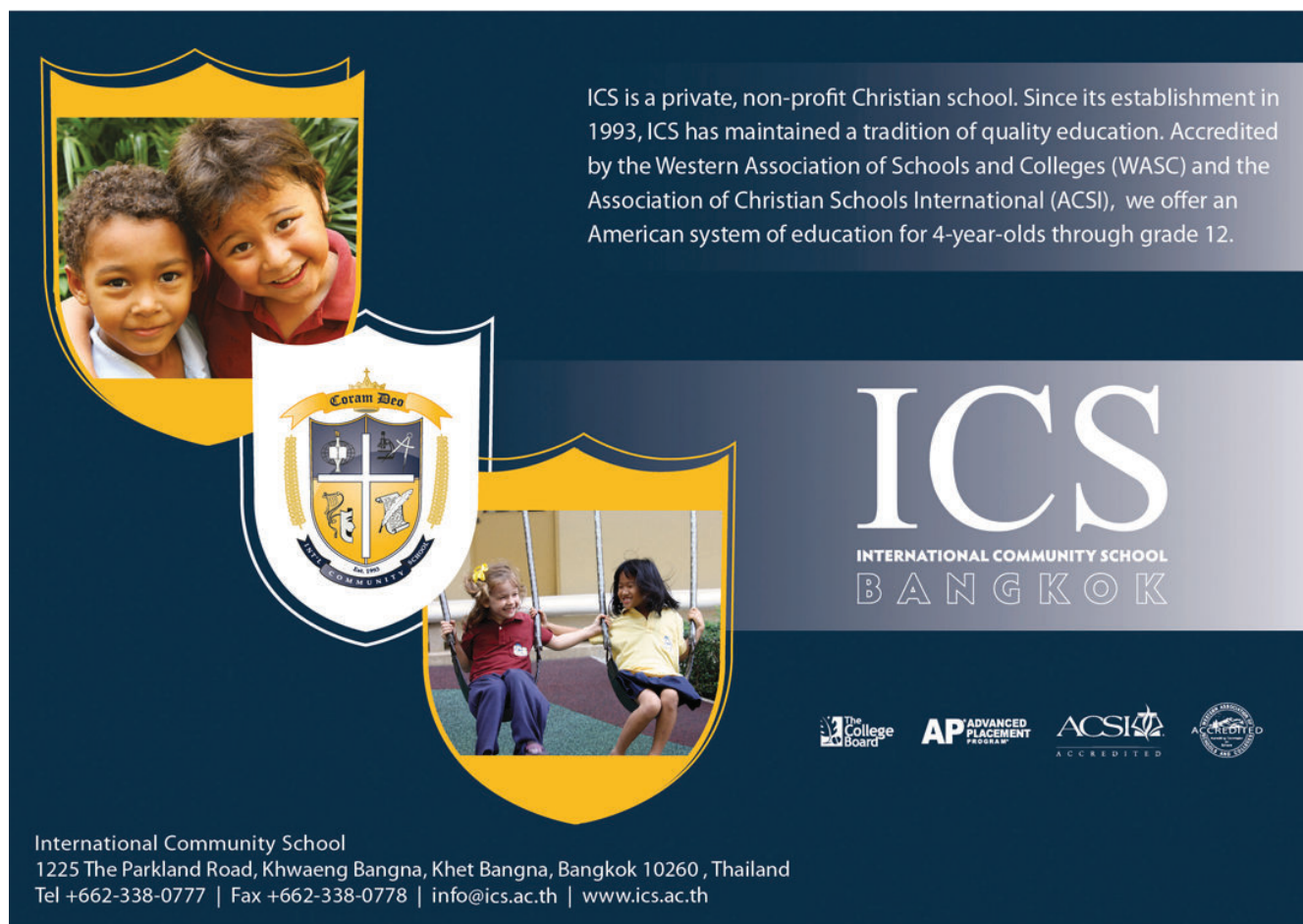
The progress with going away from objects and more towards people has given me the much needed break that

I was secretly longing for. Although my longing for just a moment of peace is overshadowed by my overwhelming guilt. You know the guilt only a mom can impose upon herself, the thought of "how can I want to be away from him when he needs me to get him through therapy and help him to progress!?"

I expressed my concern to our doctor and told him that I am totally burnt out and how I don't know how to shake this overwhelmed, just want to run and hide feeling. Killi's doc gave me a prescription (and no, it was not Xanax) one that allows me some guilt free "me time." Once he explained how I need to take care of myself and how getting burnt out on all of this therapy, all day everyday will ultimately hurt our efforts. So with Killi enjoying therapy and not freaking out if I am not with him I can now take some much needed time

to myself to decompress. Even if it is just a few hours to write, work, volunteer, get a massage it will be the little bit of time I need to mentally regroup and not lose myself in this entire process and in my new life in Bangkok. Killi's doc has a very scientific medical term for this and it is known as SWS, Sukhumvit Wife Syndrome. This is (for some of us) when the wives that have moved here to follow their husbands, stop their careers, moved away from everything and everyone that they know and love and are now the stay at home mom/wife and it is basically a shock to our system! In my case, I concur 100%!

My son has mellowed, I now have permission to mellow, my household is more mellow and I now feel as if I can breathe. ■



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