

**Welcome to SENIA-Beijing**, a volunteer organization committed to support, teach, and learn from parents, teachers, students, learning support professionals, counsellors, and anyone involved with the education for differently-abled people!



Image source:  
[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/are\\_some\\_ties\\_better\\_than\\_others](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/are_some_ties_better_than_others)

Dear All,

We are back! It is a pleasure to be with you through our newsletter again. In this edition, we focus our attention on **how to make new friends and keep old ones**. In times like this, having friends, no matter where they are, it is an essential part of our lives. Recent discoveries have also highlighted the vital role of friendship in our lives. In summary, it keeps us healthier. Friendship comes in many forms and there are two other aspects that come to my mind.

The first is **how to be my own friend?** Thinking about this query has led me to look after myself, taking care of my own wellbeing. It has shown how hard it is to keep a healthy balance in different aspects of the *work/life* ecosystem. It includes **health** – how we feel physically and mentally; **relationships** with others at work; **purpose** (clear goals, motivation, workload, ability to influence decisions), **environment culture** (work culture, facilities, tools), and **security** (financial security, safety, bullying/harassment).

According to Office for Standards in Education, Ofsted – UK, regarding their wellbeing, teaching staff and education professionals reported the **highest rates of work-related stress, depression, and anxiety** in Britain. Understanding the issues and what causes them can provide evidence-based recommendations for further actions in order to improve our wellbeing at work.

The other question that popped on the back of my head is **how to be friend with people with different abilities?** Our world does not make this easy. So many things influence our behaviour (culture, geography, bias, age, ...) But how we look at this can definitely change the ways we make and keep friends. With that in mind, and with **safe precautions**, the Internet and social media can be our allies. In this edition, we bring up different strategies to give us a hand. We hope they drive our efforts and help us in moving from social exclusion to supported inclusion.



***By Juliane Karlsson – SENIA-Beijing Media Chair***

**Dear SENIA-Beijing,**

Welcome to the 2020 - 2021 academic year. We warmly welcome all teachers, specialist, parents, and community members. I would firstly like to extend extreme gratitude once again to the previous board members for all they have done and accomplished in making SENIA-Beijing what it is today. This leads into the first items I would like to share, our mission and vision from our parent organization.

**Mission:** The Special Education Network Inclusion Association (SENIA) is an association of educators, professionals, and parents whose mission is to advocate for and provide resources/supports for differently abled individuals.

**Vision:** To live in an inclusive world where every individual is supported, resources are accessible, potential is maximized, and action is inspired.

With that being said, I would like to introduce you to our current board and their positions:

- **James Rupasinha, Secretary and External Expertise Chair**
- **Faith Peik Hwa Ng, Marketing Chair**
- **Petra Zerovnik, Membership Chair**
- **Janice Bareng-Pineda, Events Chair**
- **Juliane Karlsson, Media Chair**
- **Dr. Gerald Anthony, Chairman**

In the upcoming year, the SENIA-Beijing board has many things in store for its members. This will be a **year of enrichment** of previous resources, as well as a few firsts. Our communication platforms such as our website and WeChat group will be upgraded. Our external outreach has also been enhanced with a dedicated Marketing Chair. The external expertise directory is now available in several formats; with the most up to date listings and tips on how to select the appropriate specialist. The final thing I will mention for now is in the community. We will continue to develop meaningful partnerships with our local counterparts through the Local Integration of Needs and Knowledge (**L.I.N.K**) program.

The Board also will have several firsts this year. SENIA-Beijing will be involved in its first ever virtual Fall Conference liaising with SENIA International (<https://seniaconference.org/>). In order to accommodate local Teaching Assistants, we have also created a premium ticket price for teachers that wish to bring their Teaching Assistant to the conference with the “add-on” feature. The more individuals that register together, the **more economically accessible** the conference becomes for your **Watch Party**. At the conference there are also exciting contests to showcase projects from the community that help “**Bridge the Gap,**” our conference theme. Claim a spot for you or your team while spots are still available.



**Regards,**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerald Anthony".



## BEST BUDDIES FRIENDSHIP PROGRAMS

These programs build one-to-one friendships between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), offering social interactions while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded. Through their participation, people with IDD form meaningful connections with their peers, gain self-confidence and self-esteem, and share interests, experiences and activities that many other individuals enjoy.



### HARROW SCHOOL BEIJING

has joined Best Buddies in its Friendship Program through the Leadership and Service Activities. Students, supported by Rong Ai Rong Le, partake in different activities in the campus.



Hi, LiZhao! I miss you so much!  
Are you all ok? I really hope that the epidemic situation will end soon so we can meet in the school again! Did you do any interesting things at home to keep yourself sane? I think it's a good chance to watch some wonderful movies and listen to some pop music now! I extremely hope that we can meet each others soon!  
Sincerely, Ella Luo





PRESENTED BY



**HELP SPREAD INCLUSION!**

**YOU  
INCLUDE  
ME**

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO JOIN!**



If you have questions, you can contact  
Janice Bareng-Pineda at [jpineda@harrowbeijing.cn](mailto:jpineda@harrowbeijing.cn)

## SENIA-Beijing is here for you.

We are always looking at different ways to address the needs of our community. If you are interested in being part of the chapter or know someone who can benefit or collaborate with us, please, get in touch with any one of **our board members**. We are more than happy to make it happen.



**Janice Bareng-Pineda,**  
**Events Chair**

Special Education Network and  
Inclusion Association (SENIA) - Beijing  
Events 2020-2021

SENIA-Beijing brings you to what is happening around to keep you updated on upcoming events, conferences, seminars, webinars, and workshops this year!

Please visit,

<https://sway.office.com/FkMmMX1jxjnkVolx>

For those who are looking for help and resources related to **mental health matters**, here goes our updated **External Expertise List** with possible recommendations.  
Let us know if you would like to be included on it by getting in touch with James.

Follow the link to access the [Beijing External Expertise Directory](#).

**James Rupasinha**  
**Secretary and External Expertise Chair**



## Looking for more resources?



Image source: [Getty Images](#)

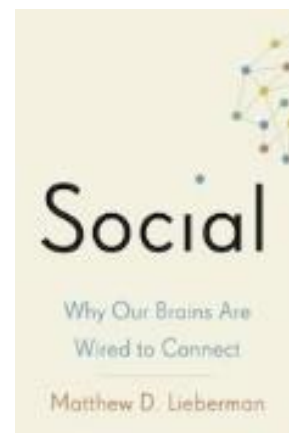
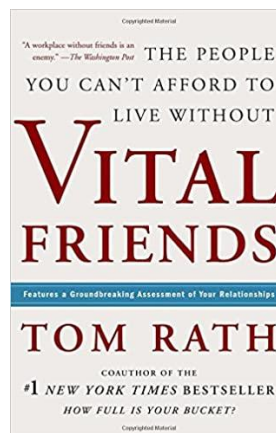
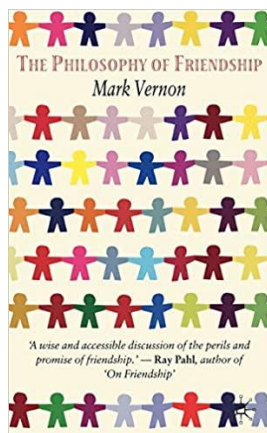
### How People with Autism Forge Friendships

Most autistic individuals want to and can make friends, though their relationships often have a distinctive quality.

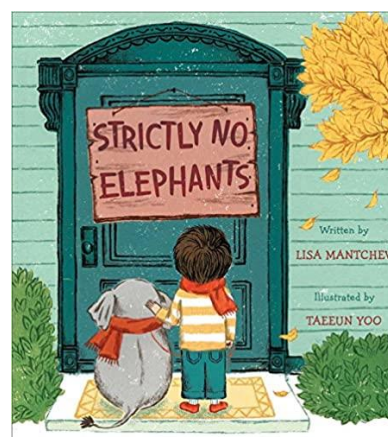
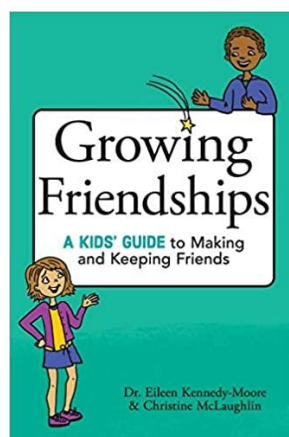
By Lydia Denworth, April 1, 2020, Spectrum

<https://www.spectrumnews.org/features/deep-dive/how-people-with-autism-forge-friendships/>

### For the grown-ups



### For the little ones









Resources for parents and educators on how to engage with socio-emotional learning during this particular time. <https://www.socialthinking.com/free-stuff/video-lessons>

*I love how explicit the concepts are. I have been using Social Thinking in my lessons and the children loved exploring social learning. All the concepts are embedded in most if not all academic curriculums too.*

– Janice Pineda

## Getting in touch. Meet the Board

 <p><b>Dr. Gerald Anthony</b> Chair <a href="mailto:geraldanthony@keystoneacademy.cn">geraldanthony@keystoneacademy.cn</a></p>	 <p><b>Janice Pineda</b> Events Chair <a href="mailto:jpineda@harrowbeijing.cn">jpineda@harrowbeijing.cn</a></p>
<p><b>Juliane Karlsson</b> Media Chair <a href="mailto:pegjuli@outlook.com">pegjuli@outlook.com</a></p> 	<p><b>James Rupasinha</b> Secretary/External Expertise Chair <a href="mailto:james.rupasinha@st-annes.ox.ac.uk">james.rupasinha@st-annes.ox.ac.uk</a></p> 
 <p><b>Faith Peik Hwa Ng</b> Marketing Chair <a href="mailto:faithng@blueprinsm.com">faithng@blueprinsm.com</a></p>	 <p><b>Petra Zerovnik</b> Membership Chair <a href="mailto:petra.zerovnik@bcis.cn">petra.zerovnik@bcis.cn</a></p>

## More SENIA-Beijing?

<p><b>Facebook</b></p> <p>Another way to stay in contact is through our Facebook page, titled SENIB - Special Education Network in Beijing. It is a closed group, but you can request to join at: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/1728937867318355/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/1728937867318355/</a></p>	<p><b>Newsletter &amp; Social Media</b></p> <p>Are you interested to collaborate on our next newsletter edition? WeChat and Facebook groups? Ideas, experiences, questions, practices, and much more to share... Get in touch with <b>Juliane Karlsson</b> <a href="mailto:pegjuli@outlook.com">pegjuli@outlook.com</a></p>
<p><b>L.I.N.K</b></p> <p>Do you want to participate on it? Talk to <b>Dr. Gerald Anthony</b> <a href="mailto:geraldanthony@keystoneacademy.cn">geraldanthony@keystoneacademy.cn</a></p>	<p><b>Website</b></p> <p><a href="https://seniainternational.org/beijing/">https://seniainternational.org/beijing/</a></p>

