

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 education for differently-abled people!



Let's pass this around so everyone gets a little love today❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

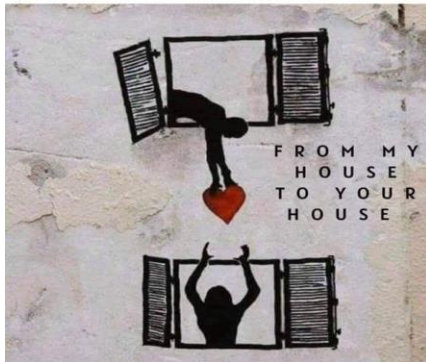


Photo source:

<https://www.facebook.com/114005426901287/photos/a.114061376895692/121532386148591/>

Dear All,

We are living in times that demand us to reflect upon what really matters. Times when being together becomes a different way to be present, in distance. Times when **love, patience, courage, resilience, and creativity** lead our way to deal with our fragilities. Being vulnerable does not mean being weak. It means being brave enough to know when to ask for help. I am delighted to see so many helpers along the way. #wearealltogether!

By Juliane Karlsson

## World Autism Month: spreading awareness, acceptance, and lighting up the change.

Visit the Light It Up Blue campaign page at <https://www.autismspeaks.org/how-light-it-blue> for more information.



Photo source: <https://www.ifc.com/2016/04/light-it-up-blue-in-honor-of-world-autism-awareness-day>

**Autism**  
Quick facts

Autism is a bio-neurological developmental disability that generally appears before the age of 3

Autism impacts the normal development of the brain in the areas of social interaction, communication skills, and cognitive function.

Autism now affects 1 in 59 children.

Boys are four times more likely to have autism than girls.

The rate of autism has steadily grown over the last twenty years.

Children with autism do progress – early intervention is key.

**POLICY LAB** SOURCE: <https://nationalautismassociation.org/resources/autism-fact-sheet/>

Photo source:

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2020/04/02/features/215600/world-autism-awareness-day-falls-today?page=1>

\*According to the CDC, the current prevalence of children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is approximately 1 in 54 children in the USA.

## Sports Fans News



Photo source:

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/jelleknikkers/posts/>

Life is full of surprises. To celebrate Autism Month, let's meet **Jelle Bakker** and his brother **Dion Bakker**. Jelle is an autistic, 34 years old man, from the Netherlands, who turned his hobby (constructing marble machines) into a way of living. His YouTube channel has brought great entertainment for those who are under quarantine. Launched in 2006, the Jelle's Marble Runs YouTube channel uses an ingenious technique to reinvent inanimate marbles as its own characters; captivating us all. Nowadays, millions of people have watched Marble Runs.

**It reminds us all of the gifts of seeing the world differently!**

**Recommended by Juliane Karlsson**

## The Transition to Adulthood

Becoming an adult is typically equated with becoming a full and equal participant in the social, economic, and political life of one's community. However, the transition to adulthood remains a significant challenge for persons with autism because of the lack of opportunities and support devoted to this phase of their life.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the 2020 United Nations observance of the World Autism Awareness Day draws attention to issues of concern related to the transition to adulthood.

In order to celebrate the Day and improve the awareness and understanding for people with autism, Beijing Rong Ai Rong Le Family Supporting Center (RARL) held an online session on the topic of The Transition to Adulthood. Two young people were invited to share their own stories related to education and employment.

Yang is a young man with Asperger's Syndrome, tall and strong. In order to accompany his growth, Yang's mother trained herself on the autistic spectrum and supported Yang to complete university studies. Both mother and Yang believe that there is always a position for Yang in society.

However, Yang has changed jobs five times in three years after he graduated in 2017. In order to get a job, he moved from his hometown in Dalian to Beijing, and participated in supporting employment program of RARL. So far, it is still challenging for Yang to get a job which he can fully enjoy or feel stable.

In 2019, Yang completed a research report on the employment of people with high-function autism under support of a researcher, who is also a technical adviser of RARL. The report shows the employment experience of seven adults who are on the autistic spectrum. Coincidentally, all of them have the same experience of changing jobs frequently.

"As a person with Asperger's Syndrome, although we have certain skills and education background, we have challenges when interacting with others. We may also have not participated in relevant vocational training, so that we do not have any opportunity to improve our social skills before entering the workplace. We sometimes don't understand what happens or what the problem is." This makes some unwritten, "hidden rules" in the workplace become "roadblocks" to their employment. A person with Asperger's Syndrome will likely not understand these unwritten, "hidden rules" in the workplace. But their co-workers may expect them to understand it like everyone else without saying anything. For example, everyone knows that friendly relations should keep a seemingly distance, especially in working place, but this is very difficult for a person with Asperger's Syndrome.

At the same time, "the environment is many times not friendly enough, colleagues lack understanding of autism, the communication between colleagues and the job coach supporting the employment program sometimes are not effective, and all those factors make our employment become very difficult to go on." Yang said in the report.



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<sup>1</sup> From the UN website.



Picture: Just thinking

Remark: there are three thinking circle in the picture. The biggest one has buildings, stars, and lines, which means an inclusive society.

Although Yang completed his college education under the support of his mother, there is still lack of support on the transition stage before employment. This made it difficult for him to adapt to the new workplace environment.

### **What is a transition service?**

Transition service is a well-coordinated service based on personal needs, which aims to maximize personal potential and achieve personal development.

First of all, transition services should be coordinated between multiple parties: if it is a transfer from secondary school to vocational education or university, it needs the active participation of the institution in the next stage.

Secondly, a transition service should have a goal and be result oriented: the goal is to maximize the development of personal potential, and the result is to assist the case owner to adapt to the next stage of life, learning and work within a reasonable time frame.

Therefore, from goal to result, it is necessary to develop IEP (individualized education plan) or ISP (individualized service plan) for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, to better implement the supporting actions and follow up the achievement of the results and goals.

In this process, the effective participation of the person with intellectual and developmental disabilities is crucial, because they are at the core of the whole support system.

**By Michelle Wang**

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## WeChat Guidelines

Thanks all of you who already filled our brief member list form. We encourage **all members to do it as soon as possible**. Please helps us to provide better support to our community. SENIA-Beijing indeed appreciates your effort.



Please take some time to fill the form below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ZA9iCIfM0u67zTlJyNaHeSTwVK7Wy5NswmAj2dL9eRURUZNU01DOUDLSIBKU0dSM0U1T1FDWTZLMS4u>

## SENIA-Beijing Hot discussions

Should My Child Take Medicine for Challenging Behavior?



A Decision Aid for Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder



Photo source:

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/atna/ir-p-medication-decision-aid>

“Is it possible for kids to be prescribed Ritalin/Concerta in Beijing?”

This hot question led to a very interesting thread about how to get specific medicines in Beijing or Shanghai and possible alternative therapies. Here go some takeaways from the discussion. Firstly, any medicine should be used only with medical prescription to address specific behaviours such as self-injury or aggression. Minimizing symptoms is a key main goal to allow a person to focus on learning or communicating, for example.

The vast majority of treatments combine medicine and [behavioural therapy](#). On the other hand, neurofeedback therapy is a promising non-pharmacological intervention. “As with any emerging new treatments, knowledge of technical aspects of the treatment, proper standards, and education are crucial for appropriately evaluating the merits and pitfalls of [neurofeedback](#).”

However, what to do when families do not have income enough to offer these options to their children? Do we have in Beijing any support group, which provides free therapy or low cost treatments? Additionally, what does taking medicine means? The best approach to the child’s needs or something used only to control challenging behaviour as a [quick response](#) that in the long run would cause more damage than good for the child?

Based on [Shannon Des Roches Rosa’s](#) experience, she’s tried everything before using drugs to lessen her son’s violent behaviour. Worrying about the side effects that any medicine carries demands families working closely with child’s healthcare providers, but also with schools. Those who work closely with children are an excellent resource providing feedback

about how the medicine is affecting students’ performance, not only at school but also in life. These valuable follow-ups strengthen the [action plan](#) and allow informed decisions to be made.

Thanks, Christin Topper (**WAB**), Barbara (**Bright Future**), DilySHK (**Psychotherapist**) and Dr. Mike (**Child Psychologist**) for the great discussion!

Here goes a summary of the discussion on availability:

- **Where:**
  - Beijing: at BJU and Local Hospitals (translators are need at LH if you don't speak Chinese)
  - Shanghai: at Shanghai United Pudong
- **Suggestions of whom to look for:**
  - Dr. Claire Massip (children and adolescent psychiatrist). Please, make a call first to confirm if she is back to work
  - Dr. Zhang (Shanghai)
- **What do you need:** Prescription from a doctor.
- **Available medicine:** Concerta, Strattera, and Ritalin
- **Side effects:** *Be aware of them.*
- **To know more, please visit:**
  - <https://www.additudemag.com/autism-medication-treatment-help-parenting/>
  - <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/autism/conditioninfo/treatments/medication-treatment#f1>
  - <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/atnair-p-medication-decision-aid>
  - <https://childmind.org/article/autism-and-medication/>
  - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6538574/>



## Free Resources

### E-learning



Photo source: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-emergencies/coronavirus-school-closures/solutions>

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-emergencies/coronavirus-school-closures/solutions>

**Recommended by Juliane Karlsson**

<http://www.twinkl.com/offer>

Offer Code: USATWINKLHELPS

**Recommended by Reed Rhodes**

### Tips from our external expertise professionals.

“Balancing daily activities at home.”

[https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/H-PDxYy-OvdQUo1Pt6y5\\_g](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/H-PDxYy-OvdQUo1Pt6y5_g)

By Nazneen Adam (**Occupational Therapist**)

“Helping parents and children to establish a routine at home and ways to manage various tasks.”

<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/RwfeCfgo4oMZao-X6MXJEQ>

By Ellie Zhu (**Counsellor**)



## Free Online Books

Free access is available **until the end of May 2020**. There are many textbooks there about education and even early childhood education!

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/what-we-publish/textbooks>

**Recommended by Reed Rhodes**

Amazon cancelled the subscription costs of books and audio stories for children and students of all ages for as long as schools are closed. Free stories to stream on your desktop, laptop, phone or tablet using the following link

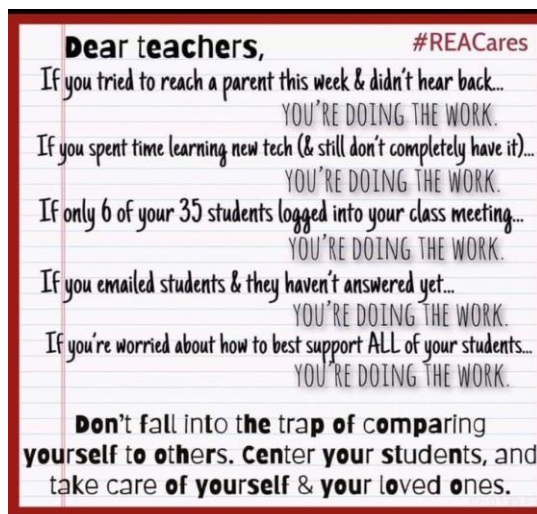
<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

**Recommended by Don**

"A new story book that aims to help children understand and come to terms with COVID-19 has been produced by a collaboration of more than 50 organizations..." - WHO

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/09-04-2020-children-s-story-book-released-to-help-children-and-young-people-cope-with-covid-19>

**Recommended by Juliane Karlsson**



## Our mental health toolbox

**How are you today?** This session is dedicated to look after us. Being in the front line is not easy task and together we can provide many ways to help each other here.

Thank you, **Christin Topper** (WAB/psychologist) for lifting our day with this post!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/free-livestream-with-jon-kabat-zinn-tickets-100312545524>

"Mindfulness, Healing and Wisdom" by Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn.

**Recommended by Reed Rhodes**





## Getting in touch. Meeting the board

**Dr. Reed Rhodes**  
(Chair)

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(Secretary, Facebook)

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**Juliane Karlsson**  
(Newsletter/WeChat)

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**Dr. Gerald Anthony**  
(Membership/L.I.N.K)

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**Katy Cameron**  
(PD/Events/External Expertise)

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### Facebook

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:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1728937867318355/>

### SENIA-Beijing Newsletter/WeChat

Are you interested to collaborate on our next edition? Ideas, experiences, questions, practices, and much more to share... Get in touch by emailing

**Juliane Karlsson**

[pejuli@outlook.com](mailto:pejuli@outlook.com)

### L.I.N.K

Do you want to participate on it? Talk to

**Dr. Gerald Anthony**

[geraldanthony@keystoneacademy.cn](mailto:geraldanthony@keystoneacademy.cn)

### Website

<https://seniainternational.org/beijing/>