

# a host's guide to parent workshops

Helping Families and Communities Stay Healthy and Strong



## Inside you will find...

Four parent workshops for any setting:

- Ages & Stages
- Building Your Child's Healthy Team
- The Magic of Reading Together
- You Matter!

...with activities to keep kids engaged during workshops!



# introduction

As someone who reaches families with young children, you are an important part of helping families discover their power and critical role in keeping their child healthy every day and every way. Sesame Street and UnitedHealthcare have created this guide to support you in this all-important work.

At the beginning of each workshop or during sign-up, encourage parents to introduce themselves, tell you a bit about their children, and mention any questions or concerns. That will help you choose one activity or a combination that caters to the space, the group size, and to parents' needs. If you're planning an event on your own, you might reach out to local UnitedHealthcare offices to partner on events. No matter what type of event or workshop you host, you're playing an important role in helping families raise healthy children!

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## Kid's Corner:

Another adult can keep little ones engaged while you work with their parents:

- **Read the *Monster Moments* books** aloud to kids, and then distribute the coloring page, *Growing Up with Marty and Grover!* (page 9). Ask, "How did Grover help his cousin Marty? Who helps you at home or at school?" Kids can draw pictures of people who help them.
- **Create a play area** with doctors' coats, play stethoscopes, bandages, and stuffed animals and dolls, for kids to practice caretaking. Or, set up a play kitchen with healthy play foods, and pretend to go on a healthy shopping trip together.
- **Have a healthcare provider host a "heart health" booth.** He or she can teach about heart rates and help kids measure their own heartbeats and pulses before and after exercise. You can even make an "I counted my heartbeat/pulse!" take-home certificate for the provider to fill in with the numbers. As kids wait, they might watch the "[My Cute Little Heartbeat](#)" video.



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## Workshop 1: ages & stages

Together with parents, explore some of the important stages and milestones in their child's development.

### activity ideas

- Consider the ages of the kids parents have, and read aloud the *Monster Moments* storybook corresponding to that age group! The books celebrate some of the most magical moments in Marty's childhood and will get parents excited about these special times in their little one's life.
- Distribute *Your Little One's Big Moments* (page 8) to talk about Marty's milestones, and do one of the following activities:
  - **After reading Book 1**, discuss how Marty began to crawl. Crawling babies are little explorers who touch everything and anything. This makes it even more important to keep play spaces safe! For safety ideas, share last the page of *Keeping Kids Healthy and Safe* and invite parents to add ideas.
  - **After reading Book 2**, talk about how Marty has temper tantrums because he can't yet fully express himself with words. Make collages that teach kids feeling words and facial expressions. Cut out pictures of people from magazines expressing a range of feelings (happy, sad, surprised, angry, worried, etc.), and glue them onto paper or poster board, and label them.
  - **After reading Book 3**, talk about how Marty's make-believe play encourages creativity and exploration. Some parents love playing pretend with their child, while others have a harder time getting into character. You might:
    - have parents share games they played when they were little.
    - divide into smaller groups and give each a cardboard box. Encourage parents to pretend the box is something else, such as a pirate ship, spaceship, or treasure chest, and act out a short play around it! Parents can use these ideas with kids at home.

### time:

30 minutes

### materials:

- *Your Little One's Big Moments* (printable, page 8)
- *Monster Moments* storybooks
- paper or poster board
- old magazines
- glue sticks or tape
- markers
- empty cardboard boxes
- safety scissors

### helpful links:

- [Sesame Street in Communities "Milestones"](#)
- [Keep Kids Healthy and Safe](#)







**time:**  
30 minutes

**helpful links:**

- [SSIC Milestones Topic](#)
- [Keep Kids Healthy and Safe](#)
- [Healthy Teeth, Healthy Me](#)
- [Brushy Brush Song](#)
- [Super Teeth Chart](#)

## Workshop 2: building your child's healthy team

Talk with parents about building their child's healthy team so they can play, learn, and grow!

**activity ideas**

- Invite a primary care provider (PCP) to speak with parents about how to build a healthy team (PCP and dentist) for their child. He or she can discuss:
  - timing for well visits (checkups).
  - questions to ask at checkups.
  - information about children's development.
- Invite a dentist to answer questions and speak with parents about early tooth health. You might:
  - play the [Brushy Brush Song](#) and encourage parents to use it at home with their child to get her excited about brushing time!
  - hand out the [Super Teeth Chart](#) to help keep track of brushing.
- Many kids have fears about going to the doctor. Provide tools for parents to prepare kids!
  - Let parents know that before a visit, they can give their child a sense of control by teaching him what to expect. Invite a child to pretend he is the doctor! Let him feel and listen to your heartbeat, or ask him to look into your mouth while you say, "Ahhhhh!"
  - Have an assortment of children's books about going to the doctor and invite parents to read through them. In pairs, they can role-play parent-child conversations about doctor/dentist visits.
- Have a health fair! Set up different stations around your space. You might have:
  - all of the *Growing Every Day, Every Way* materials.
  - a primary care provider and/or dentist available to answer parents' questions.
  - a safety display with tips to keep kids safe indoors and outdoors.
  - a yoga instructor demonstrating simple movements that keep bodies healthy and strong.

## Workshop 3: the magic of reading together

The more that children are read to, the more their language skills will develop. Share tips and strategies to help bond and build language during story time.

**activity ideas**

- Gather families and read one of the *Monster Moments* storybooks aloud as a demonstration.
- As you read, vary your tone of voice, talk about the pictures ("Marty is on a swing! You love the swings."), and ask story-related questions ("How many blocks does Marty have? Let's count them!"). These strategies help children focus on the story and encourage language development.
- Asking questions while reading will help kids understand more about the story and build their vocabulary.
  - As a group, make a list of question starters to use when reading ("I wonder why..." "What do you think will happen to...?" "How do you think he feels when...?" "What do you think will happen if...?").
- You might also distribute copies of *Elmo & Mommy's Day* for parents to make their little one a book.

**Special-needs children may have difficulty focusing on books. Let parents know that they can ask their child's doctor, teacher, or other professional caregivers for tips on how to make reading time a fun learning experience for everyone in the family.**



**time:**  
30 minutes

**materials:**

- *Monster Moments* storybooks
- Copies of *Elmo & Mommy's Day* Activity Sheet (page 9 of PDF)

**helpful links:**

- [SSIC Milestones Topic](#)
- [Keeping Kids Healthy and Safe](#)
- [Talking is Teaching Reading Tips](#)

**Share ways parents can engage with their child around the *Monster Moments* storybooks at different ages and stages. (You can also distribute [Talking Is Teaching Reading Tips](#).)**

- **At any stage**, cuddle kids close and let them know how happy you are to be their parent. Talk about how much they are growing in every way!
- **With babies**, point to and talk about what is happening in the pictures. Read the book again and again! Babies love repetition and hearing their parent's voice.
- **With toddlers**, point out what they were doing when they were Marty's age and all that they're able to do now. Toddlers can help turn pages!
- **With preschoolers**, help build language skills by asking questions along the way ("What was your favorite toy when you were Marty's age?") and talking about the pictures.



## Workshop 4: you matter!

### time:

30 minutes

### materials:

- index cards
- pencils
- soft music

### helpful links:

- [SSIC Milestones Topic](#)
- [Keeping Kids Healthy and Safe](#)

Parents do so much each and every day to care for their little one that it's easy to forget to take care of themselves. Explore self-care strategies so parents can be at their best to take care of their child.

### activity ideas

It's probably been a while since some parents have had even five minutes of peace and quiet! Offer them this opportunity with a brief relaxation experience. You might put on some soft music and begin by saying, "Close your eyes and take three slow, deep breaths."

- **Relax the Mind** Ask parents to think about the following things to clear their head and boost their mood:
  - Think about a recent happy memory. What happened? Where were you? Who was with you? What feelings come to mind about that moment?
  - Think about special people in your life. What makes them special? How do they make you feel? How do they support you?
- **Relax the Body**
  - Encourage parents to "tense up" their whole body. Then have them relax their body, part by part, from head to toe.
  - Release tension in the neck: Invite parents to flex their head right and left 10 times, then forward and backward ten times. Then, have them roll their shoulders forward and backward, ten times each.
  - Have parents put one hand on their chest and the other on their belly. Encourage them take slow, deep breaths, for three-five minutes. As they do so, they will feel their lungs inflate, their bellies release air, and a calm sensation travel over their body.
- **Get Support**
  - Distribute index cards and pencils and encourage parents to make a list of the people on their "team" who can help when they're having a bad day, when they need someone to care for their child, or when their child is sick. Suggest people to whom parents can go for help and support, such as a close family member, a neighbor, religious or spiritual guide, or a family doctor.
  - Parenting requires a lot of time and energy; let parents know how important it is to stay healthy physically and mentally. Connect with local UnitedHealthcare offices to bring in mental and physical health care providers to talk to parents about ways to ease stress, cope with emotions, and take care of the body so that they are at their healthiest to raise their child.



# you're invited

growing  
Every Day  
Every Way

To:

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Date:

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Time:

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Place:

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# name tags

Use these name tags to help participants introduce themselves!  
Print them on sticker paper and cut them apart.

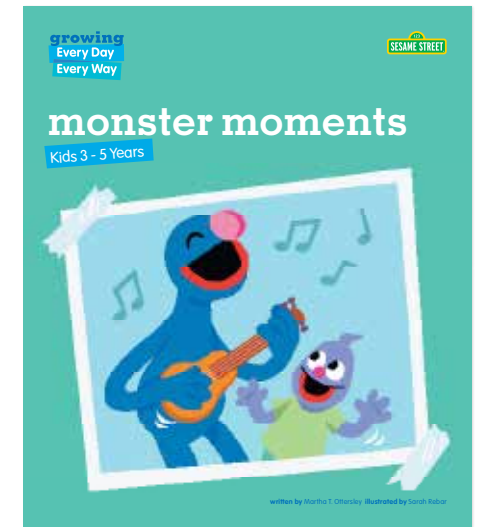
growing  
Every Day  
Every Way



# Your Little One's big moments

growing  
Every Day  
Every Way

In *Monster Moments*, we see Marty grow up from an adorable baby monster to a "big boy"! Here are some of Marty's milestones and ways you can help your child build these same skills.



## Book One

- Milestone:** Marty responds to others' emotions.  
**Tip:** Show your baby her face in a mirror to help her recognize expressions and facial features.
- Milestone:** Marty crawls.  
**Tip:** Do "tummy time!" Lying on his tummy can help your baby learn to hold his head up, focus on his surroundings, and crawl!
- Milestone:** Marty says a few simple words.  
**Tip:** Before bedtime, sing a lullaby, look at a book together, or talk about the day in a soothing voice to encourage language development. If you speak a language other than English at home, do these things in that language as well!

## Book Two

- Milestone:** Marty is walking.  
**Tip:** Make sure the surrounding environment is safe to explore, being aware of any sharp corners, unsecure furniture, or slippery floors.
- Milestone:** Marty can be nervous around strangers.  
**Tip:** Prepare kids in advance ("NAME is coming to spend time with you, and cares about you very much. I'll be back after you eat lunch."). You can leave your little one with a family photo to look at as well!
- Milestone:** Marty has some temper tantrums.  
**Tip:** Label emotions: "It seems like you're feeling frustrated because your blocks fell over. Can I help you rebuild the tower?"

## Book Three

- Milestone:** Marty can count ten or more things.  
**Tip:** Count things around you, such as buttons on a shirt or cars on the street.
- Milestone:** Marty shows concern for friends who seem sad.  
**Tip:** Pretend a doll/stuffed animal is feeling sad. Talk about ways to help it feel better (giving it a hug, asking it if it needs help, etc.).
- Milestone:** Marty plays cooperatively with other kids.  
**Tip:** Use a timer to practice taking turns.



# growing up with grover and marty coloring page

**growing**  
**Every Day**  
**Every Way**

Marty and his big cousin Grover love spending time together and playing all kinds of games, like blocks and Simon Says! Color in this picture and think of the games you love to play with the people who take care of you.

