

SESAME WORKSHOP

# Welcome Sesame

## A Guide for Providers Working with Dari and Pashto Speaking Families



**Activities** you can do with children and families



**Information** you can share with caregivers



**Ideas** to help families practice resilience-building skills

# Welcome Sesame

## Helping Families During Resettlement

When children and grown-ups experience moments that feel scary or threatening, their minds can go into “flight, fight, or freeze” mode. This is our brain’s way of trying to protect us.

Families who are in the process of resettling may experience many moments like this, and their most stabilizing force is relationships with supportive adults like you. Your caring presence can help them feel calm, and the strategies you share can help them work through these moments.

Whether you have several days or just a few minutes to connect with them, you can help families situate their experiences—both good and bad—into the broader context of their lives. You can also help them acknowledge, discover, and leverage their strengths every step of the way.

The resources and activities in this guide are designed to build on families’ resilience by teaching ways to navigate transitions while maintaining a hopeful perspective. The key messages acknowledge the many big feelings that come with significant changes, while reminding families that they have strength, fortitude, and courage.

Available in other languages at



[sesamestreetincommunities.org](http://sesamestreetincommunities.org)

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### sesameworkshop

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit organization behind *Sesame Street*, the television show that has been reaching and teaching children since 1969. Sesame Workshop has a mission to help kids everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder. We’re active in over 150 countries, serving vulnerable children through media, formal education, and philanthropically-funded programs, each grounded in research and tailored to local needs and cultures. For more information, please visit [sesameworkshop.org](http://sesameworkshop.org).



## Video Playlist

### A Welcome from Sesame Street Friends

**Hello Song**—Sesame Street friends say (and sing!) “hello.”

**Elmo Makes a New Friend**—When Elmo is nervous about making friends with a boy who doesn’t speak the same language as him, Mae tells him a story that helps him feel excited and eager.

**Mae’s Minute: Keeping Control**—Mae takes a minute to help caregivers create a calm environment for children by setting rules and taking deep breaths.

### Coping with Big Changes

**Proud Song**—Together, Elmo and his dad sing about the ways they make each other feel proud.

**Cookie Is Sad**—Basma and Jad help Cookie identify his feeling of “sadness” and help him feel better by “drawing it out.” The strategy helps Basma, too!

**Mae’s Minute: Family Team**—Elmo loves to play, cuddle, and talk with his mother. They’re a team, and listening to each other helps their family stay happy and healthy.

### Learning New Things

**Elmo Is Positive**—When he has trouble balancing a box on his head and feels sad, Elmo’s father helps him remember what makes him special and encourages him to keep practicing.

**Mae’s Minute: Play Is Powerful**—Mae explains in a minute how playing can help with a child’s development and create a bond with their caregiver.

**Daily Routines**—Big Bird talks about the importance and power of daily routines.

Access the video playlist in Dari and Pashto.

## Video Playlist

### Celebrating Who We Are

**Happy to Be Me**—Big Bird sings about some things that make him feel happy and special.

**Elmo Is Special**—Elmo experiences feelings of doubt, but is reminded of the things that make him special, too!

**Mae’s Minute: Self-Care**—Mae takes a minute from her break to encourage caregivers to find time for themselves during their busy day.

### Coping with the Trauma of Resettling

**Give Yourself a Hug**—Sesame Street friends show how hugs help when they have big feelings.

**Elmo Feels Sad**—After Elmo gets a hug from his father and colors a picture, he feels much better.

**Mae’s Minute: Child Stress**—Mae takes a minute to talk to caregivers about identifying when a child is feeling stressed and how to manage it.

### Belonging

**A Place for You**—Sesame friends sing a song filled with phrases that children can sing to themselves once they’ve heard it a few times.

**Saying Salaam**—Zari tells us all about how to greet friends and neighbors and the meaning of the word “salaam.”

**Mae’s Minute: Circle of Safety**—Mae takes a minute to encourage caregivers to provide their children with other safe, trusted adults to talk to.

Access the video playlist in Dari and Pashto.

# Welcome Sesame

## A Welcome from Sesame Street Friends

Resettling in a new place is hard, and you've had many difficult experiences already. It's okay to feel sad or mad about what's happened, and unsure about what's to come—change and challenge may continue to be a part of your family's story.

It's important to remember that you are not alone. There are people and organizations to support you...including your friends from Sesame Street. Though the challenges you will face in your new home and community will vary depending on where you are, we are glad you're here!

We're here to help you recognize and build on your strengths, to learn new skills, and to help you and your children heal, cope, and thrive in the future. Our furry, friendly Muppets can help you talk with your young children and may even make very difficult conversations a little bit easier.

For now, let's start by just saying hello.

**Explore the resources in this packet to learn ways to calm and comfort children and practice saying hello:**

- **Offering Comfort**—an article for grown-ups
- **My Name Is**—a printable activity page for children
- **Watch, Play, Practice Activities**
  - Hello Song—a video for families
  - Elmo Makes a New Friend—a video for children
  - Mae's Minute: Keeping Control—a video for grown-ups
  - Elmo's School Friends—a game for families



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**Remember:** As you explore these resources, know that safety, security, and comfort are your priorities. It's okay to focus on just making sure you and your children feel safe and calm. In those moments, a deep breath may be all you need (or, sometimes, all you can do). If you still feel stressed, it's okay to take your time and come back when you're ready.



## Offering Comfort

During tough times and stressful situations, children may feel as if their world has been turned upside down. As a caring grown-up, you can help children feel calmer. First, ensure that everyone is safe. Then, focus on calming your bodies.

These strategies can help:

- **Take a deep breath.** Inhale through your nose and exhale out of your mouth, slowly, three to five times.
- **Count to five.** Counting can help children shift their focus away from the stress of a situation and back to the present moment. Count slowly together.
- **Tighten and relax.** Encourage children to purposely tense up and relax different parts of their bodies. They might raise their shoulders up toward their ears, then draw them down and back, standing tall (then repeat).

When you feel more calm, or when the situation is less intense, you can...

### Provide Reassurance

Let children know it's okay to have many different feelings, and that they can always talk to a parent or another trusted grown-up about what they're thinking and feeling. Saying "I get scared/worried sometimes too" can help them feel understood and reassure them that they're not alone.

### Stick to Routines

There's comfort in the familiar! Choosing at least one simple daily routine that children can look forward to, such as singing the same lullaby at night, can give them a sense of control.

### Cultivate Confidence

Uncertainty can leave children feeling uncertain about themselves, too. You can help them remember the things that make them special. Together, make a list of positive statements and invite them to choose one and repeat it throughout the day:

I can do hard things.

I am learning and growing every day.

I can make new friends.

I am kind to others.

I bring joy.

When things change, I can be flexible.

I am helpful.

I am not alone.



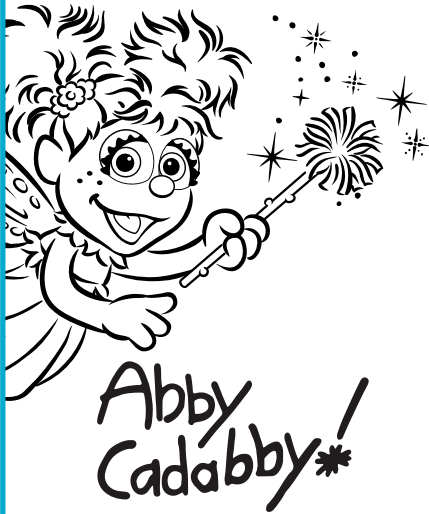
## My Name Is...

Big changes mean that you and your children will have lots of opportunities to meet new people. Though the idea of starting again may feel daunting, most relationships begin with a simple “hello.”

Help children color the page. Then practice introducing yourselves.

Say, “Hello.” “My name is \_\_\_\_\_.” “It’s nice to meet you.” “What’s your name?”

## Cookie Monster



## Zari



## Watch, Play, Practice

### *For Children:*

Watch the **Hello Song** and **Elmo Makes a New Friend** videos to learn about saying hello from Sesame Street friends. After watching, practice saying “hello” with children. Raise your arm and give a friendly wave.

You might also talk with children about how they feel about meeting new people. Are they nervous or excited? Remind them that all their feelings are okay and that with practice, meeting new people can become something they look forward to.



**Hello Song**



**Elmo Makes a New Friend**

### *For Caregivers:*

As a grown-up, you may feel hesitant about introducing yourself to others, too. That’s okay—it’s important to be cautious. But you can protect your family while also benefiting from new people who are trustworthy and caring. Each person you meet—at your new or “for now” home, at your child’s new school, or in a local place of worship—can be a link to important resources and opportunities, or can become a good friend. A simple “hello” can hold a lot of power.

It can help to remain calm. Watch **Mae’s Minute: Keeping Control** to learn how to create a calm environment for children (and grown-ups).



**Mae’s Minute: Keeping Control**

### *For Families:*

Together with children, play **Elmo’s School Friends** to help Elmo play, share, and solve problems with his friends at preschool.



**Elmo’s School Friends**



# Watch, Play, Practice

## For Providers:

### Activity 1: Calm-Down Role Play

The **Stress Relief Poster** shows children six strategies they can use to calm down and relieve stress when they're feeling upset:

- talking to a grown up
- moving your body
- belly (deep) breathing
- asking for help
- drawing
- counting to five

Point out each strategy and practice doing it together. Act out different scenarios when children get upset, and then role-play one of the strategies to calm down.

To start with, you can choose sillier scenarios (“Oh no! My magic carpet won’t fly!”) to lighten the mood and then act out some real child-appropriate situations (“I can’t find the favorite book I brought from home!”) where they might need to use a calming strategy.

### Activity 2: Compliments Game

Building children’s self-confidence can help them cope with the changes of resettling in a new place. You can encourage children to play the “compliments game” as a group or individually, by asking them to notice a positive behavior or quality in themselves or in others, and sharing it out loud. If you are in a group, you can start by pairing up and asking each partner to share a compliment about the other. As the children become familiar with each other, you can go around the group in a circle, sharing the compliments with everyone. If you are at home, you can share compliments about family members, and encourage children to think of one compliment for themselves each day.

### Stress Relief Poster



# Welcome Sesame

## Coping with Big Changes

Even very small transitions, such as getting ready to leave the house, can be difficult for young children, because they are experiencing so many new things all around! It's no wonder that more significant transitions like resettling can be overwhelming for little ones.

A change like this will likely mean new roles and responsibilities, making mistakes, and navigating big feelings. Embracing a sense of family togetherness can help you get through the happy and hard moments of this process with more confidence...and even joy.

The resources in this packet offer a few simple strategies that may help your family feel more secure and united in the midst of big changes.

### Inside:

- **Understanding and Explaining Change**—an article for grown-ups
- **What Changes, What Stays the Same**—a printable activity page for children
- **Watch, Play, Practice Activities**
  - Proud Song—a video for children
  - Cookie is Sad—a video for children
  - Mae's Minute: Family Team—a video for grown-ups
  - Slow It Down—a game for families

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**Remember:** As you explore these resources, know that safety, security, and comfort are your priorities. It's okay to focus on just making sure you and your children feel safe and calm. In those moments, a deep breath may be all you need (or, sometimes, all you can do). If you still feel stressed, it's okay to take your time and come back when you're ready.

## Understanding and Explaining Change

Change has been—and may continue to be—a big part of your family’s story. Consider these ideas to help your family understand and cope with change.

### Change is a part of life.

During big transitions, it may help to remember that change is a natural part of life. You might talk with children about things that change, and how those changes are good or helpful:

- When a plant grows from a seed, we see that change can be beautiful.
- When the seasons change throughout the year, we can enjoy new things, such as swimming in warm weather or warm drinks in cold weather.
- When the colors on a traffic light change, traffic runs smoothly—change can be helpful!

Then, talk about some changes you’ve experienced or may experience soon. What good things happened (even very small ones)? What are you looking forward to?

### Grief is a part of change.

Feelings of grief—including sadness, anger, and confusion—are natural when things change. You may be mourning the loss of your home, routines, familiar places and things, or the death of a loved one. It’s normal to feel sad or mad about what’s happened, and unsure about what might happen in the future.

Every member of the family grieves differently and at their own pace. Grief may go away briefly, return, and then go away again. Even when children seem okay, you can remind them that...

- It’s okay to feel big feelings, and even different feelings at the same time.
- We can miss how things used to be, and enjoy life now.
- It’s okay to feel joyful when something good happens or to laugh when something is funny.
- When we do feel sad, mad, or anxious, there are things we can do to help ourselves feel better.





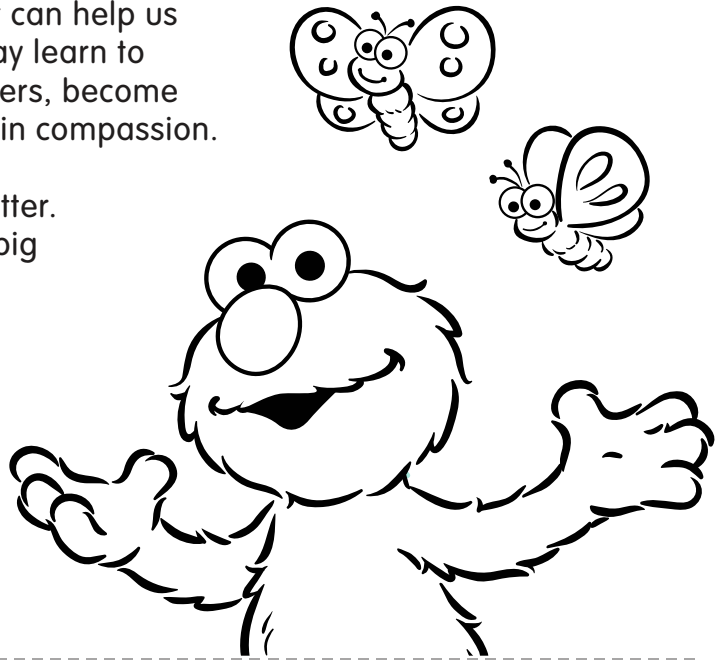
## Change helps us grow.

While it can be uncomfortable and painful, there can be beauty in change, too. Change brings the opportunity to learn important lessons and gain skills that can help us face future challenges. For instance, we may learn to advocate for ourselves or our family members, become more comfortable asking for help, or grow in compassion.

Big changes often help shape us for the better. You might think of some examples of how big changes have helped you learn and grow and share them with your children.

Can children think of ways they've grown?

Ask your child to repeat after you:  
“I am changing, learning,  
and growing every day.”



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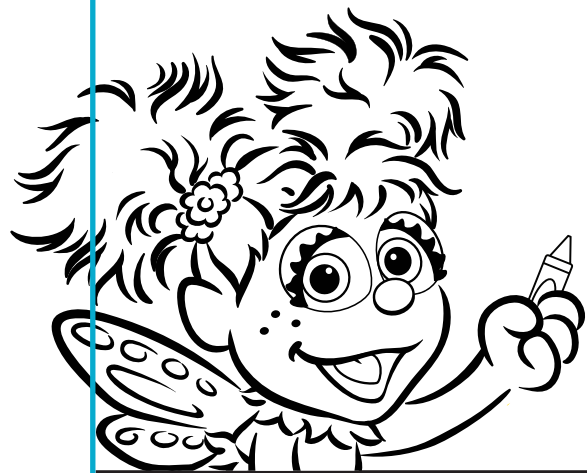
### What Changes? What Stays the Same?

It can be comforting to remember that not everything changes. Remind children that even though many things have changed and will continue to change, some things will always stay the same:

- I am still me.
- We are still together.
- We can still laugh and smile together.
- We can still dream of the future.

There are routines that can stay the same, too—you can say hello to the sun and goodnight to the moon, you can sing the same song as you go outside together every morning, and you can tell your family that you love them.

Print the page and complete it together.



# What CHANGES? What stays THE SAME?

Things are always changing. But some things always stay the same. Talk with children about both kinds of things and write your ideas on this page.

## Changes

*new school*

## Stays the Same

*good at flying*

## Watch, Play, Practice

Big changes can make children feel uneasy. Learning to name their emotions, calming activities, and encouraging words from caring grown-ups like you can help.

### *For Children:*

Watch **Cookie is Sad** to help children learn what sadness might look like, and what might help them feel better.

Watch **Proud Song** to hear all the ways Elmo's father is proud of his son. Then, talk about times you feel proud of your child. For example:

- When she works hard to learn new skills, such as new words.
- When he has a positive attitude even on difficult days.
- When she is kind to siblings, friends, and other adults in her life.

Ask, "What makes you feel proud of yourself?"

### *For Caregivers:*

Elmo loves to play, cuddle, and talk with his mother, Mae. They're a team (just like your family!), and listening to each other helps their family stay happy and healthy, even in difficult times.

Watch **Mae's Minute: Family Team** for ideas.

### *For Families:*

Together with children, play **Slow It Down** to enjoy calming activities such as looking at images or creating a new kind of art.



**Cookie is Sad**



**Proud Song**



**Mae's Minute: Family Team**



**Slow It Down**



## Watch, Play, Practice

### For Providers:

#### Activity 1: Bulbul's New Home

In **Bulbul's New Home**, the bird is afraid to leave his home to join his friends. Finally, he gets the courage to move and discovers that home is where you can be with people who love you, even if it's in a new place. Read the book "Bulbul's Home" aloud, ask some questions summarizing the plot and Bulbul's emotions through the story, such as, "How did Bulbul feel about moving?," "What helped Bulbul feel better?," and "What did Bulbul learn about home at the end of the book?"

Give each child a piece of paper (or, you could ask them to come up to a blackboard or large paper in the front of the group) and ask them to imagine a new home for Bulbul and draw it. What does it look like? Who is there with him? How does he feel in his new home?

Ask each child to share back one detail about their drawing. End the activity by asking children to share what they think makes Bulbul feel safe and comfortable in his new home.

#### Activity 2: My Daily Routine

Routines can offer comfort and security during times of change. Try to incorporate as much structure and routine into your child's day as you can (a wake up, dress, and eat routine; a good-morning routine at school; bedtime routine including a familiar lullaby, etc.). Visualizing the daily routine and hanging it somewhere in your home or classroom can help remind children of their schedule and anticipate transitions. Talk through the daily routine and divide the day into 1–3 "sections" (e.g. morning, afternoon, evening). Ask children to think of 1–3 "steps" of the routine for each part of the day. You can write out the steps and ask children to draw pictures that will help them recognize and remember what they need to do. Incorporate the daily-routine chart into your day as you point out next steps and ask children what they need to do next.

#### Bulbul's New Home



# Welcome Sesame

## Learning New Things

Big changes often involve lots of learning. When settling into their new or “for now” communities, children and adults will need to learn new routines, languages, and rules, environments, and cultural norms, among other things. So much learning may feel overwhelming, but knowing that they are good learners can build young children’s confidence. And learning new things together can help families forge unique bonds that can help them through future challenges.

Learning can happen anytime, anywhere—and the resources in this packet can help you get started right away...playfully!

### Inside:

- **Learning New Things**—an article for grown-ups
- **I Know My Letters and Numbers!**—printable activity pages for children
- **Watch, Play, Practice Activities**
  - Elmo Is Positive—a video for children
  - Mae’s Minute: Play Is Powerful—a video for grown-ups
  - Daily Routines—a video for families
  - Reading Adventures—a game for families



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**Remember:** As you explore these resources, know that safety, security, and comfort are your priorities. It’s okay to focus on just making sure you and your children feel safe and calm. In those moments, a deep breath may be all you need (or, sometimes, all you can do). If you still feel stressed, it’s okay to take your time and come back when you’re ready.

## Learning New Things

Children are natural learners, and in challenging times learning can be a source of comfort, joy, and even hope. A child's ability to learn is something that doesn't change even when life's circumstances do. The skills they learn can build confidence and remind them that they have so much to contribute to their new (or "for now") community. Plus, sharing what they've learned with family or friends can spark conversations and strengthen relationships.

As a caring grown-up, you can help your child develop a love of learning simply by encouraging their curiosity, talking, and listening. Consider the ideas below.

### Ask and Wonder

When we encourage children to approach the day (or any new situation) with curiosity, we help to build their resilience, too. Invite children to engage with the world around them like a scientist might, by asking questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Remind children that it's okay to ask questions (and it's also okay for you to not have all the answers). Figuring things out can be a fun part of the process!

### Look and Learn

As you settle into your new (or "for now") community, children will have many opportunities to learn. As you go about your day, be on the lookout for letters, numbers, colors, and shapes, and point them out.

Make learning new words into a game! Point to an object and ask, "What's that called?" Say the word in your native language and then try it in English. Make a list of words you'd like to learn and keep track of your progress.

### Rest and Remember

The quiet moments before bedtime are great moments to reflect on what children have learned during the day. Ask: "What surprised you?" "What was interesting?"

Then, before going to sleep, say these words together:

Even though many things have changed and may change, I am still me.  
I can learn new things. I am a learner, and no one can take that away from me.

Color the letters with Elmo!



A B C D E

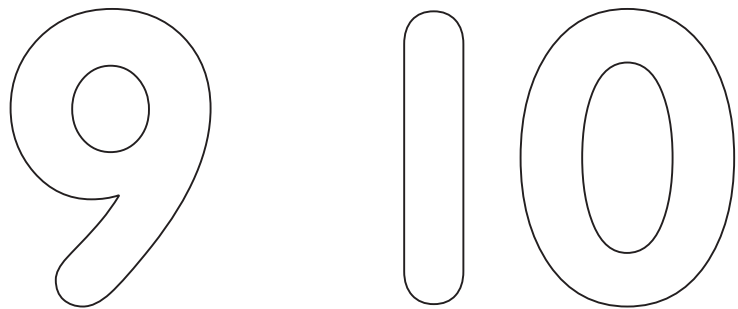
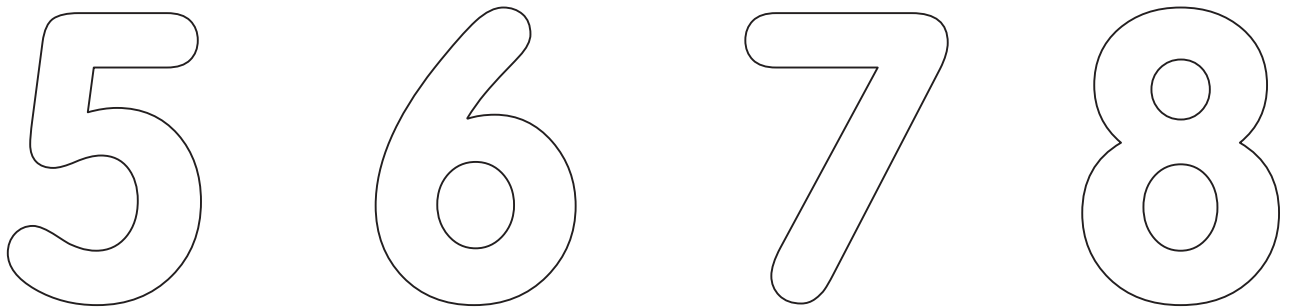
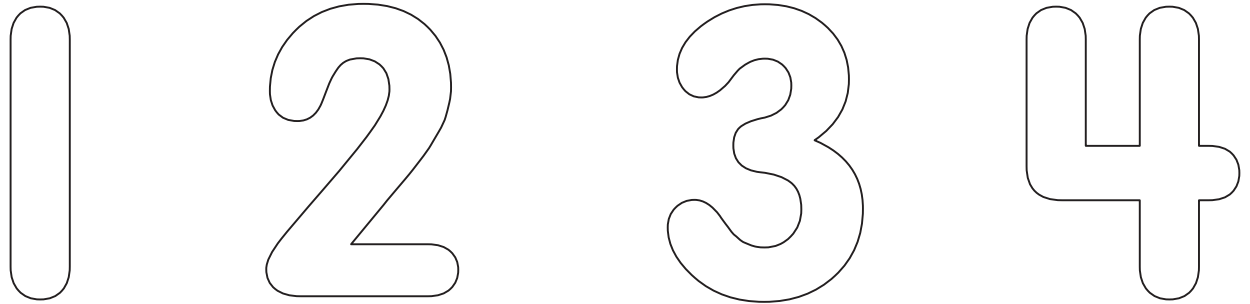
F G H I J K

L M N O P

Q R S T U V

W X Y Z

Color the numbers with Zari.



## Watch, Play, Practice

Ordinary moments such as getting dressed, preparing meals, cleaning up, or bedtime can be opportunities to learn together. In these moments, you can help your child build skills for learning new words, reading, writing, math, and so much more. Your life—and routines—may look and feel different right now, but even one or two consistent moments in a child’s day can build their sense of security.

### *For Children:*

Watch **Daily Routines** with your child and think about ways you learn together throughout the day. Ask, “What are some things we do each day?” “What do you look forward to?”

This can also be a time to talk about what’s different and what’s the same as before. You can remind children that it’s okay to miss how things used to be—and still enjoy life now, too.

Persistence is an important part of learning. Watch **Elmo Is Positive**, to see how Elmo’s father helps him remember what makes him special and encourages him to keep practicing.



**Daily Routines**



**Elmo Is Positive**

### *For Caregivers:*

Playing together with your child supports her healthy development and can help strengthen your relationship.

Watch **Mae’s Minute: Play Is Powerful** for ideas.

### *For Families:*

Together with children, play **Reading Adventures** to learn new words, tell stories, and laugh together.



**Mae’s Minute: Play Is Powerful**



**Reading Adventures**



## Watch, Play, Practice

### For Providers:

#### Activity 1: Social-Emotional Worksheets

These worksheets explore different social and emotional skills, like calming down, comforting, problem solving, and sharing. Sit together with your child and help them complete the activities in the pages, or even just color them and talk through the actions in the pictures.

#### Social-Emotional Worksheets



#### Activity 2: Find My Letter!

Help your children spell their name in their home language using the Baghch-e-Simsim alphabet poster. Then help children spell their name in English using the “I Know My Letters” coloring sheet.

Ask children to look around their environment and community to find the letters from their name, and share it with each other to learn new letters. If you are familiar with English, you can also help them learn new words that also begin with that letter.

#### I Know My Letters!



## Celebrating Who We Are

In challenging times, it's okay to feel mad and happy (or any contrasting feelings) even at the same time. Looking for the good things in our lives—and in ourselves—can help us feel positive more often. These resources offer ways to help your child develop that skill, and build confidence along the way.

### Inside:

- **Building Confidence**—an article for grown-ups
- **I Am Somebody**—a printable activity page for children
- **Watch, Play, Practice Activities**

Happy to Be Me—a video for children

Elmo Is Special—a video for children

Mae's Minute: Self-Care—a video for grown-ups

Make Your Mark—a game for families



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**Remember:** As you explore these resources, know that safety, security, and comfort are your priorities. It's okay to focus on just making sure you and your children feel safe and calm. In those moments, a deep breath may be all you need (or, sometimes, all you can do). If you still feel stressed, it's okay to take your time and come back when you're ready.

## Building Confidence

Big transitions and changes can cause many feelings, including self-doubt, for your child. Developing an “I can do it” attitude can help your little one redirect his negative feelings and help him face challenges with more optimism.

The playful ideas below can help boost children’s confidence. Try these ideas when you and your family are feeling somewhat calm. When times feel more stressful, taking a deep breath or standing tall and still can help children feel connected to themselves and the present moment.

### Guess the Feeling

Take turns showing different emotions with your face and body. Can the other guess the feeling? This game will help children learn what to call their feelings—helping them feel more confident talking with you and asking for help when they need it.

### I Can Do It...Can You?

One positive thing about resettling in a new place is that you get to learn many new things, every day. Learning new skills can help us all develop confidence!

Try this little game with your child:

1. Say and show something you can do, such as jumping on one foot, throwing a ball, or drawing letters and numbers.
2. Then invite them to give it a try. Say, “I can do it. Can you?”
3. Take turns to let your child show off their skills, too.
4. And finally, practice—and celebrate—often!

Accomplishments—big and small—add to a child’s sense of confidence that she can remember in tough times. Keep a list of all your child’s accomplishments and display the growing list in a place they can see every day.

### Count to Five

Use your fingers to count to five. As you count, say something positive about your child, such as, “You are brave” or “You are helpful” or “You are kind to your siblings.” Invite them to do the same for you or another family member. Encouragement—from a caring adult or even from themselves—can help children feel confident.

# I Am Somebody

Saying kind things to yourself or together with your child is a powerful way to keep positive ideas in your heads and hearts when you need them most. Print these cards cut them apart, and keep them in an envelope.

Children can pick one to read aloud. Ask your child to repeat it, then say it together.

Think of more kind things, and write them on blank squares. Make as many as you like. You can also leave them as notes for your child to find.



I am strong in my skin.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
and that's enough!

I am important.

I am always learning.

The little things I do  
add up to a lot.

I am growing every  
day in every way.

Lots of people love me.

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## Watch, Play, Practice

In times of transition and change, it's okay to feel uneasy or unsure. Reminding children that they are important and pointing out all the things that make them special can help boost their confidence. This positive self-assurance can be a source of comfort in times of uncertainty. And appreciating themselves and others helps children build strong relationships.

### *For Children:*

In **Happy to Be Me**, Big Bird sings about some things that make him feel special and happy.

in **Elmo Is Special**, Elmo experiences feelings of doubt, but is reminded of the things that make him special, too!

Watch the videos together with children. Then ask them to share something special about themselves. What are they proud of? What are they good at? What makes them unique?



**Happy to Be Me**



**Elmo Is Special**

### *For Caregivers:*

Self-appreciation is an important skill for adults to practice, too. Each day, try to tell yourself one good thing about you or something you did during the day:

“I remained calm when trying to solve a problem.”

“I listened to and comforted my child.”

Watch **Mae's Minute: Self-Care** for more ideas.



**Mae's Minute: Self-Care**

### *For Families:*

Together with children, play **Make Your Mark** and delight in the beautiful ways you each express yourselves through art.



**Make Your Mark**

## Watch, Play, Practice

### *For Providers:*

#### **Activity 1: Celebrating Your Kindness**

**Kindness Saves the Day** is a book showing simple ways to use our senses to be kind and notice kindness in our communities. After reading this to children, invite them to use their senses to “find” acts of kindness. Follow examples from the book: seeing a friend being kind, giving a family member a loving hug (touch), making and sharing a tasty meal (taste), speaking and listening to kind words, etc.

#### **Kindness Saves the Day**



#### **Activity 2: I Am Strong, I Can Change**

This activity is about exploring the positive, natural changes that children notice in the world around them and relating those to the changes they have experienced themselves, helping to build self-confidence about facing new challenges.

First, talk about the natural changes we see on a regular basis and then connect these to the idea of resilience and growth. Say:

- “Today we are going to talk about changes. We see changes in the world around us every day. For example, the change of the darkness of night to the light of day.”
- “Can anyone think of other changes we see in our environment?” (e.g., seasons change, trees change, body changes as we grow, animals that change, etc.)”
- “Sometimes changes can be difficult, but we are strong enough to grow through change.”

Give each child a piece of paper and help them trace their hand. Ask them to think of five changes they have experienced and draw or write one on each finger. Ask them to share one change that they have experienced back to the group. End the activity by emphasizing how proud you are of them for growing and being strong through these changes.



## Coping with the Trauma of Resettling

Trauma—the physical and emotional responses of a child to events that threaten their lives or the physical or emotional wellness of themselves or of someone critically important to them—can have lasting effects. But caring adults hold so much restorative power in their hands. You can help children learn coping strategies—or ways to feel better—that can help lessen the negative effects of trauma.

Here are a few ideas to help you and your child cope with difficult or traumatic situations. Many of these strategies can be done any time, any place. You may need to try a few strategies to find out what works well for you. Remember that each person is different; what helps you feel better may be different than what helps your child.

### Inside:

- **Practicing Comfort Strategies**—an article for grown-ups
- **Feeling Faces**—a printable activity page for children
- **Watch, Play, Practice**
  - Give Yourself a Hug—a video for children
  - Elmo Feels Sad—a video for children
  - Mae’s Minute: Child Stress—a video for grown-ups
  - Feeling Faces—a game for families

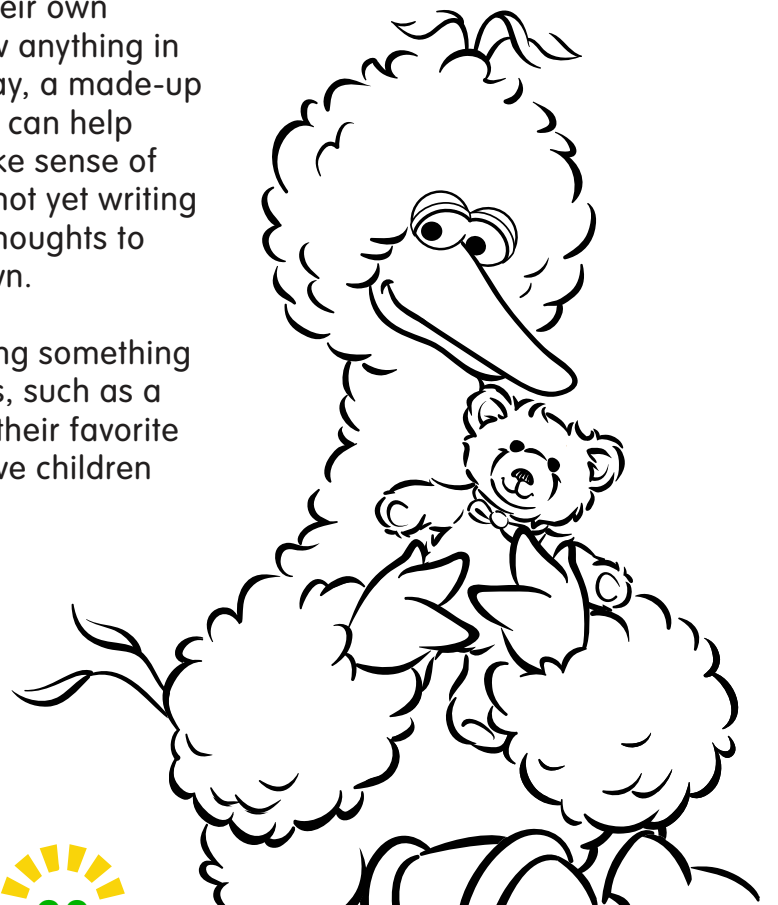
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**Remember:** *As you explore these resources, know that safety, security, and comfort are your priorities. It’s okay to focus on just making sure you and your children feel safe and calm. In those moments, a deep breath may be all you need (or, sometimes, all you can do). If you still feel stressed, it’s okay to take your time and come back when you’re ready.*

## Practicing Comfort Strategies

When our brains might be preoccupied by big feelings like fear, anxiety, or anger, simple techniques and nonverbal activities can help children and adults get “unstuck.” Practice these strategies with young children (remember, they work for grown-ups, too!), then talk about other ways you can feel calm, safe, and comforted.

- **Breathe.** Paying attention to our breath helps us come back to the present moment, and it can be done anytime, anywhere. Take three deep breaths—in through your nose, and out through your mouth—and feel your belly rise and fall.
- **Move your body.** Sometimes our feelings are too big for words. Invite children to express their feelings with their body. They could jump up and down, reach up high, squeeze into a tight ball, run very fast, or dance to an uplifting song.
- **Draw your feelings.** Children can express their feelings through art. You might ask them to draw what made them sad (or mad, or happy!), or to explore the feeling itself (“What color is your sadness?” “What shape is it?”). These questions can help children learn about their emotions and feel comfortable talking about them.
- **Keep a journal.** Offer children their own notebook. They can write or draw anything in it—what happened during the day, a made-up story, a poem—the act of writing can help them sort their thoughts and make sense of new information. If children are not yet writing on their own, they can tell their thoughts to you, and you can write them down.
- **Snuggle a comfort object.** Having something familiar to keep through changes, such as a blanket, a piece of clothing with their favorite color, or a stuffed animal, can give children a sense of security.



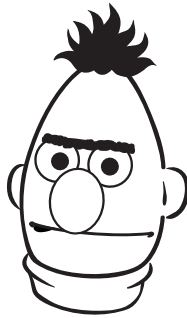
## Feeling Faces

Understanding and expressing feelings is another important coping skill for children and adults. Helping children name emotions is an important first step in building social-emotional skills, and can lay the foundation for honest, healing conversations. Knowing the names of feelings can help children identify and talk about their own emotions, as well as develop empathy for others who may be feeling the same way.

Print this page and point to the different characters. Talk with children about how they are feeling. You can say, "Look, Big Bird is feeling happy. He's smiling." Make feeling faces along with the characters. You can say, "This is my happy face." Children can color the page.



**furious**



**mad**



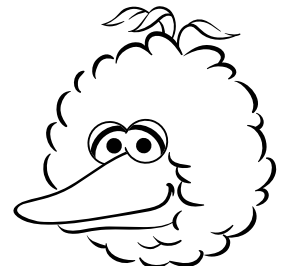
**miserable**



**ecstatic**



**frustrated**



**happy**



**thrilled**



**sad**



**disappointed**

## Watch, Play, Practice

### *For Children:*

In **Give Yourself a Hug**, friends from Sesame Street show us how hugs help them feel better when they have big feelings.

And in **Elmo Feels Sad**, getting a hug from Elmo's father and coloring a picture help Elmo feel better.

Watch these videos together and explain that hugs are one way we show love and support for people we care about, especially in tough times. And you can always give yourself a hug—just wrap your arms around your own body! Children might also try patting themselves on the back, closing their eyes, and rocking back and forth, or squeezing tightly or gently.

Do they have a favorite way to hug themselves?

### *For Caregivers:*

Big feelings and stress often show up in young children's behavior. Watch **Mae's Minute: Child Stress** for ideas on how to identify signs of stress in young children, and how you might be able to help.

### *For Families:*

Together with children, play **Feeling Faces** to learn words to describe and express emotions.



**Give Yourself a Hug**



**Elmo Feels Sad**



**Mae's Minute: Child Stress**



**Feeling Faces**

## Watch, Play, Practice

### *For Providers:*

### **Activity I: Your Circle of Good**

In the Circle of Good, the characters create a “Circle of Good” for their friends, the birds, who have been through a very hard time. In this circle each friend puts a small gift to show they love and care for the birds. The circle is a place the birds can come to find comfort. Create a Circle of Good in your space, at home or in school. Find a small space away from the center of activity, where children can go to rest and feel safe when they need a moment of calm. Ask everyone to think of something comforting, calming, and friendly that they can bring to the Circle of Good.

Some ideas: a drawing of a happy place, a flower, a picture of something that makes them feel good, art supplies, music, favorite books, a stuffed animal or soft pillow, blanket or fabric to touch, etc. Create a circle on the floor or the wall using colored tape, and invite each child to visit the Circle of Good when they need to remember the good.

### **Circle of Good**



# Watch, Play, Practice

## *For Providers:*

### **Activity 2: Let It Out, Get It Out Moves**

In this activity you will lead a simple exercise that shows children ways they can use their bodies to calm themselves and cope with difficult feelings. The purpose of this activity is to teach some physical calm-down and coping tools while getting children to move their bodies, listen to directions, and follow through. As you chant, use your hands and feet to clap and stomp a simple beat to create a rhythm for the movement.

**When I'm sad, it helps to**  
**Let** (clap) **it** (clap) **out** (clap).

**When I'm sad, it helps to**  
**Get** (stomp) **it** (stomp) **out** (stomp).

**I CRY it out.**  
(Make a crying face with arms bent with hands pointing to eyes)

**I take a DEEP breath in and out.**  
(Show a deep breath through the nose, with hands on your belly, breathing out through your mouth, do this 3 times)

**When I'm sad, it helps to**  
**Let** (clap) **it** (clap) **out** (clap).

**When I'm sad, it helps to**  
**Get** (stomp) **it** (stomp) **out** (stomp).

**I wrap my arms around myself and SQUEEZE it out.**  
(Wrap your arms around yourself to your back and squeeze tight with eyes closed)

**I SPEAK it out "I AM SAD"**  
(Put your hands around your mouth to mimic shouting, say the words clearly and calmly to a person close to you)

**When I'm sad, it helps to**  
**Let** (clap) **it** (clap) **out** (clap).



# Welcome Sesame

## Belonging

Resettling in a new country is never easy, and the process will be filled with different transitions. You and your family may live in a state of uncertainty for a long time, maybe calling a hotel room “home” for a while or moving from place to place often. When you can’t see where the road ahead leads, it can help to focus on what you can control, such as making sure that each member of your family feels safe, valued, and capable. It may take time, but you’ll find there are people in your new community who are eager to meet, support, and befriend you.

The resources in this packet offer ideas to boost your family’s sense of togetherness, curiosity, and confidence.

### Inside:

- **Settling In and Reaching Out**—an article for grown-ups
- **Sesame Friends**—a printable activity page for children
- **Watch, Play, Practice Activities**
  - A Place for You—a video for children
  - Saying Salaam—a video for children
  - Mae’s Minute: Circle of Safety—a video for grown-ups
  - A Little Help From My Furry Friends—a game for families



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**Remember:** As you explore these resources, know that safety, security, and comfort are your priorities. It’s okay to focus on just making sure you and your children feel safe and calm. In those moments, a deep breath may be all you need (or, sometimes, all you can do). If you still feel stressed, it’s okay to take your time and come back when you’re ready.

## Settling In and Reaching Out

Establishing a sense of belonging in your new or “for-now” community will take time. Small, consistent steps can help. Consider these ideas:

### Settling In

Before going out into your new community, do what you can to make your new or “for now” home feel comfortable, and invite children to help you.

- Together, you might choose where to put special items or family pictures (or you can draw pictures or write words of encouragement to display).
- Maintain family routines or try creating new traditions to celebrate being in a different place together. For example, at dinner, take turns describing the good moments from your day.
- Remind your children that your family is a team and you each have a special role to play. Talk about how you can help each other each day.
- Be patient if children are sad or behaving differently than usual, such as clinging to you or being resistant at bedtime. Over time, with your love and support, you can help them learn how to thrive in their new environment.

### Reaching Out

To learn more about your new community and envision your place in it, you might:

- Seek out the closest parks, playgrounds, or other places that look interesting to your children, such as a children’s zoo or outdoor sculpture garden.
- Visit a community center, library, museum, or faith community and ask about classes or events you might like to attend.
- Help your child practice introducing himself. Say, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. What’s yours?” Encourage him to speak with confidence and to have patience for others. Explain that others may ask him to repeat his name, or need reminders on how to pronounce it just right.

It’s normal to feel nervous, and it’s natural to make mistakes! The most important thing is to keep trying. Remember that you can lead by example. When you reach out (to ask for help, or just to say hello), you model persistence, optimism and perseverance.

## Sesame Friends

It may sound simple (or silly!), but coloring can help reduce stress for both children and adults. And coloring together can help you communicate important ideas to your children without saying a word: We are on the same team. We can have a good time together. I am here with you. I am listening. I am interested in you. We can share feelings. We can make something beautiful, even when the world around us feels scary and different.

Children can also draw themselves into the picture next to the Sesame friends. Creative self-expression can be a great way to show how you feel, using no words at all.



## Watch, Play, Practice

It can take some time to feel at home in a new place. It can help to remind ourselves that we matter, that we are important, and that we are not alone.

### *For Children:*

**A Place for You** features a song filled with phrases that children can sing to themselves once they've heard it a few times.

In **Saying Salaam**, Zari tells us all about how to greet friends and neighbors and the meaning of the word "salaam."

Watch these videos, then consider telling children:

- You are safe.
- You are strong.
- There is a place for you here.
- You belong.
- We are in this together.
- I'm listening. It is brave to ask for help.
- You are not alone. You have people to help.

### *For Caregivers:*

As a caring adult, you can help your child feel safe and secure. The support of other trusted adults can make a big difference, too.

Watch **Mae's Minute: Circle of Safety** for ideas.

### *For Families:*

Together with children, play **A Little Help From My Furry Friends** to "meet" Sesame friends and practice new ways to feel calm.



**A Place for You**



**Saying Salaam**



**Mae's Minute: Circle of Safety**



**A Little Help From My Furry Friends**

## Watch, Play, Practice:

### *For Providers:*

#### **Activity 1: Make a New Home Book**

In *Where Are the Stones*, Jad re-creates his grandmother’s favorite fountain from their old home in their new neighborhood.

Remembering the places or things we love from our old homes and honoring that memory in our new homes can bring us comfort. Lead your group in creating their own “New Home” books that tell the story of where they came from and their new homes.

Encourage them to draw one to three favorite things about their old homes or communities, and a few things that they like or love in their new homes.

Ask, “Are there any similarities?” “What are the differences?”

This project can be done over several sessions to explore and honor the memories and find hope for new homes and the future.

#### **Activity 2: Hand of Hope**

This activity helps remind children that even when they are afraid, they have good experiences and loving people in their life to look forward to.

On a piece of paper, have children trace around one hand. Within the outline of each finger, they can write about or draw something they are looking forward to (or you can write it for them). Start small. For example, kids’ “hopes” might include hearing the first “ribbit” of frogs in the spring, making a favorite food with a family member, learning to ride a bike. Go around the group and ask everyone to share one “hope” from their drawing with the group. You can display the hands around the room to create a chain/rope of hope.

#### **Where Are the Stones**

