

Sesame Strong

# Provider Resources





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## Sesame Strong: Topic Map

SESAME STRONG: TOPICS, BIG IDEAS & STRATEGIES								
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
TITLE	Learning Through Play	I Am Special	The People Who Care for Me	Feelings Big & Small	Everyday Challenges	Managing My Feelings	Helping Hands	Growing & Knowing
TOPIC	Co-engagement	Self-esteem	Caring Adults	Recognizing & Expressing Feelings	Patience & Persistence	Calming Strategies	Finding Comfort	Strategy Review
BIG IDEA	Parents can make little moments count.	Confidence and self-esteem give children strength to cope with challenges.	Caring adults need care too. Take time to care for yourself.	All feelings are okay. Children need positive ways to express them.	Learning how to cope with frustration helps children overcome obstacles.	Showing children how to manage big feelings helps them deal with challenges & hard emotions.	Comfort from a grown-up can help children feel calm and protected.	Parents can make little moments count.
STRATEGY	Engage together	Give yourself a hug	Notice your circle of care	Notice feelings	Self-talk	Belly breathe	Talk with grown-ups	Engage together

## Sesame Strong: Family Resource Map

SESAME STRONG: FAMILY RESOURCES								
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
TITLE	Learning Through Play	I Am Special	The People Who Care for Me	Feelings Big & Small	Everyday Challenges	Managing My Feelings	Helping Hands	Growing & Knowing
<b>PARENT READING</b>	<i>Tips for Reading Together</i>	<i>Mindful Parenting</i>	<i>Taking Care of Yourself</i>	<i>Expressing Emotions</i>	<i>Patience &amp; Persistence</i>	<i>Recognizing and Expressing Big Feelings</i>	<i>Comfort Strategies</i>	<i>The Most Important Factor</i>
<b>VIDEO</b>	<i>You Matter Most</i>	<i>Give Yourself a Hug</i>	<i>Finding Comfort with Family and friends</i>	<i>Feelings and Emotions</i>	<i>Elmo Doesn't Give Up!</i>	<i>Handling Angry Feelings</i>	<i>Offering Comfort</i>	<i>You Matter Most</i>
<b>VIDEO</b>	<i>Storytime</i>	<i>What I Am</i>	<i>Hooray for Hands</i>	<i>Noticing that Feelings Change</i>	<i>Don't Give Up</i>	<i>Belly Breathe</i>	<i>Comfy, Cozy Nest</i>	<i>Building Self Esteem</i>
<b>BOOK (digital)</b>	<i>Play All Day</i>	<i>What We're All About</i>	<i>Furry, Fuzzy Hugs</i>	<i>Comfy, Cozy Nest</i>	<i>An Act-Along Story (printable)</i>	<i>Breathe, Buddy, Breathe</i>	<i>Comfy, Cozy Nest</i>	<i>Engage together</i>
<b>GAME (digital)</b>	<i>Draw What's in Your Heart</i>			<i>Draw What's in Your Heart</i>		<i>Breathe, Think, Do</i>	<i>Comfy, Cozy Nest</i>	
<b>ACTIVITY (printed)</b>	<i>The Things We Do Together</i>	<i>The "I Can" Flower</i>	<i>Abby's Amazing Friends</i>	<i>Feelings Tic-Tac-Toe &amp; Feeling Faces</i>	<i>Good Morning, Superhero!</i>	<i>Elmo Says</i>	<i>Color Big Bird's Nest</i>	<i>Thankful Hearts</i>



# Mindfulness Moments

Share these simple mindfulness exercises at the beginning of your mini-sessions, or anytime parents (and children) might benefit from a centering moment. Begin by making sure there is as much calm and quiet in the room as possible, and that everyone is sitting comfortably.

## Drawing and Coloring

Purposeful coloring can help us relax and focus on the present moment. It benefits both children and grown-ups! When coloring with children, you can **model how to be mindful** as you choose what to draw and color: *I am picking up the blue crayon. I'll use it to color in the sky. I am only thinking about coloring at this present moment.*

## Balloon Breathing

Taking a few calming breaths helps the brain and body relax and focus. Let's try it:  
**Inhale Deeply:** Place your hands on your belly. Slowly breathe in through your nose. Feel your belly expand like a balloon.  
**Exhale Fully:** Now, open your mouth and breathe out slowly. Feel your "belly balloon" deflate. **Repeat** two more times.

## Giraffe Neck Stretch

Breathing through movement helps calm the body and fills the brain with oxygen:  
**Sit up tall like a giraffe.**  
**Slowly and gently,** let your head fall to the right side. Breathe in and out slowly.  
**Sit up tall again.** Continue with the head falling to the left and to the front.  
**End with three deep breaths.**

## Sending Kind Thoughts

Use the power of imagination to express care for others:  
**Let's close our eyes** and take three deep breaths.  
**Think of someone you care about.** What kind words would you like to say to that person? Say them quietly in your mind.  
**Take one more breath** in and slowly let it out.






## “Learning Through Play” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Parent Mini-Workshop Overview:** “Each session, you’ll receive a packet with Sesame Strong resources for you to explore with your child. Today, we’ll come together for a quick introduction to the topic. We’ll take a look at the resources together, and you can ask questions and share ideas. Then I’ll distribute materials for you and your child to try at home.”
- **Your Family Review:** “I’d also like to know what you think of the resources. In each packet, you’ll find a Family Review coloring page for you and your child to share your opinion of the session’s activities. Please bring your review the next time we meet.”
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (“the why”):** Parents make little moments count.



**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Engage together.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Tips for Reading Together</b> (article)	Reading aloud together each day helps children become readers and writers.	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
	TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>You Matter Most</b> (video)	A caring adult can make a big difference in a child’s life.
<b>Storytime</b> (video)			Sharing a story together can be a cozy, comforting experience for grown-ups and kids!	Sing along! What book would you like to read together today?
	Read Together	<b>Play All Day</b> (digital)	Learning moments can happen anytime and anywhere.	Click through this story and play along with the Sesame friends.
	Play Together	<b>Draw What’s in Your Heart</b> (activity)	Drawing can help children show and share their feelings.	Ask children to tell you about what they’ve drawn.
	Play Together	<b>The Things We Do Together</b> (activity) 	Everyday activities together create special moments that kids will remember for a lifetime.	What everyday activities do you like to do together? Create your own “together time” book. Then, cuddle up and read it together.

### FRIENDLY REMINDERS:

Questions are always welcome. Share with parents the best way to contact you with questions. Review the date/time for your next mini-session and remind families to bring in their review. Thank parents for their partnership and participation.






## “I Am Special” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect Session 1 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** Confidence and self-esteem give children strength to cope with challenges.



**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Give yourself a hug.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Mindful Parenting</b> (article)	All children have big emotions. It helps when parents stay calm. (But it’s not easy!)	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>Give Yourself a Hug</b> (video) 	Safe, nurturing touch supports kids’ healthy development.	Practice these hugs in calm moments, so you’re ready to use them in emotional moments.
		<b>What I Am</b> (video)	Celebrating what makes your child special builds self-esteem.	Take turns sharing positive words that describe your family.
	Read Together	<b>What We’re All About</b> (digital)	Talking about what makes you a loving family strengthens your connection to each other.	Perfect for on the go reading. Take turns answering the questions.
	Play Together	<b>The “I Can” Flower</b> (activity)	Help boost children’s confidence by reminding them of all the things they <u>can</u> do.	Sit, talk, and color together.

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## “The People Who Care for Me” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect Session 2 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** Caring adults need care too. Take time to care for yourself.

**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Notice your circle of care.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Taking Care of Yourself</b> (article)	You’ll be better able to help kids cope with difficult emotions if you’re also taking good care of yourself.	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>Finding Comfort with Family and Friends</b> (video)	We all get comfort from familiar people and special things.	Listen to the song together. Then talk about the people who care and are there to help your child: family, friends, teachers, doctors...
		<b>Hooray for Hands</b> (video)	We hold hands to stick together, stay safe, show love, and help each other.	Talk about ways you use your hands to show kindness.
	Read Together	<b>Furry, Fuzzy Hugs</b> (digital)	Nurturing touch helps children feel safe and loved. It helps brain development, too!	It’s always a good time for a hug. Cuddle up and click through the story together.
	Play Together	<b>Abby’s Amazing Friends</b> (activity)	Children thrive when they know they’re surrounded by people who support and care for them.	Sit, talk, and color together.

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## “Feelings Big & Small” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect session 3 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** All feelings are OK. Children need positive ways to express them.



**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Notice feelings.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Expressing Emotions (article)</b>	Children need ways to express emotions of all shapes and sizes.	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>Feelings and Emotions (video)</b>	When children express and understand their emotions, you’re helping them overcome challenges, understand others, and communicate.	Talk about the feelings Rosita is having. When have you felt those feelings?
		<b>Noticing that Feelings Change (video)</b>	Everyone feels bad sometimes, and that’s okay. Feelings are always changing. We can learn how to handle all kinds of emotions.	Watch together and name some feelings you’ve had today. Have they changed during the day?
	Read Together	<b>Comfy, Cozy Nest (printed)</b>	Grown-ups can model strategies to help ease big feelings.	Cuddle up and read through the story together. How does Alan help Big Bird feel calmer?
	Play Together	<b>Draw What’s in Your Heart (digital game)</b>	Drawing can help children show and share their feelings.	Ask children to tell you about what they’ve drawn.
	Play Together	<b>Feelings Tic-Tac-Toe &amp; Feelings Faces (activity)</b>	Helping children reflect on their feelings encourages them to share feelings with grown-ups.	Play this game together. How many boxes can you each check off today? Use the Feelings Faces page to help name feelings.

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## “Everyday Challenges” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect Session 4 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** Learning how to cope with frustration helps children overcome obstacles.

**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Self-talk.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Patience &amp; Persistence</b> (article)	Frustration is a powerful emotion. There are strategies that can help children work through it.	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>Elmo Doesn’t Give Up!</b> (video)	Help kids discover the power of “yet”!	Learning new things can be frustrating. Remind your child of something she/he can do now that took practice.
		<b>Don’t Give Up!</b> (video)	Just like catching a ball, patience and persistence are skills kids can learn with practice.	Sing along! What new thing are you learning to do? Celebrate the small steps and the effort.
	Read Together	<b>An Act-Along Story</b> (printable)	Children can build emotional vocabulary and practice ways to calm down as they act out this story.	Stand up and move along to the words in this story. How does Elmo solve his problem?
	Play Together	<b>Good Morning, Superhero!</b> (activity)	Sometimes we have to find strength from inside.	Model self-talk as you draw and color together. <i>When I’m frustrated and want to give up, I say to myself, “I believe in myself! I can do this!”</i>

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## “Managing My Feelings” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect Session 5 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this Session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** Showing children how to manage big feelings helps them deal with challenges and hard emotions.



**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Belly breathing.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Recognizing and Expressing Big Feelings</b> (article)	Challenging behavior often happens when children can’t figure out how to express big feelings.	You can help your child recognize and express big feelings in positive ways. As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>Handling Angry Feelings</b> (video)	Learning to name emotions can help children cope with them.	Watch together and take turns choosing an emotion and showing it on your face.
		<b>Belly Breathe</b> (video) 	The reason behind a tantrum can seem small to grown-ups, but to little ones they are a big deal! Use this calming strategy to help before, during, or after a tantrum.	Practice along with Elmo so you’re ready when a tantrum happens.
	Read Together	<b>Breathe, Buddy, Breathe</b> (digital)	This plan can help children think through a solution when big feelings happen.	Cuddle up and read through the story together. How does Alan help Big Bird feel calmer?
	Play Together	<b>Breathe, Think, Do</b> (digital game)	Practicing strategies when children are calm, gives them tools to use when they’re not.	Laugh and learn together as you help a Sesame Street friend calm down and solve everyday challenges..
	Play Together	<b>Elmo Says</b> (activity)	Physical movement is a helpful way to work through big feelings and everyday stress.	Play this game together. Then, keep the physical activity going with a walk outside, or a family dance party!

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## “Helping Hands” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect Session 6 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** Comfort from a caring grown-up can help children feel calm and protected.



**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Talk with grown-ups.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>Comfort Strategies</b> (article)	During tough times, grown-ups can help create a calm, familiar environment and build children’s sense of security.	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>Offering Comfort</b> (video)	Comfort and love can help children through everyday ups and downs, and bigger life events.	Reassure your child that you are there to love and help them no matter what. Then show it with a hug.
		<b>Comfy, Cozy Nest</b> (video)	When children learn to imagine their own “safe places,” they have a powerful coping strategy to use whenever they need it.	Alan notices Big Bird is having a hard time. How does he show Big Bird he cares and is listening?
	Read Together	<b>Comfy, Cozy Nest</b> (printed) 	Imagining a safe space inside can help calm big feelings.	Cuddle up and read the story together. What would you imagine in your safe place?
	Play Together	<b>Comfy, Cozy Nest</b> (digital game)	By “helping” Big Bird practice an important coping strategy, children can explore and rehearse it themselves.	Play this together when your child needs calming down, or anytime. Ask “What were some of the things you helped Big Bird do?”
	Play Together	<b>Color Big Bird’s Nest</b> (activity)	A wordless activity like coloring can help reduce stress for children and grown-ups.	Sit quietly together, and color.

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## “Growing & Knowing” Mini-Session

- **Start with a Mindfulness Moment.**
- **Collect Session 7 Family Review:** How did the Sesame Strong activities go last session? What was your favorite resource? Any challenges? Questions?
- **Share this session’s Big Idea (the “why”):** You can make little moments count.



**Strategy Spotlight (the “how”):** Engage together.

- **Review this session’s resources:**

	Play List		Main Message	Co-Engage Tip
ME TIME	Parent Reading	<b>The Most Important Factor</b> (article)	Each of your loving actions has a positive impact on your child’s development.	As you read, underline tips or points that you’d like to remember.
TOGETHER TIME	Explore Together	<b>You Matter Most</b> (video)	You make a big difference in your child’s life. That’s something to celebrate!	Talk about how you’ve spent time together being Sesame Strong. What have you enjoyed the most?
		<b>Building Self-Esteem</b> (video)	Children build strong relationships when they appreciate themselves and others.	Watch together. Then take turns sharing something you like about yourself. What are you proud of?
	Read Together	<b>Hugs All Around</b> (printable)	Hugs show someone you love that they are safe and cared for.	Showing kindness can be as simple as giving a big hug! Who do you know that gives good hugs?
	Play Together	<b>Thankful Hearts</b> (activity) 	Gratitude builds appreciation for all the things to celebrate in life.	Work together to write or draw on the hearts. What are you thankful for?

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