

SESAME WORKSHOP

# Welcome Sesame

## Comforting Resources for Parents and Children During Times of Crisis



**Activities** you can do with your children



**Information** to support caregivers



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

For more resources, visit <https://sesameworkshop.org>

# Welcome Sesame

## Helping Families During Crisis

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

Children who are affected by crisis and conflict 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.

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

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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** *(page 5)*

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

### **Learning New Things** *(page 9)*

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

**Elmo’s World News: Pretend Play**—Elmo delivers a special news report with his friends about how playing pretend inside can be a safer option than playing outside.

**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.

### **Coping with Big Changes** *(page 14)*

**Watch, Play, Learn: 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!

**I Can Do It**—Abby is trying to turn a pumpkin into a carriage but her magic wand isn’t working. Abby learns to have hope, believe in herself and to keep trying.

**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.

Access the video playlist by visiting [www.youtube.com/@welcomesesame6674](https://www.youtube.com/@welcomesesame6674)

## Video Playlist

### **Coping with Trauma** *(page 19)*

**Give Yourself a Hug**—In tough times, give yourself a hug!

**Watch, Play, Learn: Grover is Sad**—Grover lost one of his juggling rings and is feeling sad. Basma and Jad help Grover feel better by teaching him to “move it out.”

**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** *(page 23)*

**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.

**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.

### **Celebrating Who We Are** *(page 27)*

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

Access the video playlist by visiting [www.youtube.com/@welcomesesame6674](https://www.youtube.com/@welcomesesame6674)

# Welcome Sesame

## A Welcome from Sesame Street Friends

Being 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: Self-Care—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



Abby  
Cadabby!

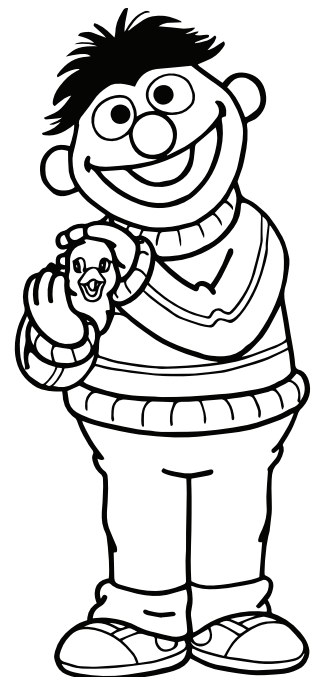


ELMo



Big B'rd

Ernie



## 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.

Taking a moment for yourself can be powerful, too. Taking care of yourself can help you better care for others, especially during big changes. Watch **Mae’s Minute: Self-Care** for ideas.



**Mae’s Minute: Self-Care**

### *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**



# Welcome Sesame

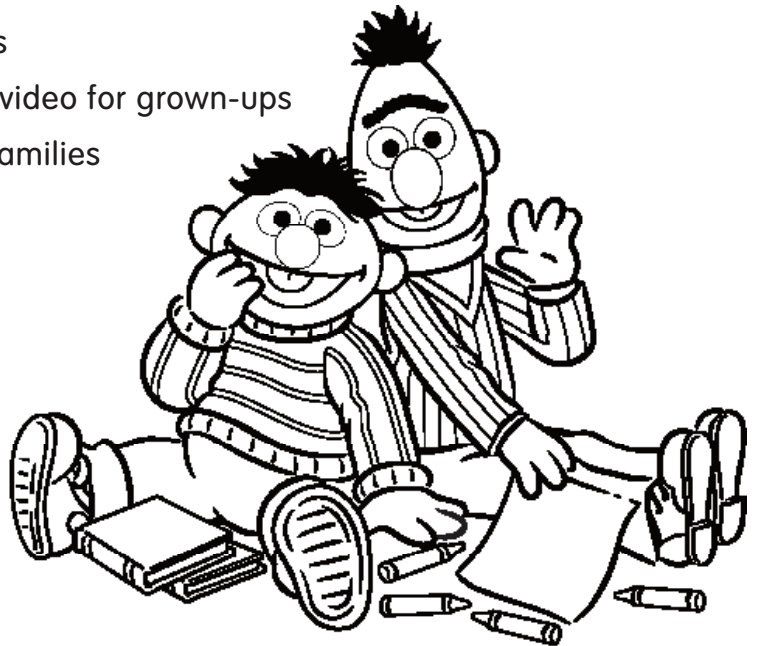
## Learning New Things

Big changes can mean learning new routines, languages, 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 World News: Pretend Play—a video for children
  - Daily Routines—a video for families
  - Mae's Minute: Play Is Powerful—a video for grown-ups
  - 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

In 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 (or another language). 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

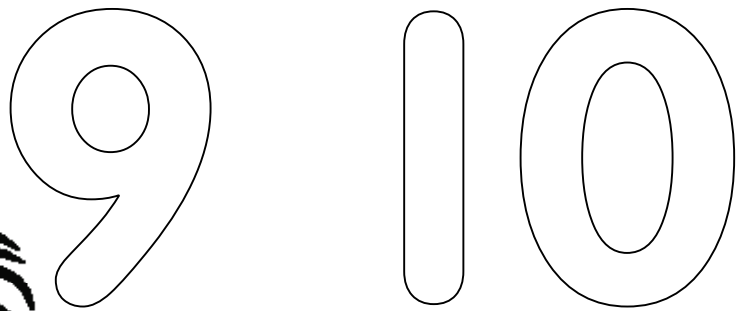
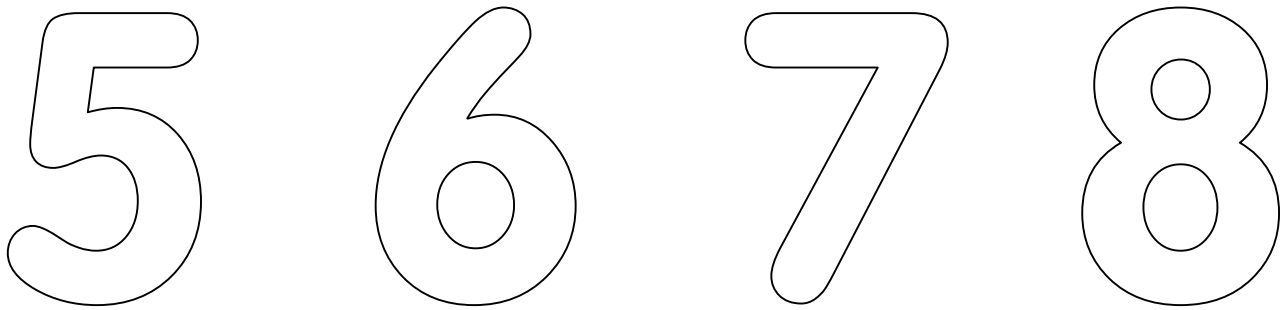
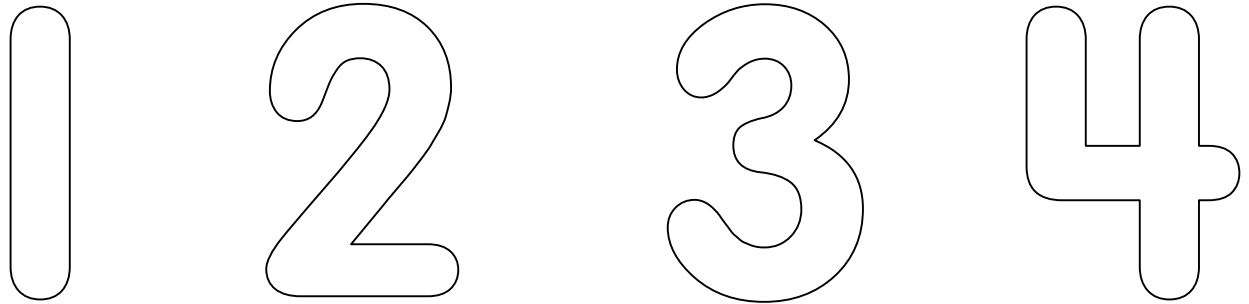
F G H I J K

L M N O P

Q R S T U V

W X Y Z

Color the numbers with Abby Cadabby!



## 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.

Imagination and play help facilitate joyful learning for your child.

Watch **Elmo’s World News: Pretend Play**, where Elmo delivers a

### *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.



**Daily Routines**



**Elmo’s World News:  
Pretend Play**



**Mae’s Minute:  
Play Is Powerful**



**Reading Adventures**

# Welcome Sesame

## Coping with Big Changes

Even very small transitions 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 being in a new place—especially because of crisis or conflict—can be overwhelming for little ones.

A change like this will likely mean new roles and responsibilities, making mistakes, and navigating many 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**

I Can Do It—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, being apart from family, 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.

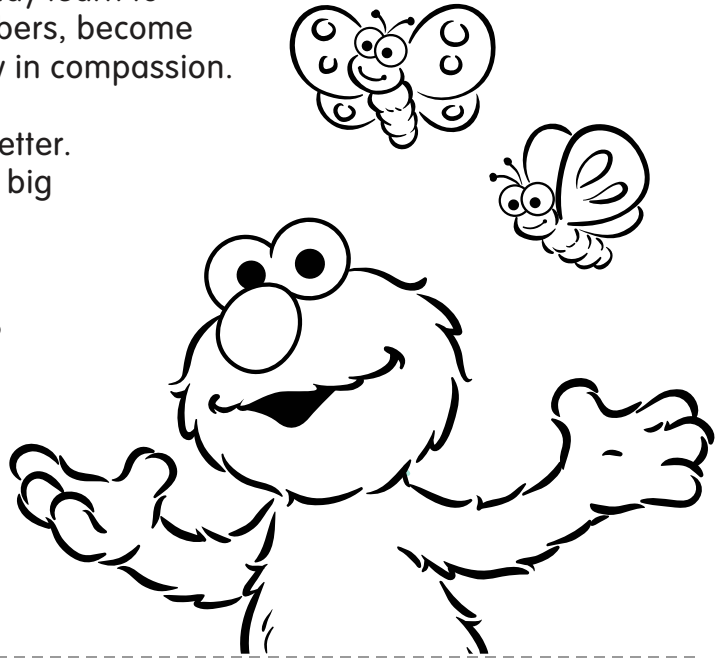
## Change helps us grow.

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."



**On the next page:**

### **What Changes? What Stays the Same?**

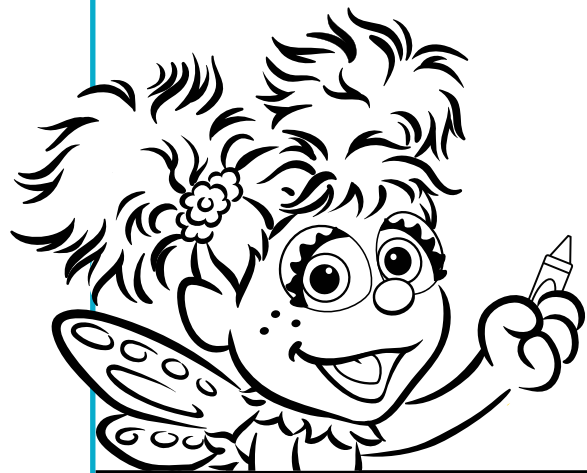
It can be comforting to remember that not everything changes. Remind children that even though many things have changed and will continue to change, some things will always stay the same:

- 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 **I Can Do It**. Sofia encourages Abby Cadabby to not give up on her idea and continue trying to achieve her goal.

Talk with your child about how perseverance and faith in our abilities help us to persevere in difficult times or after failures. Remember that your support and encouragement play a big role in your child's success. Remind your child of situations when you were proud of them. Example:

- When a child works diligently to master new skills
- When they have a positive attitude, even on difficult days.
- When they are kind to siblings, friends, and other adults in their life.

Ask the child: "What are you proud of yourself for?"

### *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**



**I Can Do It**



**Mae's Minute: Family Team**



**Slow It Down**

## Coping with the Trauma of Crisis and Conflict

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

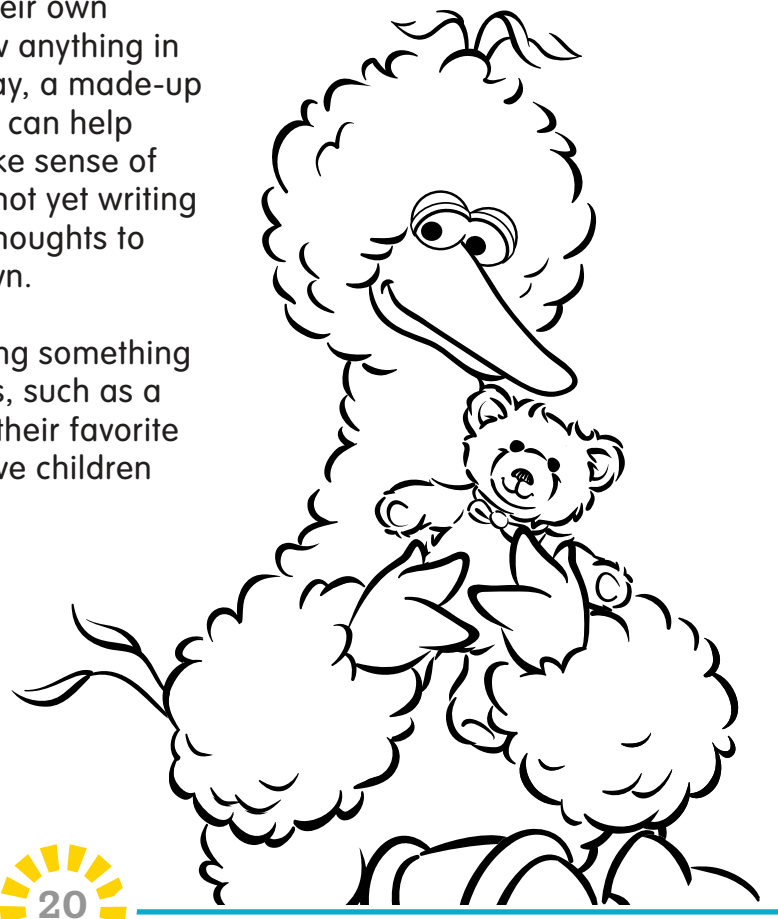


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## Practicing Comfort Strategies

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.



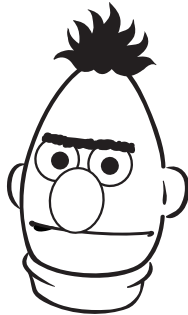
# Feeling Faces

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**



**angry**



**sad**



**excited**



**frustrated**



**calm**



**happy**



**disappointed**



**nervous**

## 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 **Grover Is Sad**, Basma and Jad help Grover feel better when he loses a juggling ring his grandmother gave him.

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**



**Grover Is Sad**



**Mae's Minute: Child Stress**



**Feeling Faces**

# Welcome Sesame

## Belonging

Being in a new place is hard. It's possible that you and your family may live in a state of uncertainty for a long time, with many transitions; perhaps 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 (or "for now" 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.

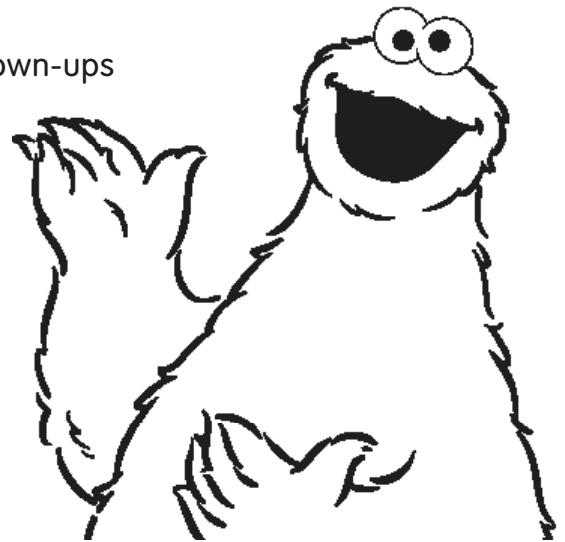
### Inside:

- **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

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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# 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.

Watch this video, then consider telling your child:

- 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.



**A Place for You**

### *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.



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

### *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 Little Help From  
My Furry Friends**

# Welcome Sesame

## 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 being 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: Keeping Control** for more ideas.



**Mae's Minute:  
Keeping Control**

### *For Families:*

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



**Make Your Mark**