

Social Connection Volunteer Tip Guide

USING THESE RESOURCES

As a caring adult, you can help little ones discover their power to make your communities — and the world — a happier, more connected place for everyone.

Sesame Street and MetLife Foundation have created these materials to support you in this all-important work of nurturing children's early understanding of social connection and helping them grow up to be kind, cooperative, and thoughtful friends.

Here are ways to implement this program:

- Choose an activity that meets your particular need. For example, if you are working with a group of 10-20 children and have access to a video player, you could conduct any of the video activities below. Some require access to art supplies, others only require the ability to imagine the scenarios.
- These activities can also be conducted with individual or small numbers of children at home.
- If you do not have access to staff to facilitate activities, you can still have the videos playing in a common space that children and parents have access to such as a lobby or waiting area.

PROJECT GOALS

With the support of caring grown-ups, children can gain the essential skills for establishing and maintaining caring relationships and resolving interpersonal social problems — laying an important foundation for lifelong mental and emotional wellbeing.



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Activities

Video Activity 1: *Wes and Friends Build a City*

In this video, Elmo, Abby, Wes, and Elijah are building a city with blocks, but they run into an obstacle. Watch the video together with children. After watching, ask children what Wes did to solve the problem with his friends. Then, pass out blank pieces of paper, markers, and other art supplies and ask them to draw a picture of what the city might have looked like when the friends finished building it together.



Video Activity 2: *Wes Becomes a Perspective Detective*

Watch this video in which Elijah invites Wes to become a perspective detective. After watching, point out to children that Wes used a strategy called “Stop, Notice, Think.” Then, ask children to use the “Stop, Notice, Think” strategy to guess what you might be feeling as you act out a big feeling without using words. If children are old enough, you can have them take turns acting out big feelings and have the other children guess them too.



Video Activity 3: *Zoe’s Get Well Basket*

In this video, Elmo, Abby, Wes and Louie decide to do an act of kindness for Zoe. Share the video, then ask children what they noticed Elmo and his friends doing. Invite children to come up with some ideas for kind acts they can do for their friends. You might even turn it into a game of charades, where children can guess what kind acts the other children are doing.



SHARING THE MATERIALS

Have the videos playing in a common space such as a lobby or waiting area. Watch a video as a group and ask, “How was ___ being a good friend? Have you ever done anything like this?” You might have children act out the stories on their own.

SPREADING THE MESSAGE

If you have permission from parents, share photos of the event, and children’s work, on social media.



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