

Sesame Family Newsletter Archive

News and Notes from the Workshop
Posted by Jordan Brown

SESAME FAMILY NEWSLETTER---Oops! I Made a Mistake!
June 2, 2004

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FROM THE WORKSHOP
Sesame Workshop wants to help children grow up healthy and strong!
Click here to learn more.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=11544143>

*** If at first you don't succeed...

Like many preschoolers, when my nephew Ben was 4 years old, he found great joy in helping his family. There was a lot that little Ben could do. He could help carry the groceries from the car to the kitchen. He could distract his little brother on the verge of a tantrum. And he could help prepare their dog Miami's dinner. But as helpful as Ben was, things didn't always go without a hitch.

One Sunday, at a family brunch, Ben insisted on carrying a large carton of orange juice from the refrigerator to the table.

"You sure you got that, buddy?" my brother-in-law Jim asked.

"I got it," Ben replied, lugging the carton with all his might.

Seconds later, the carton slipped from my nephew's hands, and busted wide open on the floor. O.J. splashed in all directions.

Ben looked at Jim, and meekly said, "I love you, Daddy!"

Everyone laughed as Jim and my sister Sharon gave Ben a hug, and reassured him that accidents happen. Soon, a shaken Ben was smiling, as he helped clean up the mess.

This event happened years before my wife Ellen and I had our first child Finn. But it has stayed with us, both as a favorite family story, and as an important lesson about how to handle the inevitable goofs, slip-ups, and failures that are a part of growing up. Now that Finn is almost 4, we're getting a chance to teach our son how to bounce back from mistakes with honesty, resilience, and humor.

I DIDN'T DO IT!
Why children lie, and the words you can use to teach the value of honesty.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=48120>

RESILIENCE: AGES TWO TO FIVE

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Annual Report

Preschoolers can begin learning to handle disappointment.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=80964&>

MY KID'S A SORE LOSER

Children win in the long run when you teach them to lose gracefully.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=25560>

***Losing my cool, in the freezer aisle

Forget kids, most grown-ups are not so great at admitting their mistakes. Telling others that you messed up takes courage and a strong self-esteem. The bigger the mistake, the more difficult it is to fess up about it.

As a parent, of course, I never make any mistakes. (Okay, stop laughing... it's not nice to laugh at others.) To encourage Finn to admit his failures, I deliberately point out my slip-ups. Last week, klutzy me happened to drop a bowl of cookie batter on the kitchen floor. After mumbling some choice words under my breath, I said to Finn, "Oops, daddy made a mistake."

I also tell Finn "I'm sorry" when I lose my temper at him. Last week, after a long day of playing, Finn and I were headed home from the park, exhausted. Suddenly, I realized I had forgotten to buy an ingredient for dinner. I figured that Finn could keep it together for a very quick trip into the supermarket. Not one of my brightest ideas.

As soon as we got into the supermarket, Finn insisted on getting one of the kiddie shopping carts. I told him that we only had to buy one thing, so we didn't need a cart. Let's just say Finn didn't agree. Knowing that an over-tired Finn would start racing his kiddie shopping cart through the aisles, crashing into people and products, I picked him up and ran to the frozen food section. Finn flipped out big-time, insisting that he needed a shopping cart. Eager to get out of the store, I barreled ahead, grabbed the item, and ran to the shortest checkout line--all the time looking like (and feeling like) the worst dad in history. When we finally got out of the store, we were both frazzled. At home, once we had both calmed down, I apologized to Finn. I told him that we were both too tired after playing and that I was sorry I took him into the supermarket. I also apologized for getting mad at him, and reassured him that I loved him.

LIKE PARENT, LIKE CHILD

If you want your child to have a healthy self-esteem, start with your own.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=631&>

SELF-CONTROL: TWO TO FIVE

How a child develops self-control.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=817#2>

THE DANGEROUS EMOTION

Ways to express anger without harming your child.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=784>

AGGRESSION: TWO TO FIVE

How young children learn to control their hostility.
<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=1035>

***Singing a big bird classic

Thinking about mistakes brings to mind a Big Bird song that I enjoyed when I was a kid, "Everyone Makes Mistakes" by Jeff Moss. Here's a bit of this Sesame Street classic.

If you spill a glass of milk all over the floor,
Well, your mom and dad still like you just as much as they did before,
'Cause when Mother and Dad were just as small as you,
I'll bet that they knocked their milk over too.

'Cause everyone makes mistakes!

Oh, yes they do
Your sister and your brother and your dad and mother too;
Big people, small people, matter of fact, all people!
Everyone makes mistakes, so why can't you?

Jordan Brown

Sesame Workshop

***GAMES AND MORE: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, OSCAR

Celebrate Oscar's birthday (June 1) with some grouchy games!

Oscar's Trash Collection

<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=110740>

Bumper Cars

<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=7142277>

E-mail Oscar

<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/gwr?s=nl&t=155003>

***WEEKLY TRIVIA

What song would Oscar never sing on Sesame Street?

- A. I Love Trash
- B. Oh Happy Day
- C. I Wanna Hold Your Trash
- D. Trash Can Blues

Well if you know Oscar, you know that there's no way you'd ever catch him singing B. (Unless maybe no one else was around.)

***Sesame Store

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