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The nonprofit educational organization  
behind Sesame Street and so much more



## Sesame Family Newsletter

September 25, 2008

### Healthy Habits, Here We Come!

by Jordan D. Brown

A dad encourages his kids to be active and try new foods.

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#### Featuring:

The Importance of Setting a Good Example

Getting Olivia's Heart Pumping

Beyond Chicken Nuggets and French Fries



### Games and More

#### Food Fun

- [Elmo's Close-up: Food](#)  
Can you guess the picture close-up?
- [Checkout Cookie](#)  
Find food patterns with Cookie Monster at the checkout counter.
- [Cooking with Rosita](#)  
Count and cook in Spanish and English.
- [Elmo's Song: Food](#)  
Play along with Elmo's song about food.
- [Healthy Foods](#)  
Cookie Monster raps about healthy food.
- [Weekly Trivia](#)

### Pre-Order Sesame Street: *Abby in Wonderland* on DVD!

It's a whole new take on Alice in Wonderland! In this movie, little *Sesame Street* fairy Abby Cadabby falls asleep and follows a red rabbit (Elmo) down a rabbit hole and into Wonderland.

[Pre-Order](#)

### Emergency Preparedness

When something bad happens, it's good for families to have a plan in place. Through this new project, Sesame Workshop is helping parents and children work together to ensure that everyone is safe and secure.

[Read More](#)



### Thanks for Your Support

Over the past year, donations from friends like you helped us bring new versions of *Sesame Street* to Indonesia, where educational opportunities for young children are limited, and to Northern Ireland, where children are learning unity and optimism.

[Renew Your Support](#)



### [Earth's Best: A Proud Sponsor of Sesame Street](#)

Earth's Best brings you fun, delicious, organic, healthy alternatives to kids' favorite foods with nutrient-rich Earth's Best *Sesame Street* breakfasts and snacks made from organic ingredients. Fortified with 8 essential vitamins, iron and zinc, Earth's Best helps to ensure that little tummies get the big nutrition they need.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE

National Child Health Day, celebrated on October 6, is the inspiration for this week's newsletter. Until recently, I had never heard of this special day, but was relieved that it didn't require me to run out and buy any expensive cards or presents. According to the official "National Child Health Day" website, one way to celebrate is to "take the surgeon general's pledge." As I read the first line of this pledge --"I pledge to be a role model by making healthy choices for myself" -- I felt horribly guilty about the yummy glazed donuts I shared with my daughter Olivia (age 3) as a mid-morning snack. Normally, our meals are quite healthy, but sometimes we indulge in less nutritious fare.

The pledge reminded me of one of the most important things I've learned as a parent: Kids learn by watching and imitating us. Whether we like it or not, our children pick up our habits, good and bad. As a parent, if I make a point of developing healthy habits, such as getting regular exercise, or eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, then my children will be much more likely to follow suit.



### [HELPING CHILDREN DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS THROUGH FUN AND PLAY](#)

Establishing an easy and fun health regimen keeps kids going strong.

### [HEALTHY FOR LIFE](#)

Nurturing your child's growing body and mind.

### [KEYS TO KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY](#)

Some crucial childhood health advice that no family should be without.

## GETTING OLIVIA'S HEART PUMPING

Making sure Olivia gets plenty of fresh air and physical activity is fun and easy on these sunny fall days. She loves riding her tricycle. She also enjoys playing catch, kicking a ball "as high as the moon," and going on nature hikes.

Thanks to a friendly neighbor, Olivia recently discovered hula hoops. While coordinated for her age, learning to twirl a hula hoop around your waist takes lots of practice. When Olivia gets frustrated, I show her what a lame hula hooper I am, but that I keep trying and trying. As long as I'm laughing and having a good time, then I know she'll take her less successful efforts in stride.

On rainy days, I'm sometimes tempted to let Olivia "veg out" in front of a favorite video, or play quiet games in her room. I forget that even when we are inside, it is possible for both of us to get some exercise. For example, we sometimes put on the radio or CD player and invent crazy dances for the other one to try. Or, we climb up and down the stairs, pretending we're mountain climbers. And, Olivia is always up for a rousing game of hide-and-seek.



### [GETTING PHYSICAL WITH SKILL BUILDING](#)

Encouraging gross motor skills.

### [APPLES AND PUSH-UPS](#)

Grover talks to Hunter about being healthy.

### [GROVER'S MONSTER WORKOUT VIDEO](#)

Grover gets tired while demonstrating exercises to make you healthy and strong.

## BEYOND CHICKEN NUGGETS AND FRENCH FRIES

It seems that every few days a news report comes out about the obesity crisis in this country. You've probably heard the statistics: 1 in 6 kids in the U.S. between ages 2 and 19 is overweight. To



reverse this trend, many health professionals have come up with strategies to encourage children to eat a balanced diet. Many of these ideas are easier said than done. As I wrote earlier this year, Olivia has a sweet tooth the size of Mount Rushmore. I keep having to remind her that chocolate is not a vegetable.

Here are some tricks that have helped me get Olivia to eat a healthier, more balanced diet.

Watching My Food "Disappear": When I want Olivia to try a new food, I make it a game. When I'm "not looking" or "taking a nap" in the middle of a meal, Olivia delights in causing food to vanish from my plate. I always return to my plate with mock astonishment, "What happened to my broccoli? Do YOU know?" Olivia giggles, and says, "Again, again!"

Adventures in Dining: When eating out, my wife Ellen and I make a point of ordering something out of the ordinary. It's too easy to fall back on kid favorites like chicken nuggets, pizza, hot dogs, French fries, etc. I've found that when my kids are active before mealtime, they are much more willing to try ANYTHING. During a visit to a Greek diner about a year ago, Olivia's older brother Finn discovered two new foods that he now adores: stuffed grape leaves and feta cheese.

Shopping, Chopping, and Cooking: Involving my kids in meal preparation takes time, but the results are worth it. Keeping children out of trouble in the supermarket can be exhausting, but it is a great way to let them play a role in selecting the fruits and vegetables we'll eat later. At home, Finn and Olivia are usually eager to assist with the cooking, too. Last weekend I was making lasagna, and Olivia ran over to help. I was a little surprised because she's never been a big fan of lasagna. ("It's yucky! Too many foods in there!") So, I put her little stool in front of the counter, got her a safe plastic knife and let her chop up the ingredients. "Daddy, could I try some of that white cheese?" she asked. "Sure!" I said, as I cut a piece of mozzarella cheese. Chomp-chomp-chomp. It was gone in a matter of minutes. Then..."Daddy, could I try some of those noodles?" "Of course!" I said, giving her a piece of cooked lasagna to nibble. Yum! Together we assembled the lasagna, layer by layer, with Olivia eating most of the ingredients along the way. By the time I put the lasagna in the oven, she was full! When we served dinner that night, she was so proud that she'd helped make it. Was she willing to taste the finished lasagna? Of course not! "Maybe when I'm 4," she said. But I'm not giving up.

The Food = Energy Argument: I've found that my kids, like many adults, resist foods that are "good for you." One approach that sometimes works is pointing out that different foods give you different amounts of energy. I tell Olivia things like, "That cookie will only give you energy to do 20 jumping jacks. But you know how many jumping jacks you could do if you ate a cheese stick instead?" "A million!" Olivia shouts.

Here's to your health!

Jordan D. Brown  
Sesame Workshop

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## WEEKLY TRIVIA

**Which is the title of one of Cookie Monster's recent songs?**

- A. *A Cookie Is a Sometime Food*
- B. *Cookies Are My Friends*
- C. *Cookies, Cookies Everywhere!*
- D. *Cookie Craze*

The answer is (A) [A Cookie Is a Sometime Food](#). *A Cookie Is a Sometime Food* is a Sesame Street song from Season 36 in which Hoots the Owl teaches Cookie Monster that cookies are okay to eat sometimes but not all the time. The song is a parody of *A Woman is a Sometime Thing*, from George and Ira Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess*.

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### [EWWW! I'M NOT EATING THAT!](#)

The dish on how to handle your picky eater.

### [HANSEL AND GRETEL'S SNACK](#)

Hansel and Gretel choose a healthy snack.

### [HEALTHY MEAL](#)

Elmo and Jamie pretend to eat a healthy meal.

### [FOOD EQUALS ENERGY](#)

We all need healthy foods for energy.

## ABOUT THE WORKSHOP



Sesame Workshop is a nonprofit educational organization making a meaningful difference in children's lives around the world. Founded in 1968, the Workshop changed television forever with the legendary *Sesame Street*. Today, the Workshop continues to innovate on behalf of children in 120 countries, using its proprietary research methodology to ensure its programs and products are engaging and enriching. Sesame Workshop is behind award-winning programs like *Dragon Tales* and *Sagwa, The Chinese Siamese Cat, Pinky Dinky Doo* and ground breaking multimedia productions in South Africa, Egypt and Russia. As a nonprofit, Sesame Workshop puts the proceeds it receives from sales of *Sesame Street*, *Dragon Tales* and *Sagwa* products right back into its educational projects for children around the world. Find the Workshop online at [www.sesameworkshop.org](http://www.sesameworkshop.org).

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**Sesame Workshop | 1 Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023 | 212-875-6119**

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