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The nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street and so much more



Sesame Family Newsletter

January 8, 2008

"Love You, No Matter What!"

by Jordan D. Brown

The challenges and rewards of unconditional love.

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Featuring:

When Angels Sprout Horns
The "I'd Still Love You" Game
But Actions Do Have Consequences



Games and More

Sing-and-Play Along Games

- [Happy and You Know It](#)
Follow Big Bird's lead in this popular game.
- [Clap Your Hands](#)
Listen to the song and move like Elmo.
- [Where is Thumbkin?](#)
Sing and play along with Zoe.
- [Weekly Trivia](#)

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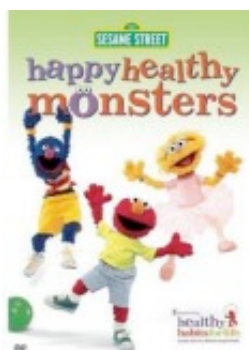
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Happy, Healthy 2009!



Get healthy and happy this new year with furry monsters from *Sesame Street*! This award-winning DVD teaches kids to exercise their body and mind and includes appearances from Wyclef Jean, Dan Zanes, and India Arie.

[Check Out the DVD](#)

WHEN ANGELS SPROUT HORNS

Loving our children is easy when they are sweet, charming angels. When my daughter Olivia eats her veggies without complaint, or when her big brother Finian cleans up his toys without a struggle, parenting is a piece of cake. Unfortunately, if your kids are like mine, they sometimes have a devilish side. Have you ever noticed how kids behave worst at times you wish they were on their best



[GROVER AND JESSE TALK ABOUT LOVE](#)

Jesse tells Grover how he

behavior? Kids mysteriously sense when you REALLY want them to behave, such as at a family party at your boss's house or a service at church or synagogue, and do all they can to rebel. At these times, telling your children how much you love them can be a monumental challenge.

But, as I am learning, one of the keys to successful parenting is just that -- unconditional love. This means letting Olivia and Finn know that I love them no matter what they do. It means telling them that our love comes without strings attached -- that I will love them even if they screw up, or somehow fall short of our expectations.

Even though my wife Ellen and I tell our kids daily how much we love them, when things go wrong, they need assurance. The other day, for example, Olivia (age 4) and I were having a blast baking a cake in the kitchen for a neighbor's birthday. I read aloud the recipe, and helped her measure all the ingredients. I gushed at her ability to count cups of flour and sugar. I marveled at how well she cracked the eggs. We were laughing and chatting away, having a grand ol' time, when... WHOOPS! ... CRASH! Olivia accidentally knocked the mixing bowl onto the floor. Batter everywhere.

Although my first reaction was to say a word I won't print here, my second was to hug a crying Olivia, and tell her, "It's okay, honey. Accidents happen. I still love you." I reminded her that I sometimes dropped things, too. We cleaned up, read a book together to help her calm down. Then we returned to the kitchen, started from scratch, and made a yummy cake for our friend.

expresses love.

[FIFTEEN SECONDS OF LOVE](#)

Grover and Rosita explain what "love" means.

[ACCIDENTS HAPPEN](#)

Telling the truth about breaking a window.

THE "I'D STILL LOVE YOU" GAME

While Olivia was upset by the accident in the kitchen, it didn't take long for her to get over it. Part of the reason might be a game we often play at bedtime. It's called the "I'd Still Love You" Game. The rules are simple: we take turns telling each other things we MIGHT accidentally do some day, and then reassure each other that we'd love each other even so.

"What if I accidentally drew on the walls?" Olivia might begin.

"I'd still love you," I say.

My turn: "What if I accidentally threw out your best drawing?"

"Don't worry, Daddy," Olivia replies. "I'd still love you."

"What if I drove a car on your computer?" Olivia says, giggling.

"Hey! You can't drive!" I say, smiling,

"Daddy!" she says, waiting for the answer.

"Yes, yes, even then, I'd love you." I give a bear hug.



[WHAT IS LOVE?](#)

Chelsea explains love to Grover.

[ELMO AND WHALE: LOVE](#)

A whale shows Elmo what love is.

BUT ACTIONS DO HAVE CONSEQUENCES

Unconditional parenting doesn't mean letting kids do whatever they want, and "la-la-la," we shouldn't care. Finian and Olivia understand that if they misbehave, there ARE consequences. If they throw a fit in the supermarket about wanting a particular snack food, they know they might lose TV-watching privileges that night. If they speak meanly to another family member, they might need to spend some time by themselves in their room. But we always make it clear that even when we don't like their actions, we still love them deeply... and always will.

Wishing you and your family an exciting new year filled with love and laughter.

Jordan D. Brown
Sesame Workshop



[LOVE HEART](#)

A song about love.

[DON'T BE A BULLY](#)

The monsters teach their friend to play fair.

WEEKLY TRIVIA

Which Sesame characters are named after the sounds they make?

- A. The Bleepers
- B. The Honkers
- C. The Snappers
- D. The Clappers

Honk! Honk! If you said 'B', you're right!

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.

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