



sesameworkshop.  
The nonprofit educational organization  
behind Sesame Street and so much more



## Sesame Family Newsletter

July 30, 2008

### Making Friends

by Jordan D. Brown

A dad helps his "social butterfly" take flight.

[Click to continue...](#)

#### Featuring:

"My Name's Olivia! What's Yours?"

The Power of Playdates

"Adam is NOT My Friend Anymore!"

Olivia's "Best-est" Friend



### Games and More

Celebrate Friendship Day!

- [Friendship E-Cards](#)  
Tell a friend how much you care.
- [Telly's Crayons](#)  
Help two good friends find their crayons.
- [Bert and Ernie Go Fishing](#)  
Color and print best buddies.
- [Elmo and Zoe Print-and-Color Page](#)  
Stay cool with your pals in this printable page.
- [Weekly Trivia](#)

#### Watch Video Trailers

Sneak a peek at the Street. Watch our video trailers to find the right DVD or video for your family.

[Watch Trailers](#)

#### Subscribe to Sesame Street DVD Newsletters

This monthly newsletter brings you all the latest news about the Sesame Street friends on DVD. Find out when new DVDs are released and catch up on some classic family favorites.

[View Sample Newsletter](#)

[Subscribe](#)

### Fire Up the Electric Company: AmEx Members Project



Hey you guyyyyys! We're relaunching The Electric Company to address the national reading crisis, and YOU could help us secure \$1.5 million in funding from American Express.

Here's how you can tell American Express that you support our work

and think it deserves additional funding:

- [Nominate our project](#), titled "Bridging the Literacy Gap for Millions of Kids"
- Encourage your friends and family to nominate us too!

Your nomination could help us bring the power of learning to the children who need it most.



#### [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.

## "MY NAME'S OLIVIA, WHAT'S YOURS?"

"Guess what, Daddy?" asked my 3-year-old daughter Olivia when I picked her up at nursery school. Before I could respond, she gushed, "I made TWO best friends today!" and then promptly introduced me to Madison and Dominique. (Whenever I hear my children boasting about their multiple "best friends," I think of Jerry Seinfeld's old joke about the bizarre wedding term "best man" Seinfeld quipped: "I was the best man at the wedding ... I thought, BEST man? ... If I'm the BEST man, why is she marrying him?")

Happy as I was about Olivia's news, I wasn't surprised. Ever since Olivia could speak, she's been wildly social. My wife Ellen and I frequently marvel at Olivia's gregarious personality. While Ellen and I tend to approach social situations in a more introverted way, Olivia "works a room" with the finesse of a skilled politician or Vegas comedian. ("Hi, I'm Olivia. Where're ya from?")

At the supermarket, my daughter makes a point of introducing herself to everyone she meets, regardless of their age. And she REMEMBERS the names of all her new friends! The other day, as we were about to check out, she spotted "one of her people" in the produce aisle and shouted, "Shane! I'll miss you!" and blew him a kiss. Shane, the produce manager, smiled and waved back as the other customers chuckled at her bold friendliness.

Unless you've been spending lots of time in the local card shop, you may not be aware that Friendship Day is next week, on August 3. I admit I find these "D-list" holidays annoying (I have enough trouble keeping up with birthdays and all the regular holidays), but there is nothing annoying about the importance of good friends. Helping our children make and nurture friendships is one of the greatest gifts we can give them.



### [FIRST FRIENDS](#)

Discover the true value of friendship.

### [DO KIDS NEED BEST FRIENDS?](#)

Helping your child develop close friendships.

### [WHAT IS A FRIEND?](#)

Search the word "friendship" in Sesame Workshop's new online video player to see Cookie Monster sing a song about friends.

### [FRIENDSHIP: BIRTH TO AGE 2](#)

At around 6 months, babies become capable of recognizing age-mates.

### [FRIENDSHIP: AGES 2 TO 5](#)

Two-year-olds engage in parallel play.

## THE POWER OF PLAYDATES

When Olivia's older brother Finn was a preschooler, he didn't have as easy a time making friends. In contrast to Olivia, who was remarkably verbal by age 2, Finn didn't really talk in full sentences until he was about 3 (unless you count "No, Daddy!" as a sentence). Much more reserved, Finn took his time sizing up social situations before diving in. Eager to help him come out of his shell, Ellen and I gently encouraged him to make friends with other children in our neighborhood.

Regular playdates were a great way to foster Finn's early friendships. In fact, one of my earliest Sesame Family Newsletters was about Finn's very first playdate (see link). Here are some playdate tricks that I've learned through trial and error. Hope you find them helpful, as well.

**KEEP IT SIMPLE** — Nothing fancy needed. An informal visit to a local playground or fast-food "play area" are easy and inexpensive ways to burn off the kids' energy while keeping your home intact. If you don't mind cleaning up the remains of "Hurricane Toddler" then visiting each other's homes can also be fun. Kids love seeing each



### [FIRST PLAYDATES](#)

A father helps his son enjoy his first playdate.

### [RECIPE FOR A GREAT PLAYDATE](#)

An ages and stages guide to creating a perfect playdate for your little ones.

### [KIDS TALK ABOUT MAKING FRIENDS](#)

other's beds, toys, pets, and so on. I've also found that in hot weather, any outside activity with water is hugely popular.

**KEEP IT SHORT** -- We sometimes forget that less is more. Better to have a 45-minute playdate that ends with everyone eager for more than a 90-minute fiasco that ends in tantrums and time-outs. At some point early in the playdate, settle on an end-time and stick to it. I've had too many playdates go awry because I said, "Why don't we let them play for another 15 minutes?"

**C IS FOR COOKING** -- I always have good luck cooking during playdates. As long as adults are carefully supervising, my kids and their friends have a blast making smoothies. They love to add fruit, juice, and other ingredients to the blender, then press the buttons to make it all whirl together. Another hit, not surprisingly, is making cookies or muffins. As long as you anticipate that your kitchen will be coated in flour, you'll probably find the fun worth the mess. To keep everyone involved, it is often helpful to break up tasks into small chunks. For example, you might have the kids use a tablespoon to add a cup of sugar gradually.

**THE VALUE OF COUNTING** -- Counting is a great way to help children learn to take turns. You might say, "Becky, why don't you play with the toy while we count to ten. Then, it will be Oscar's turn...and we'll count to ten again, and it will be your turn again."

Search the word "friends" in Sesame Workshop's new online video player to see children talk with Big Bird about making friends.

---

## "ADAM IS NOT MY FRIEND ANYMORE !"

As much as Olivia loves to boast about her multiple "best friends," she often needs help working through the conflicts that inevitably arise. Every few weeks, Olivia announces that one of her best pals is no longer her friend. I'll ask what happened, and find out that the friend in question didn't share a toy, didn't play with her during "free time," or "said a bad word at me." At such times, Ellen and I remind Olivia that even great friends don't always get along. It sometimes helps to point out examples from movies or books that she loves. "You know how Shrek and Donkey sometimes argue?" we might say. "But they really love each other, right?"

More often than not, the problem with the friend quickly dissipates, and we find it better to focus on the future. Other times, when conflicts between friends continue, it is necessary to intercede and help them get along. Preschoolers are incredibly resilient. Sometimes the two friends just need to do something fun together for a short while to heal the wounds.



### [FIRST FRIENDSHIPS](#)

Your child's early alliances are precious. Do you know how to help make them happen?

---

## OLIVIA'S "BEST-EST" FRIEND

Although Olivia is four years younger than Finn, she will always choose to play with her big brother rather than anyone else in the world (and vice versa). They especially love being silly together--playing hide-and-seek, making funny faces, playing "school," doing somersaults, and, of course, making fun of their father. Even though Olivia prefers playing with "girly" things (dolls, princess games, ballet), if Finn wants to hang out with his sister, Olivia will usually drop whatever she's doing and join him. Though she has little interest in Star Wars, if Finn asks her to put on his Darth Vader costume or hold one of his toy light sabers, she's delighted to participate.

May the Force be with you as you help your young ones develop their first friendships!

Jordan D. Brown  
Sesame Workshop



---

## WEEKLY TRIVIA

Sesame Street uses approximately \_\_\_\_ pairs of eyes and \_\_\_\_ noses per season.

- A. 100/50
- B. 1,000/5,000

C. 219/180  
D. 2,190/1,800

The answer is C: 219 pairs of eyes and 180 noses. That's a lot of plastic surgery!

---

## 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).

[Support Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)



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

To prevent mailbox filters from deleting mailings from Sesame Family Newsletter, add [sesamefamily@sesameonline.org](mailto:sesamefamily@sesameonline.org) to your address book.

[Unsubscribe from this mailing.](#)