

## Social and Emotional Well-being with Sesame Workshop

Melissa Lin: On today's webinar, we have Antonio Freitas and Kelli McDermott, who will officially introduce themselves. Next slide.

Antonio Freitas: Awesome. Thanks so much, Melissa. Welcome, friends, to today's conversation with your friends at Sesame Street and EDC with social and emotional well-being supports and strategies. We got a lot of fun things to get through today, but before we get the chance to learn and connect with the more than 400 different people on today's live conversation, let's take a minute to introduce ourselves.

As Melissa said, my name is Antonio Freitas. I work as the Senior Director of Educational Experiences here at the Sesame Workshop in New York City, working to build out not only the concepts that we'll be exploring today but then some of the different ways we share them with the grown-ups in the lives of children, specifically caregivers and providers.

During the day, I get to live my best life playing with Muppets and children. Then at night, I'm an adjunct professor working with early childhood providers, getting ready to go into Head Start classrooms across New York. I come to this place as a lover of Sesame Street and as a fan favorite of Bert from Bert and Ernie. I am a twin. Growing up, my family used to refer to us affectionately as Bert and Ernie. He's close to my heart and someone that I love to thread into all of the work we do. With that, I'll pass the microphone over to Kelli to tell us a little bit more about herself and her favorite Muppet. Kelli.

Kelli McDermott: Hi, everybody. I'm happy to see all of you here. My name is Kelli McDermott, and I am part of the internal team at the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety. I am a clinical social worker by training, so I lovingly refer to myself as being part of the behavioral health side of the house at our center. But as we move forward, we'll talk about dispelling that a little bit. I will share that my favorite Muppet is Elmo. I have a 2- and a 4-year-old, and as much as I tried to push Cookie Monster, we are just an Elmo family.

Antonio: That feels like a safe bet, right? Elmo's a fan favorite for everyone. [Laughter]

Kelli: Like I said, we are going to start with thinking a little bit about our center in the broader sense. We have some foundational principles that you can read on this slide. I know that I just mentioned that I am on the behavioral health side of the house, but what we really are working hard to do at our center right now is to fully integrate health and behavioral health and safety topics into one cohesive message to honor the fact that we are all connected through all of these things.

We think about our work through a developmental perspective. We use trauma informed care as a cornerstone to all of our work. You are going to hear from Sesame today. We engage with lots of national partners and experts in all areas of social and emotional well-being, in addition to other priorities of the center. We have – on the social emotional well-being front – leaders in

mental health consultation and substance use response and trauma work, and like I said, Sesame as well.

We're definitely showcasing their resources today but want to hold in mind that they're a wonderful partner and just part of the work that we do at the center. We are highlighting a few priorities here too: emergency preparedness, response and recovery, child incidents, the response to the pandemic, and of course the things that I've already mentioned.

I also want to highlight that we are offering many, many up-to-date resources and are often posting them on the ECLKC. We will do a little bit of a review of some of those resources at the end of our time today. But without any more ado, I want to pass the mic over to Antonio so that he can showcase what Sesame has to offer.

Antonio: Awesome. Thanks much, Kelli. For context, I come to this place as both an educator, but an educator, specifically, with Head Start programs in and around New York City. This is tribe. This feels like a family reunion to get everybody back in the same room together.

We all collectively know that Head Start staff and families play a critical role in supporting children in learning about their growing bodies and minds. Today, Kelli and I are going to walk through some of the resources to help you support Head Start children and families, as well as staff, in improving social and emotional well-being. Over the course of these next 60 minutes, we're going to be exploring an overview of what Sesame Street in Communities is and our new all in one website called [sesameworkshop.org](https://sesameworkshop.org).

Some of the newest resources there that are created to promote healthy bodies, minds, and hearts in young children to celebrate the power of caring relationships in building children's emotional well-being, and most importantly, thinking about ways to engage children, families, and staff in being healthy and happy together. With Kelli giving us that great backstory about all of the ways that this work underpins the magic that is Head Start, let's take a look at the history of Sesame and see how it is also moving in that same direction.

Back in 1969, not unlike today, the United States was on the verge of a change. With limited resources available in communities across America, Sesame Street was the first show of its kind to not only entertain but educate. Creators Joan Ganz Cooney and Lloyd Morrisett saw an opportunity to prepare every child, no matter the zip code, with the information they all needed to start school with that same level of readiness. Now, more than 50 years later, Sesame Workshop continues to prepare children for school and the world with engaging and fun ways to explore it with some of their furry friends.

We know in all that we've done together with Sesame Workshop in the broader community – not only in the United States but around the world – has been able to affirm our commitment to serve and learn from families and the caregivers and providers in their worlds, working to build smarter, stronger, kinder kids, one relationship at a time. Our workshop has resources and tools for a variety of topics. Today, we're going to share some of those with you.

Through our work, we've learned that we can help families, both children and the grownups in them, take small steps. When we do those things, we increase everyone's chances of successful outcomes in school and in life. At the end of the day, it is about our collective ability to help grownups and the children in their lives build up our resilience and healthy habits that support everyone in the neighborhood. Sesame Street in Communities, this broad range of resources that we have on Sesame Workshop, is our program to support community providers like you who serve families and help children face challenges big and small.

Whether you're a teacher, a provider, a health care manager, a program director or any type of ECE provider, you are a crucial member of that circle of care that promotes children's physical and emotional health. With our free research-based resources and professional development in English and in Spanish, we are here to help lay the foundation for children's well-being, both today and into the future.

Through our Sesame Street in Communities program, we offer a wide variety of professional development opportunities aimed at staff and providers working directly with children and their families. These sort of generally get broken down into four different pathways.

Training videos are those assets that can help you instantly level up your knowledge about a specific tool with tips for talking with families from subject matter experts from a wide variety of fields, settings, and specialties, like provider portraits on parental addiction from people within the Betty Ford Center or even conversations on ways to support homeless children and families from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

All of these resources can be found on our topic page connected to professional development. You might also put in some professional development hours of your own by taking an online course. Each of these are self-paced, interactive, asynchronous, and include a variety of resources that are curated just for you and that you can use in conversations with everyone in the neighborhood. For instance, the course Growing Together – we've just recently released – outlines the way that child care providers can strengthen bonds with a child's family by exploring in fun detail ways to help every developmental domain be accessed through strategies to make everyone school ready.

As we continue down those lines of different professional development resources, we have webinars. These are pre-recorded conversations and sort of group walkthroughs of the ways that you can use these Sesame assets to meet the needs of those in your care with guidance from others. Think a little bit about how each of these webinars comes with a resource guide and a certificate so that you have some gentle guidance on how to move forward with a best practice recommendation.

Finally, workshops, whether in person or virtually like here today, help us keep the learning alive by exploring what these resources look like in real time with subject matter experts like you. While Kelli and I are on this screen and sharing all these resources, we are really excited about learning from everyone that is on today's call to share with us in the chat window how you might consider using the resources. If you're not sure, thinking about the questions you can

ask us so we can refine those different ways we can implement and distribute these so that they're accessible to all.

You might be asking yourself, where do these live and how do I get down with them? In order to expand the reach and the impact of our resources and to make this content more discoverable and shareable, we took all the different places that we have Sesame resources and we put them in one single digital platform. This new single stop, called [sesame.org](https://www.sesame.org) or [sesameworkshop.org](https://www.sesameworkshop.org), combines a wide variety of all of our various adult-facing sites into one. We're simplifying pathways to find our content, particularly through organic search. We've got this new fun tagging system applied to almost 2000 different pieces of content and new tools that help you look and explore with the Sesame Workshop things that you can find in easy, quick, and accessible ways.

If you've used our resources in the past, don't worry. All of those same links work. All of those same pathways to get to our resources are equally accessible. We just made a one space where they will always be, no matter where you get to them. We know that this place that we're calling [sesameworkshop.org](https://www.sesameworkshop.org) or [sesame.org](https://www.sesame.org) is that home to thousands of free bilingual multimedia tools to help kids and families enrich and expand their knowledge during our children's earliest years. Our robust site is designed to enhance the amazing work you're already doing with kids and families in your community but to help you think a little bit more about how to leverage the power of the Muppet to have hard conversations with some furry friends.

There's a couple of different ways that we've been able to find best practices with providers using these resources. The first is to consider quickly creating an account. You might be able to log in and save favorites on your own virtual locker, register for webinars, and receive monthly email updates about all the new resources that come out each and every week. You might also consider exploring topics. Resources helps everyone, both children and their grownups, think about what matters in the lives of young children: health and wellness, social-emotional skills, and school readiness.

You might also consider the professional development that I just talked about and think about how you could level up your skills by viewing a webinar, a training video or even completing a course at your own speed. Also think about viewing in Spanish because – with just a click of a button – you'll be able to explore and convert every asset here in English into Spanish. Finally, think about the ways that you like to learn, and even more, the ways you like to search.

You can find tools when you need them and think about things like using the search bar or using things like filtering by age, time, or type of activity to find the resource that is most helpful for you. When we think about all of the different topics that we have on that single website, we've sort of, behind the curtain, been able to codify them into three key buckets. The first is ABCs and 1, 2, 3's. Those are more of our academically school-readiness-related topics – things like language, literacy, math, science, STEAM, language, and listening. We also have the second topic that we're calling Healthy Minds and Bodies – those things that can help children

think about the ways that they can be their best selves and most healthiest identities as they move through the world.

It involves things like thinking about how we exercise and what we eat so that we can be mindful of the ways that we engage in healthy ways to the world around us. Finally, our third and most accessible topic is that which we consider Tough Topics. These are really sort of things like parental addiction, community violence, and even grief that sometimes children have, through no reaction or experience of their own, but they're often forced to deal with because of the hardness of the world around them. We know that within each bucket, there's even a larger list of more specific topics and further breakdowns.

We recognize that in all of these different conversations, people are excited but truthfully, sometimes a little overwhelmed and not quite sure about the best place to start. We always invite the grownups working with children to think about that single child, that individual family or that group of friends you might be sharing these resources with. Maybe you write their name on the top of the notes you're taking for today's conversation or just keep them front of mind in today's talk.

Think about the ways that they like to learn, right? One child might be excited about learning how to brush their teeth by watching a video of Elmo brushing his own, while a second child might be more interested in listening to a song about brushing one's teeth. Either way, if you know the person you're working with and the ways that they like to learn curiously, then you've already won half of the battle. Thinking about the ways that you engage with children, the adults in their lives, and these topics can begin to help us. That is a very quick overview of all of the great magic that's on [sesameworkshop.org](http://sesameworkshop.org).

I want to take you very quickly on it so that you can see how to access them on your own. When you click into [sesameworkshop.org](http://sesameworkshop.org), you're welcomed with a page that has Abby, Kelli's good friend Elmo, and a whole host of other children that let you know what this page is all about. On the top, as you go across, you'll see a couple different words that you can click into: Family Resources, Our Work, About Us, Support Us, a magnifying glass to find and to search for your own things, signing in where you can create your own virtual profile, and then donating if you have some extra dollars that you want to pass to our nonprofit.

As we think about the family resources, this is the big place and the library where all of our topics live. They're, again, bucketed under those three categories: ABCs and 1, 2, 3's, Healthy Minds and Bodies, and Tough Topics. In today's conversation, we're centering all of our work and conversation under emotional well-being, which we've listed under Healthy Minds and Bodies. Once I get into [sesameworkshop.org](http://sesameworkshop.org) and go under Family Resources to Healthy Minds and Bodies, I'll scroll down to Emotional Well-being.

When I click onto the page and it opens up, all of the different topic pages across our different themes. You'll be able to scroll, have a one-sentence summary on what the page is all about, a quick welcome video that gives you a sense of what we'll be learning about, and as you

continue to scroll down, you'll see even more resources with a variety of different ways that you can learn and access them in English and in Spanish.

I'm moving through these quickly because I'm both excited about them and we're going to be spending the rest of today's conversation digging with them as a team. I'll show you where these live and also how you can find and filter by the age group you're working with, the language that people are learning in, the type of resources people want to learn in, and how much time that you have to talk with them.

Lots of different things to have today. Don't worry. We'll walk through all of them together in slow motion, but we like to start this conversation, like we always do, centered on the special people in this virtual setting. With that, I'd love for you to use the chat window and share with us what you believe are the key parts of nurturing relationships, especially when it comes to the work that we have and that we do with the children. Take a quick moment, and after you reflect, use the chat window to share with us your answers.

Danielle, props to you for kicking the conversation off with listening. We have Shayna talking about feeling safe, Chrissy talking about trust.

As these are coming in, Kelli, I want to ask you that same question online. This will be a little bit like a talk show, right? In your mind, what are the key relationships to nurturing relationships.

Kelli: I have to say, Antonio, that my early childhood mental health heart is just going pitter patter with all of these responses in the chat. My key is, in addition to some of the things that I'm seeing: consistency, safety, connection, understanding, and empathy. Some of these are duplicates. I'm seeing them come into the chat, and honestly, it's so refreshing to see our community really embracing what a nurturing relationship needs to be.

Antonio: Yeah. Also, hat tip to Judy and so many other people that have talked about not only the ideas of safety and trust and communication, but also really being able to bridge build between home and early childhood center. Think about how we engage with parents in those conversations. It's not transactional. It is gifted. It is building. Children see themselves a part of many different conversations that they're both listening in and being a part of. Lots of great things. It sounds like people have already done some cheat codes and know the answers to the questions before we built up the resources to talk about.

Friends, for context, in October of 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Children's Hospital Association declared a national emergency in children's mental health due to the toll of the COVID pandemic exacerbating existing challenges. For context, prior to the pandemic, one in every five children were diagnosed with a mental health disorder. But only 20% received follow-up care.

We know that mental health-related emergency room visits for children in 2020 increased by 24%. But even though all of these things were pushed to the forefront a little bit more aggressively, there was still a lack of focus specifically on the youngest of children. In response

to that growing mental health crisis, the team at the Sesame Workshop is supporting the emotional well-being of young children and their families through research-based resources and engaging content designed for the whole family.

Our approach offers strategies to support all families. From celebrating joyful everyday moments, to teaching children the essential skills they need, to understand and manage their own feelings, to helping grownups and community providers recognize the signs of more serious mental health challenges. As our teams collectively work together to build smarter, stronger, kinder communities, our goals for this initiative are really to think about how we elevate and destigmatize the conversation around emotional well-being in young children as we think about the different systems that they interact with.

To think about the ways that we increase the understanding and the sharing of resources for well-being with early childhood providers and programs like schools and early child care facilities that support families, to increase the ability of parents and caregivers to support the emotional well-being of their children and to teach children at the end of the day to understand, to recognize, and to apply single strategies to address and maintain emotional well-being.

These are all giant concepts that we were able to gather from both research and subject matter experts from around the United States that really helped us to guide and to shape the ways that we've created assets and the goals behind them.

We have a couple different waves of this emotional well-being work. In our first wave, the resources that we're sharing today are really centered around three big anchoring concepts: the idea of co-regulation with caregivers and the nurturing relationships between caregivers and their children, helping our youngest explore, name, and learn to take care of their big feelings, and finally, strategies that adults in a child's circle of care can take to professionally and personally grow in our own response to the need of children and their families.

With that as a very large framing text, we're going to walk in slow motion through each of these three guiding principles and the assets we've aligned to each so that all the members of today's conversation can think about how you might use this for that child whose note you have on the top of your paper or in the front of your mind.

The first idea is attunement. With clarity now on what we're doing, we want to get started with the introductory video on what attunement is all about. I'm warning you right now, Kelli and friends, this is an earworm. It's going to get stuck. If you find yourself brushing your teeth to it, walking the dog to it, it's just part of it. It will become more rote with time. Let's take a listen to My Grown-Up and Me.

[Video begins]

Elmo's daddy Oh, knee scrapes are the worst, right? There you go, son. Your booboos are all better.

Elmo: Thank you, Daddy. Elmo feels a lot better now.

Elmo's daddy: Oh, good, son. I'm glad you feel better. And, you know, how you feel on the inside is just as important to me as how you feel on the outside.

Elmo: Oh, Daddy. [Giggles]

[Music]

Elmo: [Singing] Elmo's daddy listens. Elmo's daddy cares.

Elmo's daddy: I do.

Elmo and Daddy: About Elmo's thoughts and feelings, when Elmo's happy or scared.

Abbey: I know my mom's listening.

Abbey's Mommy: I always will.

Abbey and Mommy: Because we're holding hands.

Abbey: Then she nods her head.

Abbey's Mommy: And I understand that ...

Elmo and Abbey: ... when Elmo feels OK, and when I'm not OK, you take care of me, and that's what you do.

Parents: We do.

Elmo and Abbey: [Cross-singing] grown-up ...

Parents: ... is there in every way.

Elmo and Abbey: You take care of [cross-singing], and I'll share my thought and feelings too.

Elmo's daddy: And I sure love to listen to you.

Abbey and Mommy: It's you and me, it's me and you.

Boy: My dad listens and cares for me.

Dad: I always will.

Boy: When I'm happy, you're excited.

Dad: Or when you're sad, I'll worry.



Big Bird: I know she's listening.

Big Birds Grandma: Closely when you talk.

Together: I'll give you a great big hug.

Big Bird: And It helps me feel strong.

Children: We say when I don't feel OK or when I'm not OK, you take care of me. That's what you ...

Parents: That's what we do.

Children: My grown-up.

Parents: Your grown-up.

Children: Is there in every way.

Parents: Is there in every way.

Children: To take care of me. Take care of me. You're my grown-up, and I know you're there.

Parents: I'm your grown-up, and you know I care. Because it's you and me, and me and you. So when you are OK, or not OK, I'll take care of you.

[Music]

[Video ends]

Antonio: Friends, as many of you reflect in the chat, it's a bop, right? It's a cute song. It's got a very adorable concept behind it. This idea of not only talking and reminding children that the grown-ups in their lives are there, are present, and will care. There's a back and forth of the song, where the grown-ups can sing to the child and the child can sing to the grown-up.

We did that deliberately. We wanted to foster communication and self-regulation skills. That children can learn and can articulate how they feel. But it's equally important for adults to be there to receive that information and to engage about how to work through stormy, sunny, and cloudy days about that.

We know that like our radio station, we all need to tune in to the frequency of children to understand them better. As their first teachers, parents and other caregivers have the ability to nurture connections with their youngest children through shared time, words of love, and behaviors that remind kids of the protective and ever-present role that this caring adult plays in their lives through all the different challenging, fun, and sometimes crazy parts of it.

Connected to our first concept of attunement and relationship building, you can also find the article, Tuning In. This explores ways to notice, to recognize, and to respond to children's needs, as well as the My Grown-Up Cares storybook. The Emotional Well-Being topic page also includes articles and other different things that you can use. Then, we know that when we listen to the child and we share joyful moments and even offer comfort, support, and love, we're helping them build that foundation of emotional well-being.

We know that the most important thing that we can do is really be present. That idea of protective factors and presence are key ways we can just begin showing children how important they are to the world, to each other, and to us. We show that in not only the video that you just sang, but also the storybook, My Grown-Up Cares. I want to take a moment to share it with you. As we do, I'm going to invite friends in the chat window to share how you might use the book, My Grown-Up Cares, with children in your lives or children in your care.

[Video begins]

Narrator: My Grown-Up Cares. I have a great grown-up who's loving and kind and helps me grow stronger in body and mind.

Elmo's daddy: Elmo's mom and I sure do love being Elmo's most important people.

Narrator: I have thoughts in my mind I can't wait to share. My grown-up will listen. I know that they care.

Big Bird's Grandma: I love listening to Big Bird tell me the best part of his day. Tell your grown-up one good thing about your day. Grown-ups?

Narrator: Whenever I learn a new drumbeat or song, my grown-up really listens and then grooves along.

Daddy: Sing a song you both know. Or kids, teach your grown-up a song that you learned.

Narrator: I'm so very curious. I want to explore. We use our five senses to help us learn more.

Big Bird's Grandma: My Big Bird is so curious. We love to look at leaves together and talk about how they are the same and how they're different.

Narrator: Reading's good for our brains. It's lots of fun too. Read some stories to me, and I'll tell some to you.

Daddy: Sharing stories is so important. When you finish this book, choose another, and enjoy it together.

Narrator: Sometimes I feel sad, and I can't say why. But my grown-up just holds me and they let me cry.

Big Bird's Grandma: There are all kinds of feelings. Take turns making faces that show different feelings and guess what each is.

Narrator: When I am proud, excited, and free, my grown-up is right there to celebrate me.

Big Bird's Grandma: Grown-ups, tell your little one about why you are proud of them. Kids, when do you feel proud of yourself?

Narrator: I have fun outdoors. It helps me grow strong. My grown-up says, "Hey there, can I play along?"

Elmo's daddy: Time outside can help our minds and bodies feel good and healthy. What's your favorite thing to do outside?

Narrator: We need healthy food, and we make it together. I help choose and prepare it, and it tastes even better.

Elmo's daddy: Healthy food isn't just good for your body. It's good for your mind too. Name a healthy fruit or vegetable in each color of the rainbow. I'll start. Red apple.

[Video ends]

Antonio: Friends, in the interest of time, I'm going to stop playing the story there. I did want to go through a couple of the different pages because of all the points that you all have begun to put into the chat window. This is a really key conversational starter topic and resource that you can use to not only build classroom connections for the children in those spaces, but also conversations between home and early childhood centers so that you can think a little bit more about the grown-ups in children's lives and how they can take turns talking to each other.

There's an overwhelming amount of prompts in this book which both makes it a little long, but also gives a lot of opportunities to dialogue about not only what is seen on the pages, but also what can be shared between the children and the grown-ups reading it together. In addition to those great prompts, you might consider sharing one thing that a child does that you might love. Slowing down and saving those enjoyable moments that grown-ups have with children together or even having fun by playing games or acting out stories. But overwhelmingly, just following children's natural curiosities and continuing loving bedtime routines as well as communicating that to grown-ups that can use this with children at homes.

Kelli, anything else to add or thoughts that this is making you think through?

Kelli: Yeah, this is so lovely. I know that you summarized the chat so nicely. I want to highlight the notes that people are making about how it's a nice coaching resource for adults who might not necessarily have a lot of experience talking in this way to children.

Antonio: Great. Great. friends, this wraps up Concept Number One, Attunement, and the ways that we've gently bucketed some of the different assets that you might use as you think about

them. I know from someone who's both developing these content and who has been in head start spaces and helping to work in and engage and lead those that I often like to think about: All of these concepts are important.

Sometimes, children might need them in different ways or in different orders than others. Really thinking a little bit about as we walk in slow motion through these three different key concepts, which ones to you stand out as the most important one to start with? Because that's going to engage with curiosity the children and the families in your care. You can begin to address all of them in slow motion after that.

Attunement as the first one. Let's move on to concept two, which is Tending to Feelings. We love a good feelings conversation here at Sesame Street, and we love even more to put that in the context of furry friends talking about feelings in things like a garden. Let's take one more minute to take a video called Elmo and Abby Learning Emotion in the Feelings Garden.

[Video begins]

Abby's mommy: Come on, my little blossom. Oh, I can't wait to plant all these flowers.

Abby: Oh, Mommy, these flowers are going to look so pretty in the garden. [Crosstalk] You made it.

Elmo's daddy: Hi, Abby. Hi, Maggie.

Maggie's mommy: Elmo, Louie. Oh, welcome to the Community Garden Day.

Elmo's daddy: We are so happy to volunteer.

Maggie's mommy: Well, I'm so happy that you're here.

Elmo: Yeah, Elmo's really excited to help in the garden. But, you know, Elmo feel something else too.

Abby: Oh, what's that, Elmo?

Elmo: Well, Elmo's going to a new friend's birthday party later, and Elmo's tummy feels like it has butterflies inside.

Elmo's daddy: Oh, butterflies in the tummy. We all know that feeling.

Abby's mommy: Are you feeling nervous, Elmo? Because when we're nervous, we feel unsure about something.

Elmo: Oh yeah. Elmo feels nervous. Oh, and Elmo feels excited to help out at the garden too.

Abby: Oh, you're feeling two different feelings at the same time.

Elmo: Yeah, Elmo is.

Abbey's mommy: Yes, that happens a lot to kids and grown-ups.

Elmo: It does?

Elmo's daddy: Sure. Like right now, I feel happy that I get to spend time with you, Maggie, and Abby and the garden. I'm also feeling disappointed because I know that we can't stay here very long. It's important that we talk about this because there are so many different kinds of feelings.

Abbey's mommy: That's right. Just like there are so many different kinds of flowers in the garden.

Elmo's daddy: Just like we take care of flowers, we can take care of our feelings.

Elmo: Well, Elmo still feels nervous.

Abbey's mommy: Oh, Elmo. Would you like to take some big deep belly breaths?

Abbey: Yeah. When I feel nervous, that's what I do.

Elmo: Oh, OK. Yeah, let's do some belly breathing.

Abbey: OK.

Elmo: OK.

[Deep breathing]

Elmo: You know, Elmo's feeling better. Yeah, Elmo's not as nervous about his new friend's birthday party.

Abbey's mommy: Yeah, the garden is such a calming place.

Abbey: Yeah. I feel good just being surrounded by all these flowers.

Elmo: Hey, Elmo knows. Elmo could draw some flowers on Elmo's friend's birthday card.

Abbey: Oh, boy. Flowers, friends, and feelings. What a day.

Elmo's daddy: All right, let's get to volunteer.

Elmo: Elmo want to see some flowers.

[Chatter]

[Video ends]

Antonio: Friends, as many of you saw and reflected in the chat window, this is a great opportunity to both think about and talk through the ways that we keep our bodies calm and how there can be moments and things that we can do together to create community in times that are stressful where we can name our emotions. We know that feelings are like those flowers in the garden. There are many different kinds that all need to be cared for.

This emotional awareness is that ability to notice, to label, to regulate a range of emotions, and to bring awareness to one's emotional world. A child's emotional awareness includes recognizing the physical cues of different emotions, being able to label them with feeling words, to identify and to practice regulation strategies, and to feel comfortable expressing their emotions – good, bad, and all around.

With greater emotional awareness, children will better understand their emotions and build their skills in recognizing the emotions of others. That's really what we aim to show and reflect in that video – that like a wide variety of flowers in a garden, children can have a wide variety of emotions. All are OK when we share them together.

As we continue on to this second concepts of tending to feelings, we know that for both children and grown-ups, being overwhelmed with big feelings, even pleasant ones like excitement, are opportunities to learn and even practice handling them. In this one additional video that we're calling I Notice, I Feel, I Can, you see we've been gently able to bring in a three-step action plan for children and adults to use together. You might be able to use them in the associated printable next to the screen. But I want to give you a second to see the ways that Elmo and his dad Louie notice, feel, and work to express themselves in healthy ways.

[Video begins]

Elmo's daddy: I'm putting together our new bookshelf. It's been a lot harder than I thought, son. Now, we are almost finished. Just need the last screw.

Elmo: Yep, we're almost done, Daddy. We're here if you need anything.

Elmo's daddy: Where is it? We spent all this time building the bookshelf, and we are still not finished. Oh. I just need a quiet moment.

Elmo: Oh. OK.

Elmo's daddy: What's the matter, son?

Elmo: Is Daddy upset with Elmo?

Elmo's daddy: Oh. Oh, Elmo. No, I'm not upset with you. I'm sorry. It's not your fault.

Elmo: OK.

Elmo's daddy: Oh, you know, I need to do the three steps. Do you remember them? I notice. I feel. I can.

Elmo: Yeah, Elmo does remember.

Elmo's daddy: Well, good memory. First, we say, I notice. What do I notice in my body? Well, I notice I'm breathing a little harder. My body is a little shaky.

Elmo: Oh, and also, Daddy's fur is a little sweaty.

Elmo's daddy: Ha. You're right, son.

Elmo: Just a little.

Elmo's daddy: Now it's time for step two. I feel.

Elmo: Right.

Elmo's daddy: I feel frustrated. I've been trying and trying to do something, and it's taking so long.

Elmo: You know, Daddy, Elmo used to get frustrated too. When Elmo tried and tried to put on his pajamas. But Elmo finally figured it out.

Elmo's daddy: You sure did, son.

Elmo: Yeah.

Elmo's daddy: Oh, okay, now it's time for step three. I can. What can I do to help myself? I could go for a walk to calm myself down.

Elmo: Yeah.

Elmo's daddy: How about you and I tango out around the neighborhood, Elmo?

Elmo: That's a great idea, Daddy. Oh, and then when we get back, maybe we can fix the bookshelf with some tape or glue or whatever this thing is here on the floor.

Elmo's daddy: Elmo! That's it. You found the missing screw, son.

Elmo: Elmo did? Yay!

Elmo's daddy: Yay indeed. OK, well, here, let's finish the bookshelf. You ready?

Elmo: Ready.

Elmo's daddy: You ready?

Elmo: Ready.

Elmo's daddy: All right, let's do this. And ... Ta-da!

Elmo: Yay! Elmo loves our new bookshelf. You did it!

Elmo's daddy: Yeah. We did it, son. Thanks for helping me with the three steps. Now, I notice that my whole body is relaxed. I feel happy and proud. And I can ... do a celebration dance with my little monster.

Elmo: Yeah! Let's do it, Daddy!

Elmo's daddy: Yeah!

Elmo's daddy: [Singing] We notice. We feel. We can. We can. We can.

Together: We notice. We feel. We can. We can. We can.

[Video ends]

Antonio: This is one of my favorite videos on the emotional well-being launch because of those things that, Tamika, you just flexed in the webinar chat. But this is a great introduction to self-regulation. This not only gives children the skills they need and the observations to see what it looks like. But being able to see that through the lens of an adult caring for them gives children something to both say yes to and to teach about.

It was important to demonstrate self-regulation and those three different steps. It was equally important to show a grown-up being able to react to them in healthy ways and model what I'm noticing, I'm feeling, and what I can do about that can look like. Being able to show this not through the lens of Elmo getting hot and bothered, but through his dad Louie getting it was really important to the video and how we were able to produce this piece. So grateful that you all were able to see that and clock that in real time.

Moving on, you all. It is 15 more minutes before we have to wrap up this conversation. Moving on to concept number three. We're talking about personal growth and development. Whether you identify as a caregiver, a provider, or both, adults like you in a child's life play crucial roles in supporting the emotional well-being of children.

We know that that meaningful work is hard and requires us all to be present enough to be our best selves for the communities in our care. We continue to be confronted with our own ever-changing professional and personal challenges. We know that we work hard every day to meet children's needs, but that we're also vulnerable too and in need of quiet time and our own self-regulation skills.

As members of a helping profession, we sometimes forget that we need help too. Connected to this third and final concept of personal growth and development, the articles displayed on this



screen really focus on self-care and are written from the perspectives of people in education and health care sectors to think about not only what we give, but what we need before we get to that place.

I know I might sound like a broken record, but I always love asking the question, especially to Head Start staff and to the Head Start broader community, because you all live this each and every day. In addition to the article of Caring for Yourself, I know I have people on this call that are subject matter experts in keeping themselves healthy.

I'd love for you all to take a moment and put into the webinar chat some specific skills or strategies that you have to keep yourself cared for in the best place. Maybe it's cooking. Maybe it's walking. Maybe it's playing with children or pets. But what do you do to make sure that you're taking care of yourself?

I'm going to pass the microphone over to you, Kelli. What do you do when you're with Elmo, with your own child, or in work to catch a breath with all of those different things?

Kelli: Yeah. Well, I try to mix it up a little to keep things fresh. I'll just say, today, my plans are to drink enough water, get outside even though it's cold in Boston, and to spend time with my dog.

Antonio: Nice. I see friends on the chat were talking about walks, massages, taking a bath, listening to music. Being able to connect with friends and just connecting in both ways internal and external that keep us all engaged. I love what you just said – that we've also tried to reflect in this article – to both have a plan ready, but to be flexible about that plan, remembering that there are different ways that we relax and different times that we have to do it. Having a couple different ways that you might be able to catch a moment for yourself each and every day is really what keeps this work engaging and what keeps us engaged in it.

We've talked about the self-care strategies. We've walked through those big different concepts. But we also know that even though I showed you all of the dearth of resources we have on our emotional well-being pages, many of the other resources on [sesame.org](https://www.sesame.org) promote emotional well-being and whole child health too. Some of the ones that are shown here are particularly helpful. We've shared the self-care resources available on the Emotional Well-Being topic page. But there are even more to be found on our Self-Care topic page, which you can find under the topic, Parenting.

There, we include tools, resources, and strategies just like the ones that we've shared today, including a webinar where you can earn a certificate for your time. These supplemental pages are under the Social Emotional Skills topic page. You can find other things related to calming strategies, children's feelings, making and maintaining friendships, building resilience in children, managing tantrums, and even engaging in community service.

There is, Kelli, one thing – and I'm going to tee you up for this because I'm super excited – that we've built especially for the Head Start community and ways that we can have mindful moments with children in our care.

Kelli: Yes, we are excited about these podcasts that you see labeled on this slide. Sesame built them in partnership with our center, the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety. They all live on the ECLKC. I had the extreme pleasure and honor of showcasing these at our Health and Mental Health Leaders Institute in May and have been using them regularly since. They're wonderful, and I encourage you all to go and take a look – or a listen, I should say.

Antonio: To kick that off, friends, we wanted to give you a chance to listen to it now. In a moment, our friend Kate is going to put up a poll that you can have to let us know what you would like to listen to as a team right now. As that goes, for context, Kelli; myself; Zoe, who's a member of our Sesame Street community; and our broader team, we're working to try to figure out what these things could sound like.

I was on a train in New York City going to the airport. It was a busy afternoon. Lots of people out, lots of sounds out. I was on a subway car with someone playing a bucket upside down with drums. I couldn't focus on anything. I couldn't hear the sounds. I couldn't pay attention to who I was speaking to on the call when we were having this conversation. All I needed was a quiet moment to breathe.

On that call I said, “What would it sound like if we made, for the Head Start community, some calming sounds with monsters that could be used in early childcare facilities?” That's really what prompted the building of these different concepts. We have a couple more seconds, friends, before these are out.

Let's take about 10 more seconds before we close up. We have 500, rather, 600 people on the call today, all giving us some great suggestions. All right, let's wrap it up and see.

It looks like overwhelmingly, we're going to be listening to Whole Body Listening with Elmo. This is something that we could use and that you could maybe use at home too with your special little one. Let's take a listen to Whole Body Listening with Elmo. As Kelli mentioned, this is on the ECLKC website. All of the different ones are reflected on the screen and with some information connected to them.

I'm going to select Whole Body Listening. You'll not only be able to download the audio but read the quick framing text that gives you a sense of why we created it and what we hope you'll use it for. Let's listen together.

[Audio begins]

[Bell dings]

Grover: Hello there. It is I, your furry and adorable friend Grover. Welcome to Mindful Monsters. I am glad you are here. Being a mindful monster means paying close attention to how you feel and what is going on around you. Let us start by taking a deep breath. Ready?

[Breathes deeply]

Now, let us listen in with my good friend Elmo to learn about listening with your whole body.

[Bell dings]

Elmo: Hi there. It's Elmo. One way Elmo likes to be mindful is by listening with Elmo's whole body. That means we use our whole bodies to show our friends that we are listening. Our ears listen to what our friend is saying. Our eyes are looking at our friend while they are talking. Our mouths are closed and quiet. And our bodies are calm.

Hey, Elmo knows a song that can help us remember to be whole body listeners. It goes like this.

[Singing] Here's our hearing what you have to say. Eyes are watching what you do today. Voices are quiet with our bodies too. That's why Elmo's whole body listens to you. Come on. Point to your ears. Ears are hearing what you have to say. Eyes are watching what you do today. Voices are quiet with our bodies too. That's how Elmo's whole body listens to you.

Let's do it one more time.

Ears are hearing what you have to say. Eyes are watching what you do today. Voices are quiet with our bodies too. That's why Elmo's whole body listens to you.

Elmo loves being a whole body listener. If you need help remembering, just sing this song.

[Bell dings]

Grover: Well, that was nice. Thank you for stopping by Mindful Monsters and taking a mindful moment with us today. Let us take one more deep breath together, OK?

[Breathes deeply]

Bye.

[Bell dings]

[Audio ends]

Antonio: Friends, we hope that you find that helpful as well as all the different moving pieces and different mindful meditations that you can use in early child care spaces or share with families at home. We are approaching the end of today's conversation. As we do, let's do a quick recap of all the things we've learned. You can find the resources talked about today on [sesameworkshop.org](https://sesameworkshop.org), or use the QR code that's reflected on your screen.

We've talked through all of the different assets connected to our first phase of emotional well-being resources. These include things that are from pages on ABCs and 1, 2, 3's, to tough topics, to traumatic experiences. All of our resources are available in English and in Spanish. You can also access those free professional development activities, like webinars, courses, and training and videos – all on [sesameworkshop.org](http://sesameworkshop.org).

Within the Emotional Well-Being topic page, you can access resources like videos, articles, and printable pages related to those three anchoring concepts we've talked through today – attunement, tending to feelings, and personal growth – for staff and providers. You can also find supplemental resources on those other topic pages on [sesame.org](http://sesame.org), like resources for self-care, building social-emotional skills, as well as that mindful podcast right here on ECLKC. Again, by creating a nurturing environment, building strong relationships, and supporting social and emotional development, you'll be able to help children develop the skills they need to thrive emotionally and socially one relationship at a time.

You know that you are all an essential part of the broader Sesame family. There's lots of different ways to stay engaged in our work. You can explore the resources we talked about today on [sesameworkshop.org](http://sesameworkshop.org). You might consider creating your own profile where you can have a virtual locker to access all of those resources and the more than 2,000 other ones from all of the different topics and resources we have available on our page.

We also encourage people to start small and to start individually. Think about that one child or that singular family you're working with and begin a conversation where you can share these resources with them – just a few minutes each and every day. Remember, it takes about 41 days for something to become a hobby. Be slow and give yourself grace and being able to allow these.

Then finally, follow us on social so that you can learn of all different resources. What they are, when they drop, and how you can access them. With that, I'm going to pass the microphone over to Kelli to talk through some of those great resources beyond Sesame Street.

Kelli: Great, yes. On the next slide, Antonio, we have an example of a video that is on the ECLKC about mindful breathing. This is a wonderful supplement to many of the things that we saw today that Sesame has created. It talks about what mindful breathing is, what the benefits are. It walks you through the exercise, all in under two minutes. Definitely a quick listen and something that can be hopefully utilized in your everyday practices.

On the next slide, we have a newer resource called Cultivating Wellness, and it discusses the eight domains of staff well-being. This is an opportunity to really expand our thinking about our go-to strategies for staff wellness and to make sure that we're paying attention to all of those areas that might be helpful in having a well-rounded and holistic approach to taking care of ourselves.

As a reminder, on the next slide, you can see that all of the resources that we create within the National Center are housed on the ECLKC. It's absolutely a wealth of information and a

wonderful supplement to the resources that were shown today by Sesame – so many different things to choose from.

Then we wanted to share with you something that's hot off the press. The next slide is advertising a new iPDU course called Cultivating Wellness. This is a step-by-step guide to creating your own personal wellness plan. We definitely encourage you to check it out. Our team worked really hard on it, and we're excited to be able to share it with you today.

With that, I will pass the mic over to Melissa. I don't see any questions in the Q&A now. But if you do want to add some, we will make sure that they get answered through our info line at some point in the future.

Melissa: Thank you, Kelli. Thank you, Antonio, and Kelli, for inviting us into this wonderful conversation and sharing all of this important information. If you have more questions, go to MyPeers or write to [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info). As a reminder, the evaluation URL has been placed into the chat and will appear when you leave the Zoom platform. The URL and QR code on this slide will also bring up the evaluation.

The evaluation survey is anonymous. Your feedback is important to help us improve future training and technical assistance offerings. Remember, after submitting the evaluation, you will see a new URL. This link will allow you to access, download, save, and print your certificate. Next slide.

We want to make you aware of the proposed changes to the Head Start program performance standards. The Office of Head Start is soliciting feedback on the significant changes proposed to the Head Start Program Performance Standards in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register. The proposed changes, if enacted, will stabilize the Head Start workforce and improve the quality of the comprehensive services that Head Start families count on.

Learn more about the proposed policies and how to share your feedback on the Federal Register using this QR code and on the ECLKC website. The public comment period closes 60 days after publication. Questions? Please email [ohs\\_nprm@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:ohs_nprm@acf.hhs.gov). Next slide.

Thank you. You can subscribe to our monthly list of resources using this URL. Next slide, please.

Follow us on social media and use MyPeers to continue conversations on today's topics with colleagues from across the country. Next slide.

You can find our resources in the Health section of the ECLKC website or write us at [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info). Thank you.