

# Here for Each Other

HELPING FAMILIES AFTER EMERGENCIES

Here for Families and Communities



## Community Provider Guide



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## Dear Community Provider,

Whether you are an emergency responder, a community worker, a teacher, or a faith-based leader, you are important in helping families discover their own strength after a disaster.

Sesame Street appreciates your work with families and has created Here for Each Other, a guide of simple and easy resources to help you help others recover from an emergency. The following pages provide handouts to photocopy and distribute to preschoolers and families and to other first responders. Just choose the ideas and activities that work best for you.

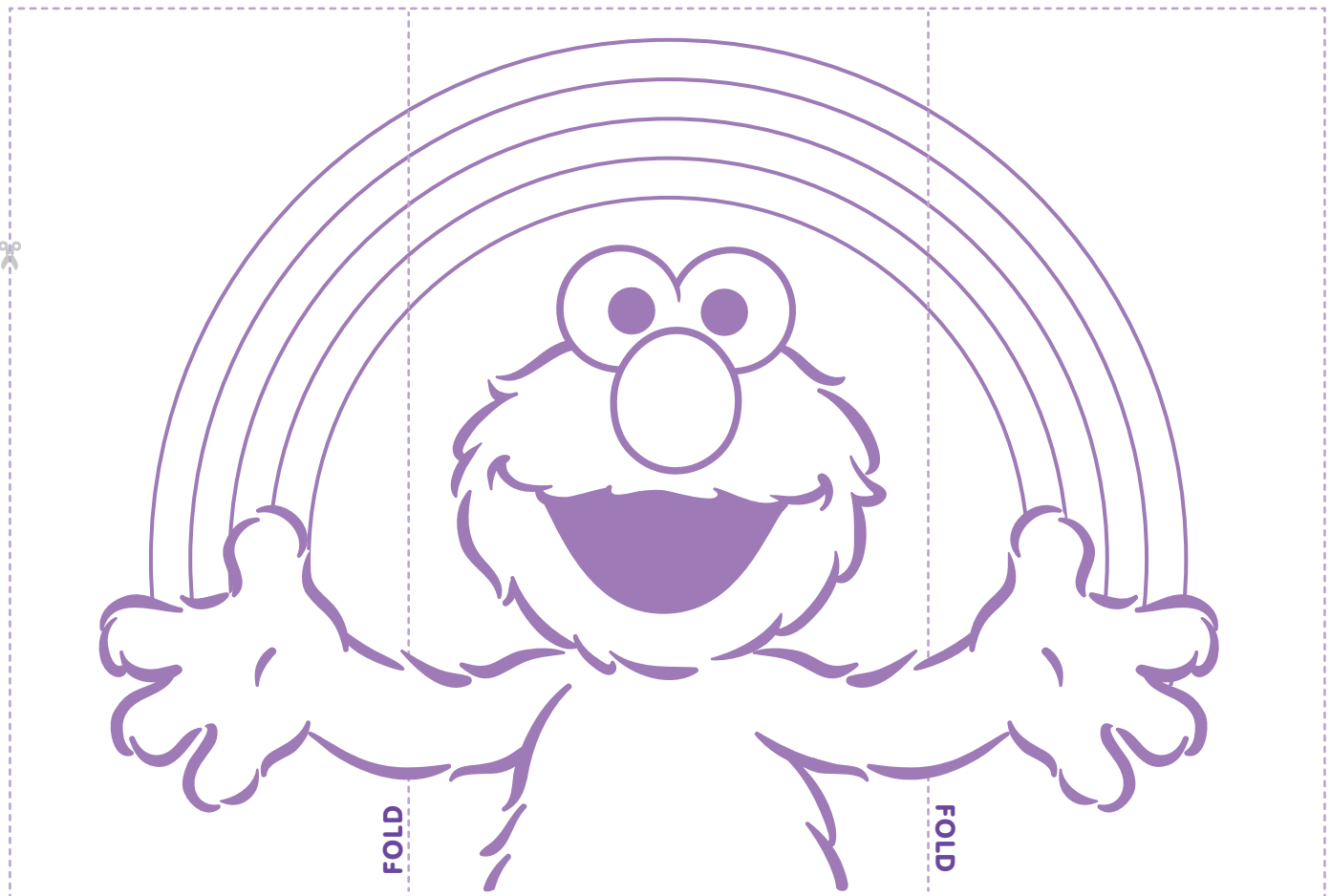
### Here is what you will find:

- » **Elmo's Rainbow Hug:** Having children think about what comforts them is a great place to start. Save this picture and use it to help children tell you when they need a hug.
- » **Helpers All Around to Keep Me Safe and Sound:** Children feel secure when they know that other people in their community are there to help them. Use this activity to help identify those helpers.
- » **Elmo Says:** Being physically active can help relieve stress. This activity can give children time to play and express themselves.
- » **Family Activity—Our Circle of Care:** This activity is for children and parents/caregivers to do together. It shows them they are not alone. There are people that care and are there to help them through this difficult time.
- » **Safe & Sound—Parent/Caregiver Tips:** These tips can help parents and caregivers create a comforting environment for their children. Help them choose one or two ideas they would like to use right away.



## Elmo's Rainbow Hug Card

Here's a big, warm, colorful hug from Elmo! Hugs always make Elmo feel better, and thinking about rainbows makes him feel happy. Think about what makes you feel safe and happy. Color in the card and fold the page along the dotted lines. Then, help Elmo share rainbow hugs with your family, friends, and helpers. Don't forget to give a big hug to yourself, too!

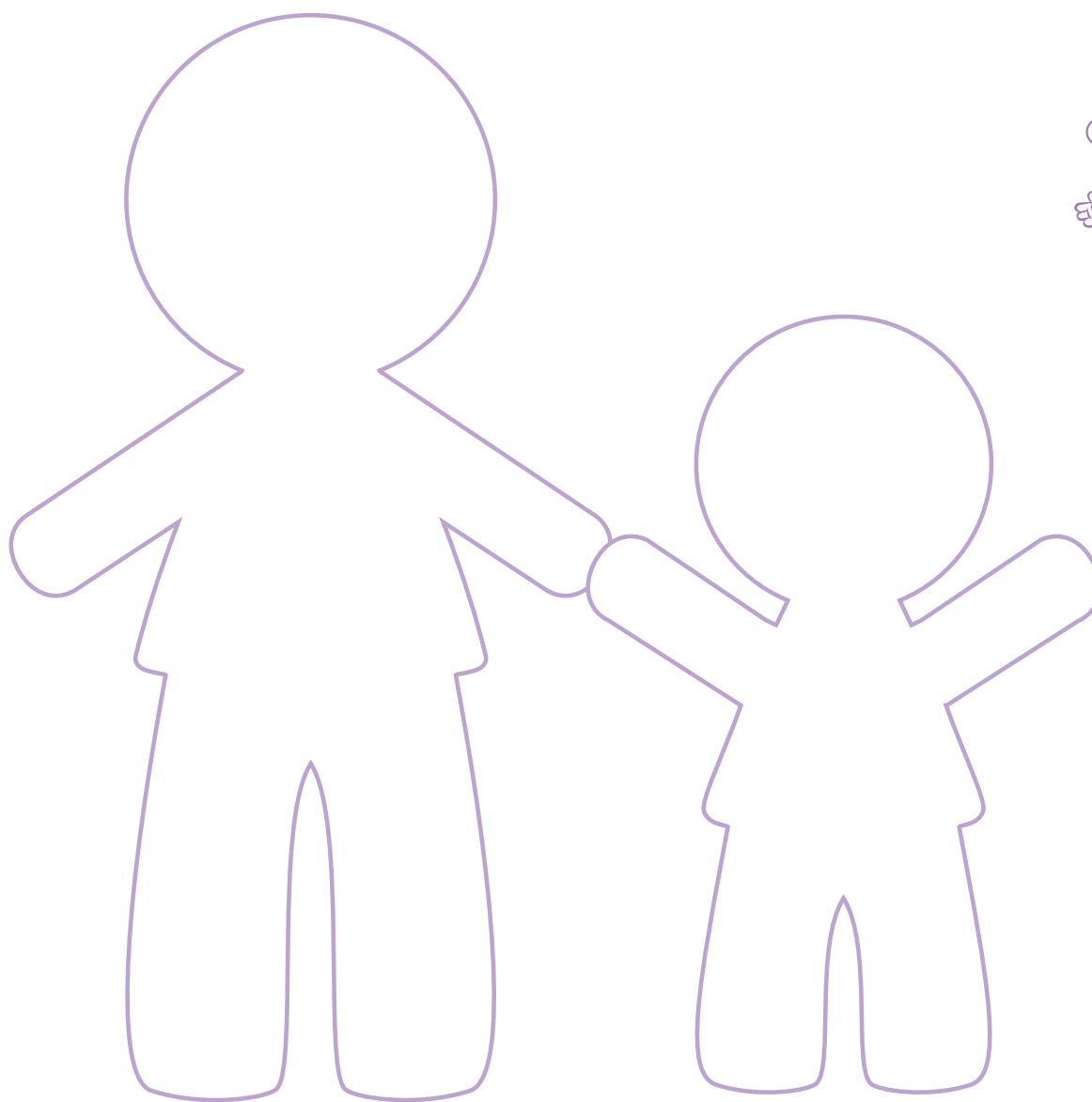


**FOR PROVIDERS:** This can be used with an individual child or with a group. Give each child a big rainbow hug from Elmo. Say, "Elmo's holding a rainbow because thinking about rainbows makes him feel happy." As children color in their cards, ask, "What makes you feel happy?," "When are some times you might need extra hugs or comfort?," and "Who do you think could use a big rainbow hug?"

## Helpers All Around to Keep Me Safe and Sound

After an emergency, remember, you are not alone. Look for the helpers all around you. They are there to keep you safe and sound. Think of someone who has helped you—your family, a friend, neighbor, firefighter, police officer, nurse, emergency responder, or teacher.



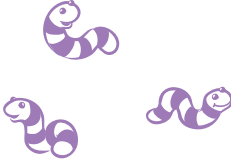





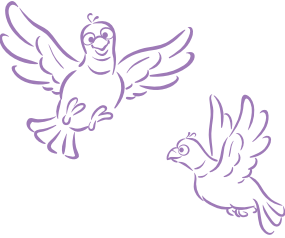



**DRAW A PICTURE** of this person and yourself in the space below.



## Elmo Says!

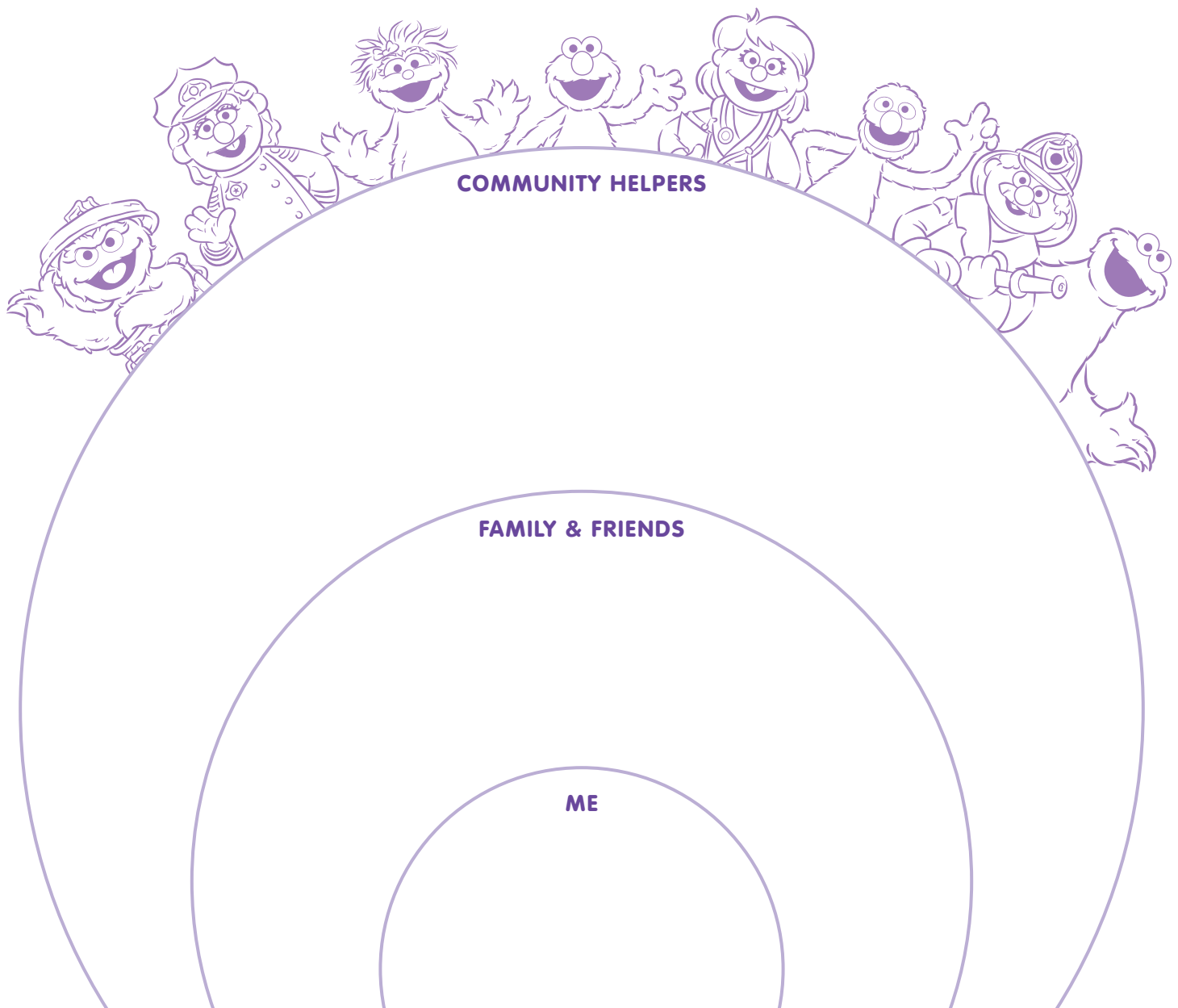
When we are feeling worried or upset, moving our bodies can help us feel better. It's fun for everyone to play together.

**PHOTOCOPY OR DOWNLOAD AND PRINT THE CARDS**, cut them out, and mix them in a bag or a small container. Take turns picking a card out of the bag and reading it out loud. What does it say to do? Have fun doing the moves together!

 <p>Stretch up high... try to touch the sky!</p>	<p>Stomp! Stomp! Stomp!</p> 	<p>Wiggle like Slimey!</p> 	 <p>Shake, shake, shake your sillies out!</p>
 <p>Pretend to play your favorite sport!</p>	 <p>Dance fast!</p>	<p>Kick your legs!</p> 	<p>Dance like jumping beans!</p> 
<p>Fly like a bird!</p> 	 <p>Waddle like a duck!</p>	 <p>Jump up! Twirl around!</p>	<p>Take five deep breaths.</p> 

## Family Activity: Our Circle of Care

There are so many people who care about you and are working hard to keep your family safe. Start by writing or drawing in a picture of yourself, then your family members and friends, then the helpers in your community. Tape this picture up to remind you of all the people you can reach out to for care and support.



## Safe & Sound: Parent/Caregiver Tips

Disasters and other stressful events can be particularly difficult for young children who may not fully understand what's going on around them. To help your child feel safe, cope with the situation, and be hopeful about the future, try these tips:

### Comfort Your Child

Keep reassuring your child that you love him and will keep him safe. Try to calm your own fears first, since your child takes cues from you. Listen carefully to your child and answer his questions honestly and simply.

### Spend Time Together

Know that simply smiling, laughing, and playing together can also help your child feel safe.

### Keep a Normal Routine

As much as possible, try to keep a daily routine, such as reading the same bedtime story or singing the same lullaby each night.

### Monitor the Media

Don't allow your child to watch repeated images of the disaster, its damage, and other violent events on the TV or on your phone. He may think that it's still happening, in real time. If you think your child might have seen or heard something, ask him about it. Correct inaccurate information and let him express his thoughts and emotions.

### Be Aware of Your Child's Behavior

Your child might have nightmares, wet the bed, be aggressive or inattentive, or cling to you. These are common reactions after a disaster. If they continue for several weeks seek the help of a health-care provider, teacher, school counselor, or mental-health professional.

### Take Care of Yourself

You're more helpful to your child when you've taken care of your own physical and emotional needs. Build a support system of relatives, friends, faith leaders, or counselors. Although it may be difficult, try to do something daily that helps you feel a little better, such as breathing deeply or taking a walk.

