



KARLI & ME

Activities for Children Coping With Parental Addiction



help kids

- build resilience
- learn coping strategies
- remember they're not alone!

[SesameStreetInCommunities.org](https://www.SesameStreetInCommunities.org)

Welcome

We all want children to be able to handle challenges big and small! This book can support you in building children’s resilience when faced with the unique issues presented by a parent’s addiction. As a caring adult in a child’s life, you can share these pages with children and:

- help them feel less shame and isolation
- engage them in conversation
- explain addiction
- offer coping strategies, support, hope, and optimism

Children and families can be resilient and heal from tough experiences. You can make a world of difference because this resilience is nurtured and powered by relationships with supportive adults ... like you!



Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit organization behind Sesame Street, the television show that has been reaching and teaching children since 1969. Sesame Workshop has a mission to help kids everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder. We’re active in over 150 countries, serving vulnerable children through media, formal education, and philanthropically-funded programs, each grounded in research and tailored to local needs and cultures. For more information, please visit sesameworkshop.org.

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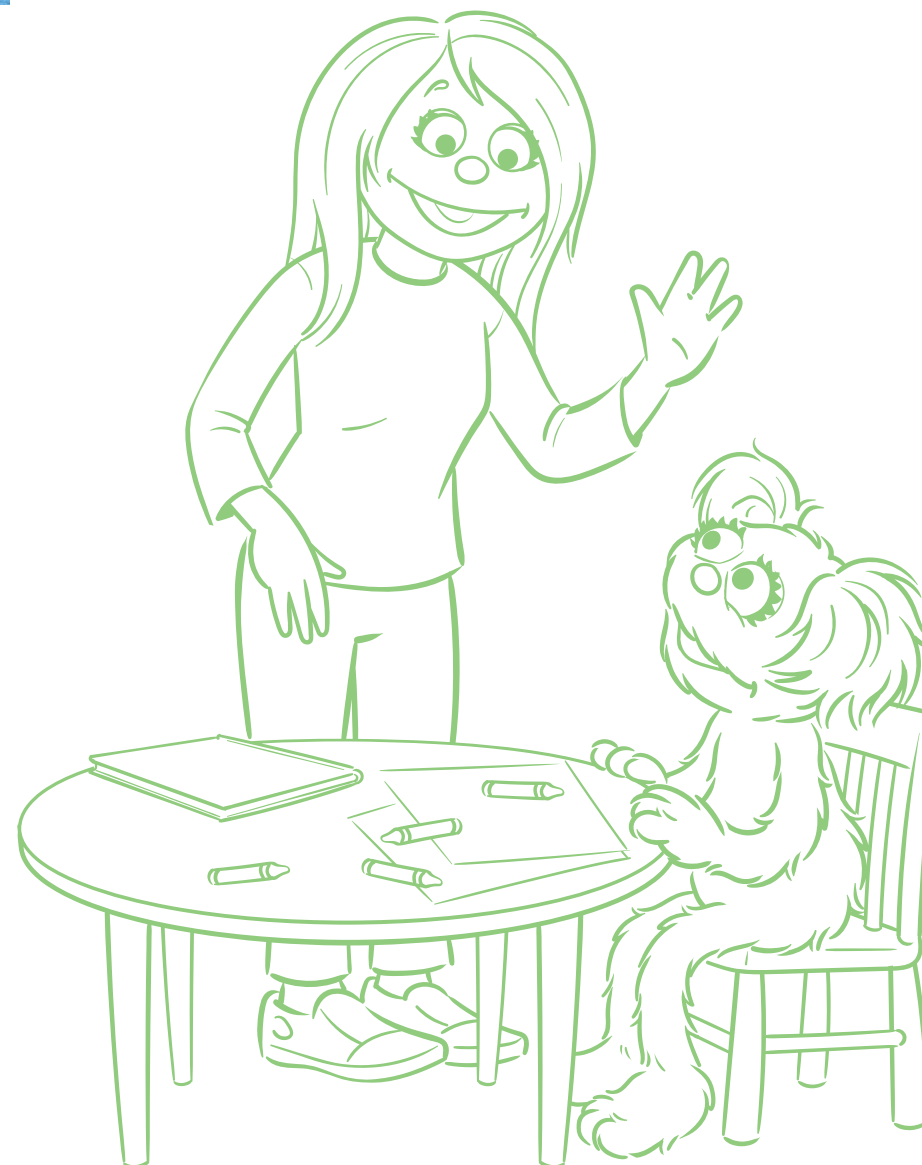
What Is Resilience?

Resilience is the ability to cope with and overcome challenges big and small—it’s about “bouncing back.” A huge factor in children’s resilience is the consistent presence of a caring adult. Resilience requires:

- **Emotional Understanding:**
Identifying and labeling feelings
- **Problem-Solving Skills:**
Having a variety of healthy coping strategies
- **An “I can do it!” Attitude:**
Having confidence and healthy self-esteem

Tough Times & Grown-Up Problems

When a family member struggles with addiction, the whole family struggles. Children often think it’s their fault and may feel shame, embarrassment, guilt, or loneliness. Sit quietly with children and use pencils or crayons to complete these pages and talk about what they’ve done on each page. You can decide how much support and guidance to offer.



Turn the page to introduce children to Karli, a new Sesame Street friend.

Supporting With “LOVEE”

When supporting children coping with the addiction of a parent, keep in mind:

Listen: Really hear what children are saying; focus your attention.

Observe: Look for non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language.

Validate: Let them know that you hear and understand what they’re telling you. Ask questions to clarify.

Educate: Tell children that grown-up problems are never their fault; it’s not their job to fix those problems.

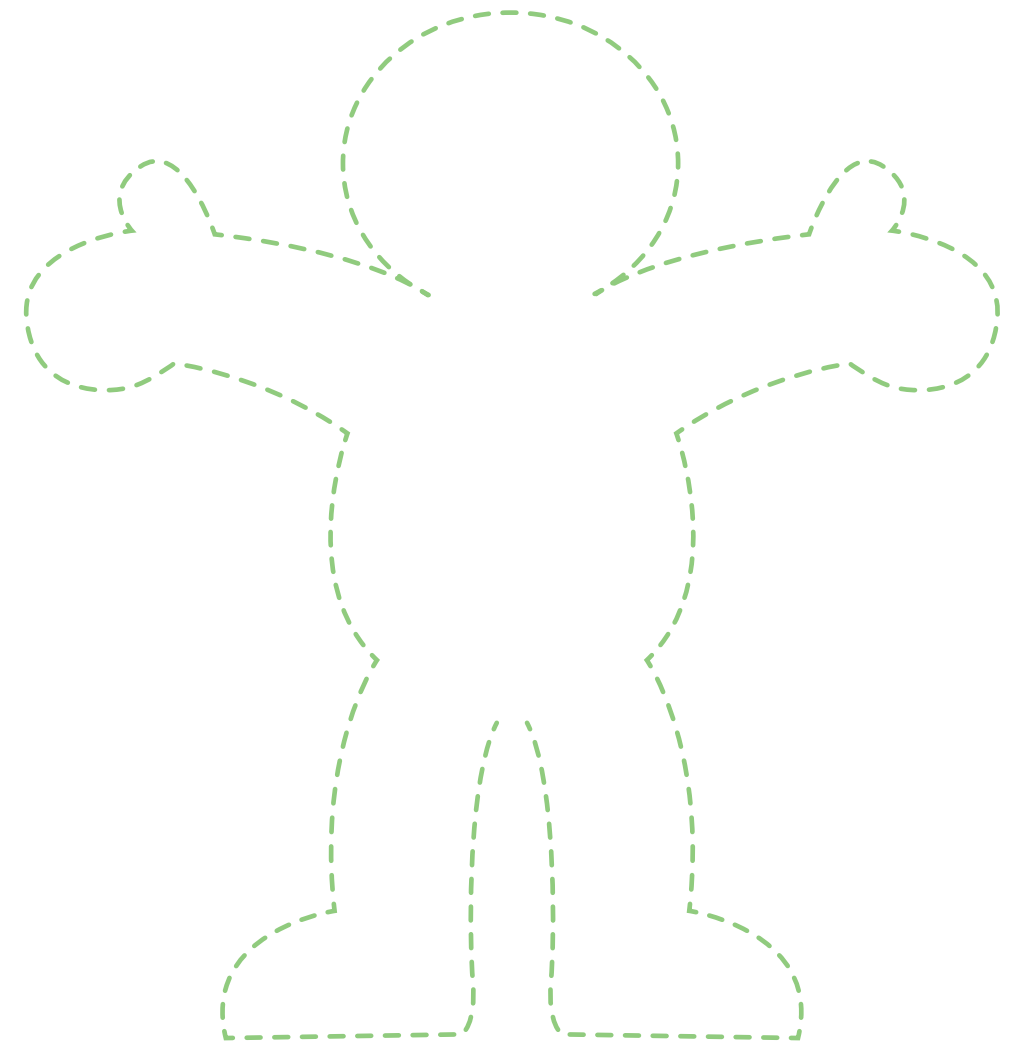
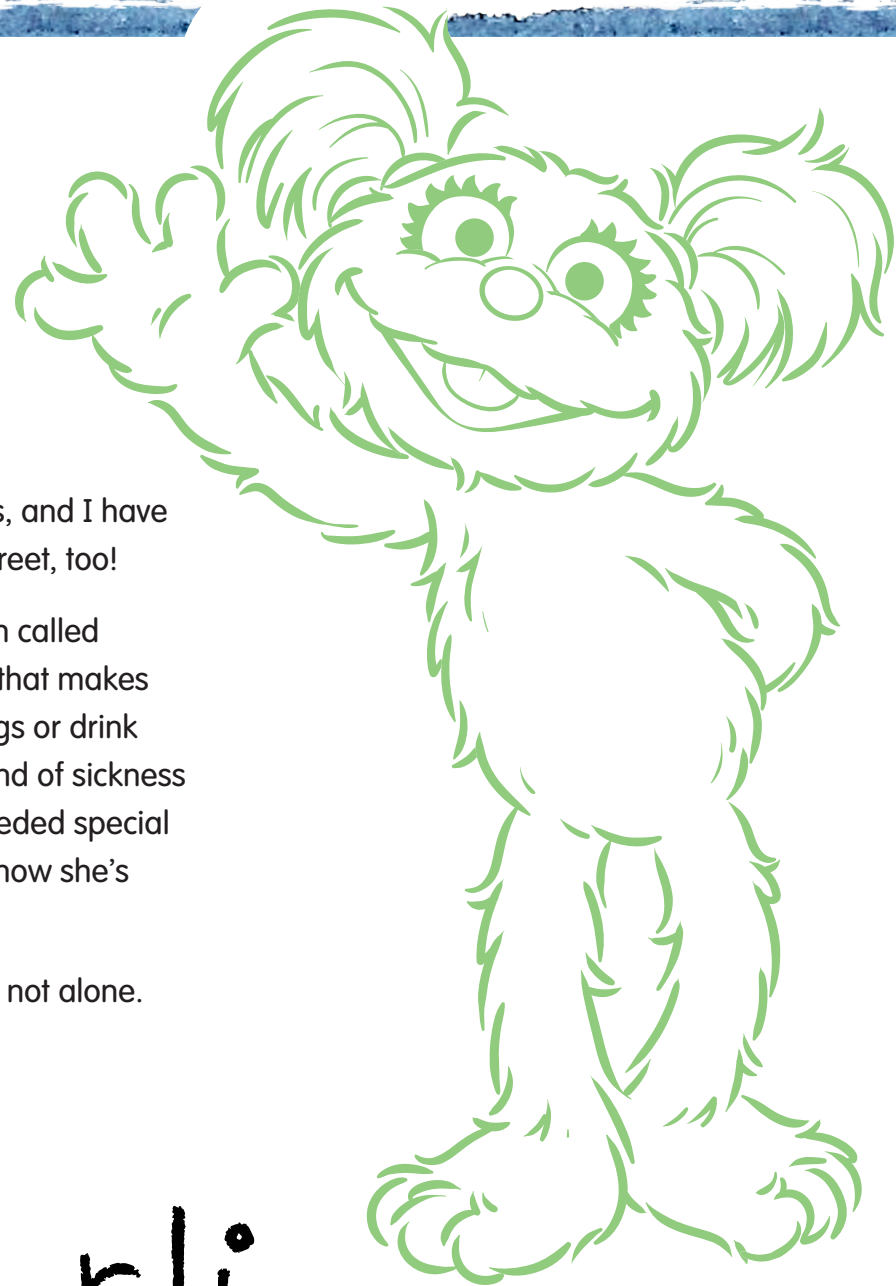
Empower: Introduce children to self-care strategies (draw a picture, read or look at a book, exercise, play a game, rest, sing, and have fun with friends).

Nice to Meet You!

Hi, I'm Karli. I'm a friend of Elmo's, and I have lots of other friends on Sesame Street, too!

My mom has a grown-up problem called addiction. Addiction is a sickness that makes people feel they need to take drugs or drink alcohol to feel okay. It's not the kind of sickness you catch like a cold. My mom needed special grown-up help to get better, and now she's staying healthy.

If you have same problem, you're not alone. Color me in!



My name is Karli.

I am 6 years old.

I live on Sesame Street.

I'm good at drawing.

One way I'm special is I am brave.

My name is _____.

I am _____ years old.

I live in _____.

I'm good at _____.

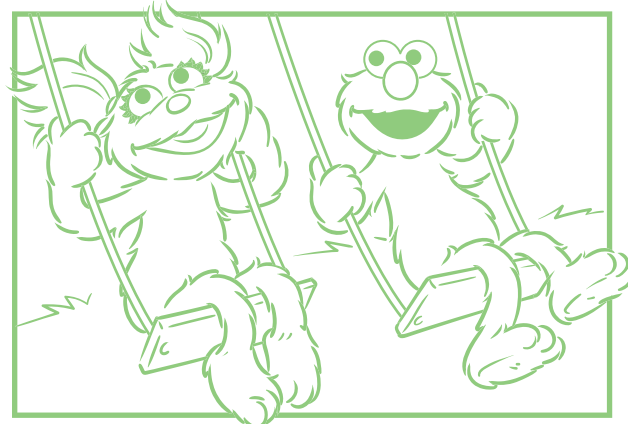
One way I'm special is _____.

➔ Now try this. Learn lots more about Karli by watching her videos on [SesameStreetInCommunities.org/topics/parental-addiction](https://www.SesameStreetInCommunities.org/topics/parental-addiction)

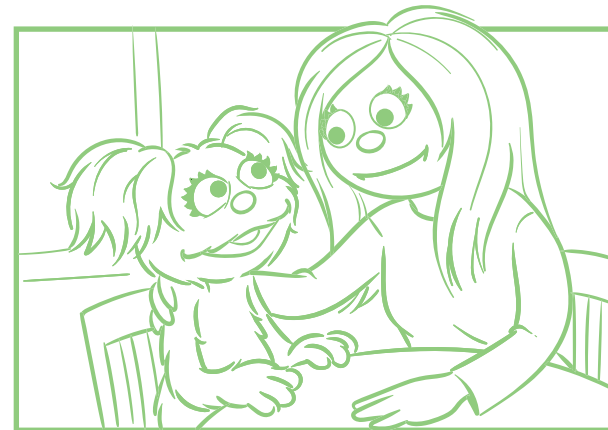
I'm Important

I used to worry that I'd have the same sickness as my mom when I grew up, but I learned that taking care of myself and making healthy choices now can help me stay well and strong as I get older. Color me in!

I take care of my body by moving around outside, getting enough sleep, and eating healthy food.



I make art that shows how I'm feeling inside.



I know grown-ups I can trust. I tell them how I'm feeling and I ask them for help when I need it.



3, 2, 1 I do this whenever I'm having big feelings. You can too.

Take **3** slow, deep breaths.

Stand up and take **2** big stretches—reach way up high and then touch your toes.

Close your eyes and imagine doing **1** thing you love to do, or a place you love to be.

➔ **Now try this.** Read the storybook *Play, Talk, Imagine* on SesameStreetInCommunities.org/topics/parental-addiction

Let's Talk

Elmo likes to talk to his Daddy, and sometimes I join them! With a grown-up, take turns closing your eyes and putting your finger down on the page. Then each of you can answer the question you landed closest to.

If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

If you could trade places with anyone for a day, who would it be and why?

If you could be any animal, what would you be and why?

What is your favorite thing about yourself?

What is one dream you remember having?

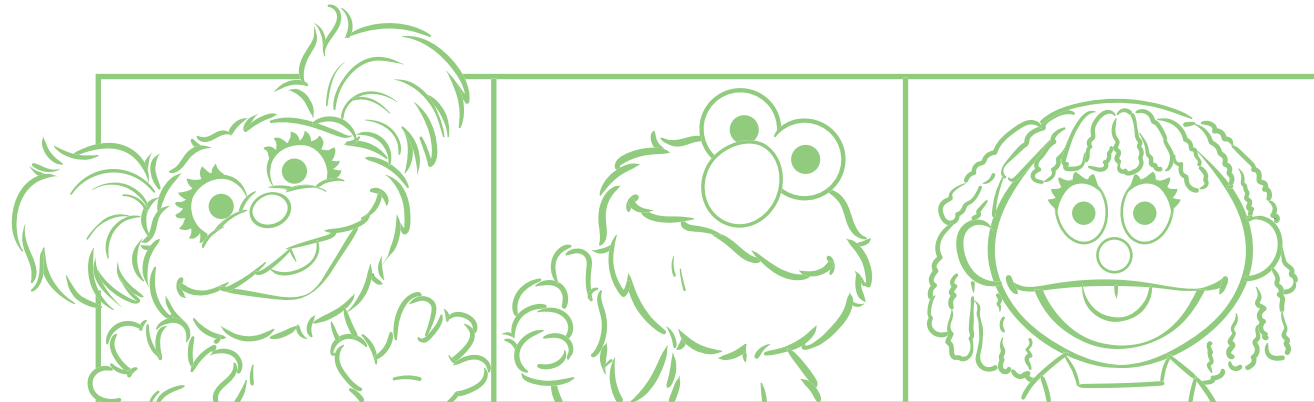
What's been the best and worst part of today?

When was the last time you laughed really hard? What was funny?

➔ **Now try this.** With a grown-up, make a list of other safe grown-ups you can trust and talk to. Check out the "Tell Me About It" interactive on SesameStreetInCommunities.org

Feeling Faces

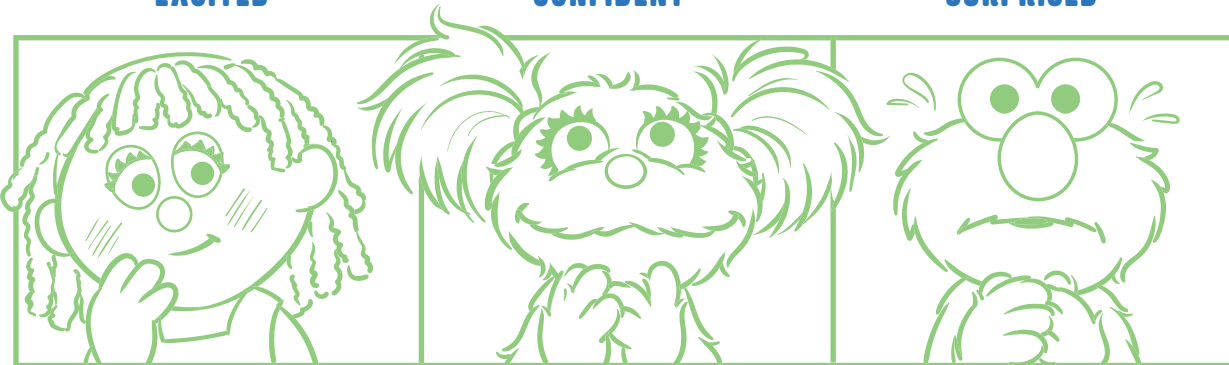
Look at all the ways my friends Elmo, Lily, and I sometimes feel. All feelings are okay and you can feel more than one at time! A grown-up can help you read each of these words. Talk together about what each means. Take turns making each expression and telling a story about why we might be feeling that way, or a time when you felt this way.



EXCITED

CONFIDENT

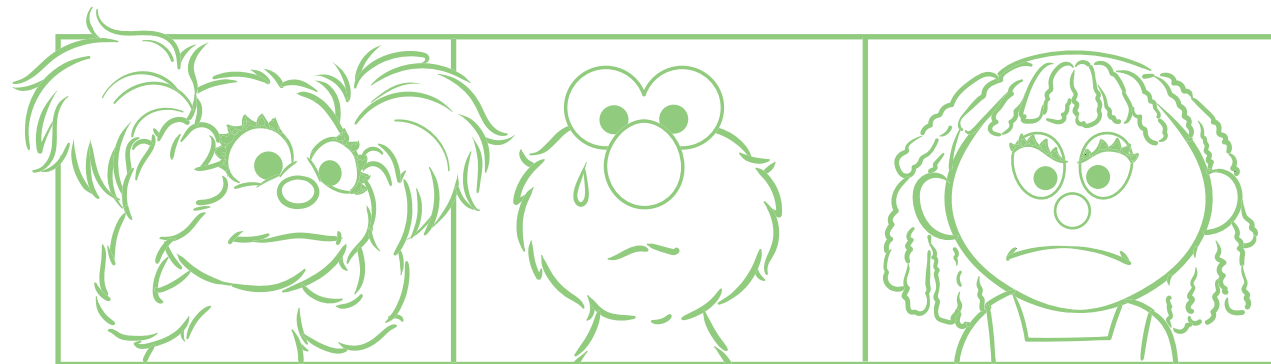
SURPRISED



EMBARRASSED

HOPEFUL

ANXIOUS



OVERWHELMED

SAD

ANGRY

➔ **Now try this.** Play the “Feeling Faces” game on SesameStreetInCommunities.org/activities/feeling-faces

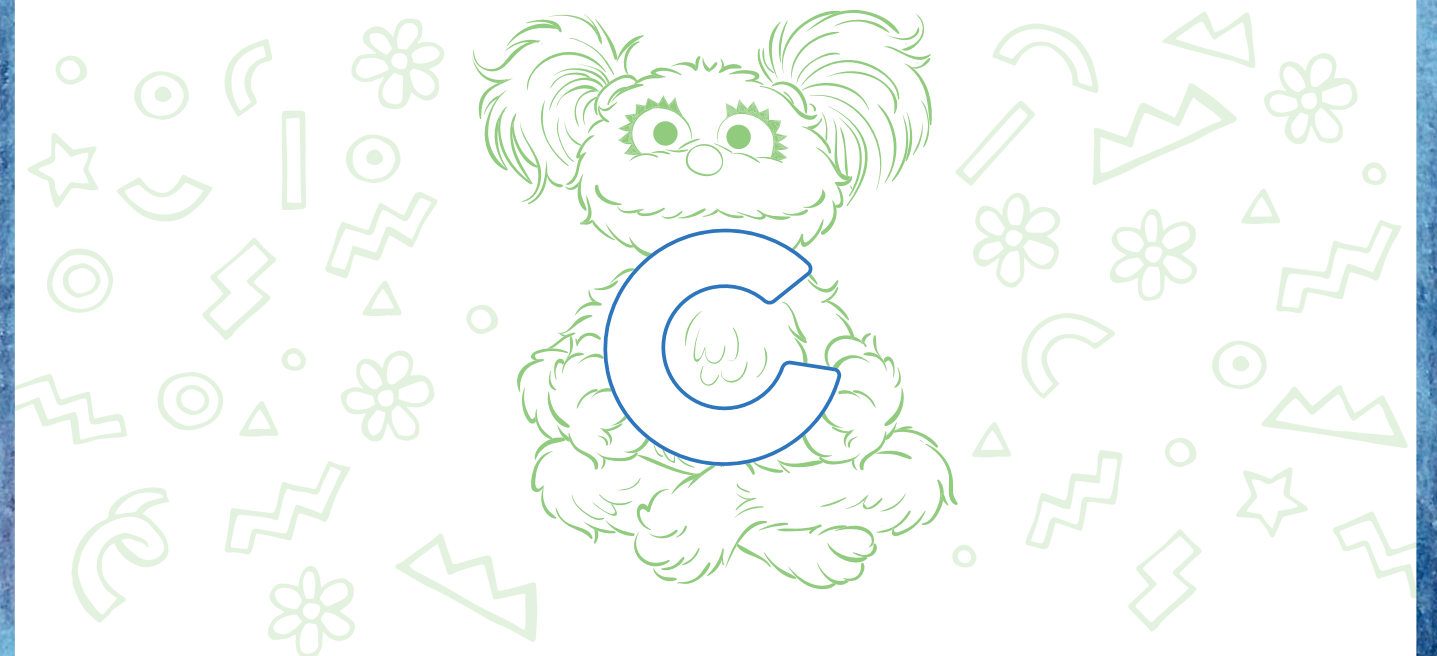
The 7 Cs

The grown-ups who help my mom also help me! They taught me the 7 Cs for kids whose parents have the sickness of addiction. Read them with a grown-up and then color the page.

You didn't **Cause** the problem.
You can't **Control** it.
You can't **Cure** it.

But...

You can help take **Care** of yourself.
You can **Communicate** your feelings.
You can make healthy **Choices**.
You can **Celebrate** yourself!



➔ **Now try this.** Color Karli's interactive “7 Cs Quilt” on SesameStreetInCommunities.org/topics/parental-addiction

Celebrating What's Good

It helps to remember the things I'm thankful for. I'm grateful for my friends Elmo and Big Bird, warm apple pie, and singing songs with my mom at bedtime. Draw three things you are thankful for. You might choose:

- someone who loves you
- favorite snack
- favorite sport
- favorite stuffed animal or doll
- favorite holiday
- a new friend
- a place you like to go
- something new you've learned to do



A large area for drawing, defined by a vertical dotted line and a horizontal dotted line that intersect in the center. The vertical line starts below the list of suggestions and extends to the bottom of the page. The horizontal line starts to the left of the list and extends across the page.



Now try this. Read the storybook *What We're All About* on SesameStreetInCommunities.org