

Sesame Street and Autism see amazing in all children



The Sibling Experience

Every member of the family plays an important role. For any child (or grown-up!), sometimes it's hard to be a sibling! That's why it's so important to have ongoing communication within the family. Each member in a family has feelings and expresses them in different ways. Emotions may come and go, one at a time, or together in waves.

THESE FOUR PRINTABLE PAGES will help siblings explore their thoughts and feelings—and help encourage conversation about them:

- » **Here We Are** This page gives children a chance to introduce themselves and their siblings and explore their similarities and differences. This page also includes ways typically developing children can explain autism to others.
- » **When I Have Big Feelings** Children can reflect on strategies that have worked when they were overwhelmed by big feelings, and think about new ways to handle big feelings.
- » **Special Times** It's important for children to spend time together as siblings, but also to spend one-on-one time with mom or dad. This page lets children imagine a special day with a parent. It also includes a question-and-answer activity for children to do together with their parents.
- » **We're Different and We're the Same** A customizable Venn diagram is a great way to show children that people can be the same and different all at once!



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Here We Are Draw yourself with your sibling in the frame.

MY NAME

MY SIBLING'S NAME

MY FAVORITE THING TO DO

HIS/HER FAVORITE THING TO DO

SOMETHING I DON'T LIKE

SOMETHING HE/SHE DOESN'T LIKE

AN IMPORTANT THING THAT MAKES ME SPECIAL

AN IMPORTANT THING THAT MAKES HIM/HER SPECIAL

WAYS YOU CAN EXPLAIN AUTISM TO OTHERS

- » (Child's name)'s brain works differently than yours. Your brain is like the boss of your body. It's what makes you *you*. The brain has an important job: making sense of the world around you.
- » Everyone with autism is different, the same way all children have differences. Some children do things differently than others.

- » Your brain lets you understand everything you see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. The brain of a person with autism works differently and that can make it hard to talk, listen, understand, play, and learn in the same way that others do. Many people with autism are good at remembering videos, drawing, reading, and many other things.
- » People have other ways besides talking to tell us what they know and want.

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When I Have Big Feelings

At any time, you might feel confused, frustrated, mad, sad, guilty, embarrassed, or jealous. Those feelings are all okay, and they come and go. If things get difficult with your brother or sister, there are lots of different things you can do.

- » Put an X next to the things you have tried.
- » What new thing on this list might you try next time? Circle or underline it.

- _____ Take a deep breath.
- _____ Try to laugh about it (or remember it might be funny later).
- _____ Just let him/her be himself/herself.
- _____ Take a break.
- _____ Remember it's okay for me to feel big feelings.
- _____ Give my brother or sister some space.
- _____ Ask a grown-up to take me for a walk.
- _____ Go to my own room and just do my own thing.
- _____ Think about a real or pretend place where I can go to feel better when I'm upset.
- _____ Ask a grown-up for help.
- _____ Talk to a grown-up about how I'm feeling.
- _____ Remember we're all different.
- _____ Remind myself it's okay to not understand.



ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET, DRAW A PICTURE OF A TIME WHEN THINGS FELT DIFFICULT. Tell a grown-up about what you've drawn. What did you do to make the situation a little easier?

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Special Times

Circle the things you and your sibling like to do together.



Now draw what you might like to do on a special day with your mom or dad—just the two of you!

AND TRY THIS... Think of some questions you have about your brother or sister, or about autism, and have a grown-up write them down on the back of this sheet. Your mom or dad might be able to answer them, or to help you find the answers (it's okay if they don't know the answers, and remember there may be no real answer—that's okay too).

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