

Subj: **Mother's Day**
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Sesame Family Newsletter

May 6, 2009

Mother's Day

by Elana A. Halberstadt

One mom strives for balance of self and family.

Featuring:

Being a Mom
A Rock and a Picture of Love
Taking Care of Me
Every Day Escapes
Celebrating Mother's Day
Games and More: Happy Mother's Day!



Games and More: Happy Mother's Day!

Celebrate Mother's Day with these videos, games, and more!

[Mother's Day Cards](#)

Print and color Mother's Day Cards.

[Hush Little Baby](#)

Listen to this lullaby, and press the keys to illustrate.

[Furry Blue Mommy of Mine](#)

Herry sings about his mother.

[Sesame Beginnings](#)

New moms, rejoice! *Sesame Beginnings* helps new moms and their babies play and learn together.

[Sesame Beginnings](#)

[Sesame Beginnings DVDs](#)

[Check out Elmo's World!](#)

Journey into Elmo's imagination with printables, videos, games, and more!

[Elmo's World](#)

Honor Your Mother and Help Another

This Mother's Day, send Mom a special e-card that says you've made a donation to children and families in her honor. Your contribution will be matched through a generous grant from the Iraq Afghanistan Deployment Impact Fund.

[Learn More](#)



**McDonald's® A Proud Sponsor of Sesame Street**

McDonald's® is happy to help *Sesame Street* make this Mother's Day special. Together, we believe in bringing a sense of joy and imagination to life.

BEING A MOM**Momma's Lap Song**

A song about sitting on mom's lap

With Mother's Day approaching, I'm amazed by the countless ways our son Max has transformed my life. Being Max's mom is both my favorite job and my most challenging one. Max is 2 and a half and I *still* feel like a new mom. I often have more questions than answers. I have LOTS of feelings about motherhood and sometimes they are contradictory -- simultaneously! So far, it's been a rollercoaster ride, full ups and downs, physically and mentally. Max brings me indescribable bliss and love. If there is a day to go over the top, this may be it. I am ready for handmade cards and flowers!

I was 40 when Max was born, and so there were inherent risks. As a result, I feel especially lucky to have delivered a healthy child. During the pregnancy, my medical chart was noted: "Advanced Maternal Age." Gee, thanks, doctor -- way to make me feel good. Each successful test, felt like a miracle. I admit that I get a bit jealous of the younger moms I meet who have more kids AND more energy. And single moms or military moms? To me, they are true heroes!

Mother's Day is a terrific reminder that moms need recognition and support, not just for one day, but all year round.

A ROCK AND A PICTURE OF LOVE

For a Mother's Day craft project, Max's nursery school teacher asked parents to bring in a small rock and a photo of mom and child together. Gathering the materials was an adventure, as we climbed around park trails, discovered earthworms, and searched for the perfect stone. Looking for a recent picture was a challenge. I realized that I don't have many pictures of just Max and me, where I don't look frazzled or I'm not making a silly face.

On Mother's Day, I think I'll ask my husband Andy to take our picture. I'll be rested and Max loves hamming it up, saying "Cheeeeeeeese!" Or "Wheeeeels!"

TAKING CARE OF ME



[Alison Krauss: Fit as a Fiddle](#)
Alison reminds us to do things we love.

To be the best mom I can be, I realize my own health--now more than ever--is a priority. I try to have regular checkups, eat well, and get enough sleep. Sounds easy enough, but there is never enough time in the day. Like many new moms, I forget to eat, am often short on sleep, and get cranky. Though I don't have the time to go to the gym, I know I'm getting exercise: Running after Max on the playground is aerobic, and lifting him is definitely strengthening my upper body.

I put Max first, and while that is part of being a mom, I do acknowledge that maintaining my health is important, too. Andy helps by regularly asking: "Did you shower? How are you feeling? Do you need a break?" He also thanks me for the work I do at home. I admit, it feels good, and I appreciate his support and thoughtfulness.

Recently, I've been suffering from back pain. Instead of ignoring it, I went to the doctor. I learned that all the bending and lifting takes a toll, and back pain is a common complaint for many parents. The doctor encouraged me to start an exercise program to strengthen my stomach muscles, which help support the back. If I want to be able to take care of Max, I have to take care of me, too. It's that simple.

EVERY DAY ESCAPES



[Yoga for Kids](#)
Gordon and kids do yoga stretches.

So how do I find the time to take care of me? The key is to be aware of my needs, and get them in small doses throughout the day. I sneak in these moments when I am with Max. I'll do one yoga pose to stretch my body or calm my mind. Just one minute of breathing and balancing do wonders and Max often wants to join me!

When I need to rest my back, I suggest we play a hide-and-seek game that has me, the "mommy cat" hiding under the covers in bed. Max runs around as the "kitten" meowing and pouncing. I get 5-10 minutes to lie down while still playing with him.

Even going to the dentist can be a mini-vacation! I hire a babysitter, walk out the door, ride a bus, and voila --- R and R! Throw in a chilled bottle of water, and I have myself a spa retreat! I could not have known that something I used to dread pre-Max, would become such a pleasure.

Everyone has different ideas of fun. I have a friend who runs. That is her sacred time. Another friend swims. Yet another sits in the park and writes. I like to listen to music or read when I have the chance. When I allow myself time to decompress, there's more of me to give to Max.

I used to feel guilty just *thinking* about taking a break, but as Max has gotten older, my feelings have changed. Max is more independent than ever, and actually seems to relish our time apart! And so do I. It makes coming home that much sweeter.

CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY

[Mother's Day Video Queue](#)

Send this video queue to your favorite Mom!

Like many moms, I crave time and peace. Telling Andy specifically what I want and need makes accomplishing it easier. He often anticipates, but he's not a mind reader, and being able to say EXACTLY what I need helps him help me.

He's great at showing me his appreciation for what I do with Max all year—and it's lovely to have a holiday to celebrate motherhood. Andy asks me, "What do you want?" I always have the same answer. I want time together with our family and I want time alone to do whatever I feel like with no set plan or schedule. My current wish list: Wake up late, lounge in bed reading, or my holy grail... watch TV in bed. Do nothing. Nap. Repeat.

I love the sentiments, cards, flowers, being pampered---all of it. But my favorite part of Mother's Day is appreciating the true gift: a happy and healthy Max. His delicious hugs and kisses are all I need.

Wishing all the Moms out there, a beautiful and happy Mother's Day.

Elana A. Halberstadt
Sesame Workshop

YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE: "HERE FOR YOU" HELPS CHILDREN COPE WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS



Making sense of serious illness, especially when it threatens the life of a young child, can be very difficult. The diagnosis often demands that children and families talk openly and honestly in the face of great uncertainty. To ease communication, Sesame Workshop in collaboration with the Center for Advanced Illness Coordinated Care (CAICC), has created the program ["Here for You,"](#) a DVD to help young children with life-threatening health problems and their families articulate feelings and establish open communication. The program tells the story of Elmo visiting his seriously ill cousin Chester in the hospital. ["Here for You"](#) encourages children and their families to ask questions, and make it easier to discuss difficult topics. We can't do it without you! Projects like "Here for You" rely on the support of generous Sesame Friends like you. [Support More Initiatives Like This](#).

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