



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Sourcebooks and Sesame Workshop to Publish *Heroes Wear Masks* to Support Families through Back-to-School Season

*New Picture Book Follows Elmo Adjusting to New Routines and Safety Measures at School*

(CHICAGO – August 6, 2020) – As schools and day care centers reopen, more than eight million preschoolers and kindergarteners will need to wear face masks during the day. Young children may find the new guidelines put in place because of COVID-19 strange and intimidating, but Elmo and his *Sesame Street* friends are here to help!

*Heroes Wear Masks: Elmo's Super Adventure* is a new picture book from Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational media organization behind *Sesame Street*, that will help children manage back-to-school anxiety and understand the changes they'll face in their classrooms and playrooms.

"One of the wonderful things about the *Sesame Street* Muppets is how powerfully kids identify with them. When they see their friend Elmo adjusting to something new, and a little scary—like wearing a mask to school—they realize that they can do it too," said Karen Halpenny, Sesame Workshop's editorial director for North America media products and publishing. "We're thrilled to work with Sourcebooks to get this special book to families—we hope it helps ease their back-to-school transitions in this difficult time."

In *Heroes Wear Masks*, children will see Elmo getting ready to head back to school, with some changes to his morning routine. Things are a little different when Elmo gets to school too: their *Sesame Street* friend will adopt—and adapt to—some of the safety measures kids will experience themselves, including:

- Wearing a mask
- Feeling anxious about leaving home
- Washing hands frequently
- Social distancing—not being able to give hugs or high-fives to friends
- Temperature checks
- New classroom seating arrangements

"We are so excited to work with our extraordinary partner Sesame Workshop in bringing forth a story that can spark playful learning and offer comfort to families and children facing a new sense of normalcy," said Karen Shapiro, publishing manager for Sourcebooks Wonderland.

The book will also feature tips for parents and caregivers, including language they can use with young children around handwashing, face masks, back-to-school anxiety, and other ways to stay healthy.

*Heroes Wear Masks* reminds readers that it's **SUPER** to help everyone stay healthy!

(cont.)



For more support, parents can find videos, articles, and games on the *Sesame Street: Caring for Each Other* hub ([sesamestreet.org/caring](https://sesamestreet.org/caring)). Created to meet families' changing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's regularly updated with free resources designed to help caregivers provide comfort, manage anxiety, create routines, and foster playful learning at home.

*Heroes Wear Masks: Elmo's Super Adventure*

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2020**

ISBN: 978-1-7282-3659-9 / \$10.99 U.S.

Hardcover (8 x 8) / Ages 3–7

Juvenile Fiction/Picture Book

For partnership inquiries, please contact Alexis Banyon at [alexis.banyon@sourcebooks.com](mailto:alexis.banyon@sourcebooks.com).

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### **About Sesame Workshop**

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit educational organization behind *Sesame Street*, the pioneering television show that has been reaching and teaching children since 1969. Today, Sesame Workshop is an innovative force for change, with a mission to help kids everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder. We're present in more than 150 countries, serving vulnerable children through a wide range of media, formal education, and philanthropically funded social impact programs, each grounded in rigorous research and tailored to the needs and cultures of the communities we serve. For more information, please visit [sesameworkshop.org](https://sesameworkshop.org).

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