

# Trinka and Sam

## The Rainy Windy Day

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This story was developed in collaboration with the Early Trauma Treatment Network, a partner of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

The story was developed to help young children and their families begin to talk about feelings and worries they may have after they have experienced a hurricane.

More information about how to help children who have experienced disasters or other traumatic events can be found at [nctsn.org](http://nctsn.org).

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The National Child  
Traumatic Stress Network

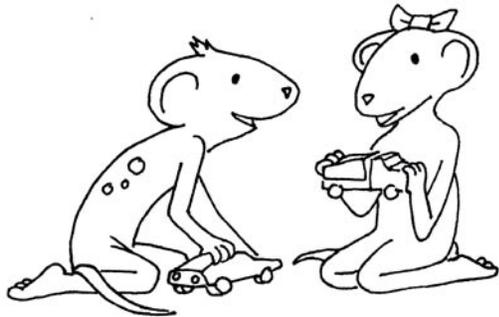
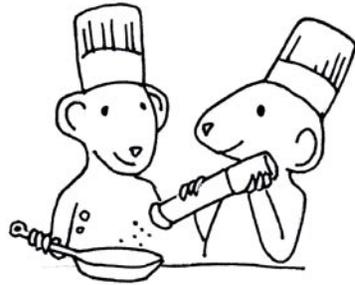
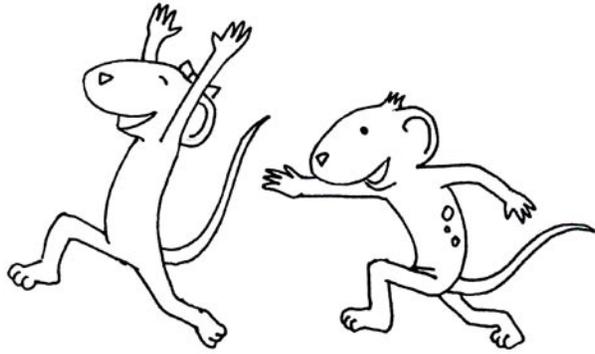
For the children of the  
Gulf Coast and children  
and families who have  
experienced hurricanes



This is Trinka.



And this is Sam.



They are neighbors,  
and they like to play together.



In the summer, they build  
sand castles.

--- Come on Sam.

Trinka, let's go ---



Coming -



- But it's so much fun.

In the winter, they go puddle stomping.

And they always listen when it's time to stop... well... almost always.



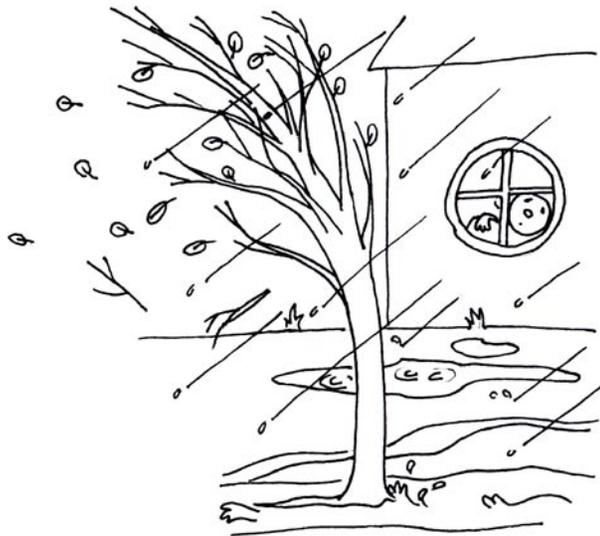
But one day it rained a lot,  
and they couldn't go outside.



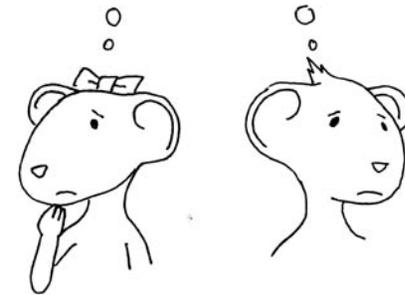
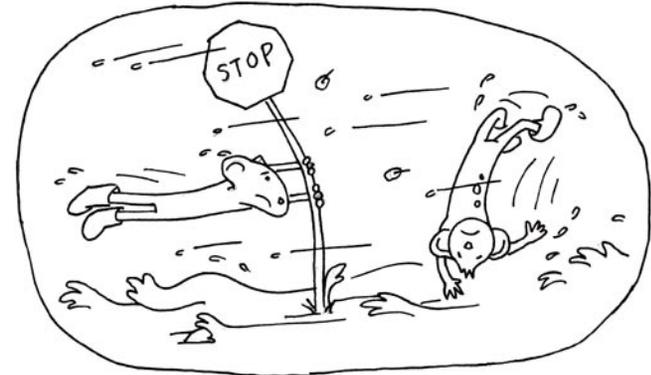
*This is not  
puddle-stomping  
weather.*



Trinka and Sam were sad and  
disappointed.



The rain kept coming. Then there was wind - not just the kind that moves your hair and makes leaves fly.



But the kind that pushes you down the street and howls. Now Sam and Trinka weren't just sad. They were SCARED. They worried that bad things might happen.

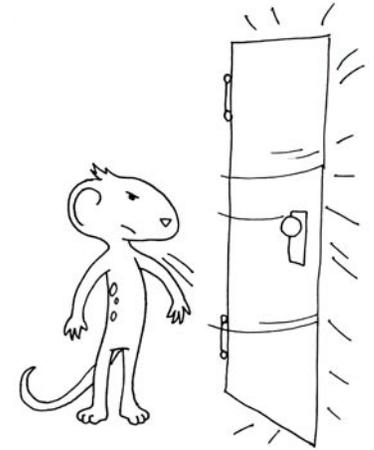
*Up up, pick me up.*

*Will the wind  
take my toys away?*

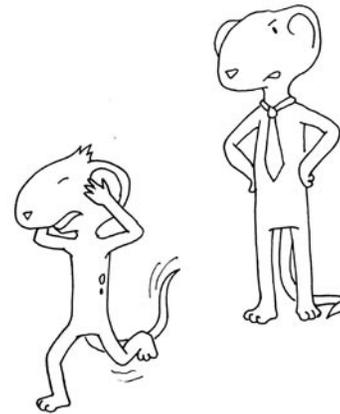
*What if the wind  
blows down the  
house?*



*He took his brother's toy.*



*He slammed the door.*



*He didn't listen to his daddy.*

"What if it happens again?" said Trinka.  
"Remember the day of the hurricane?  
What if we have another hurricane?"

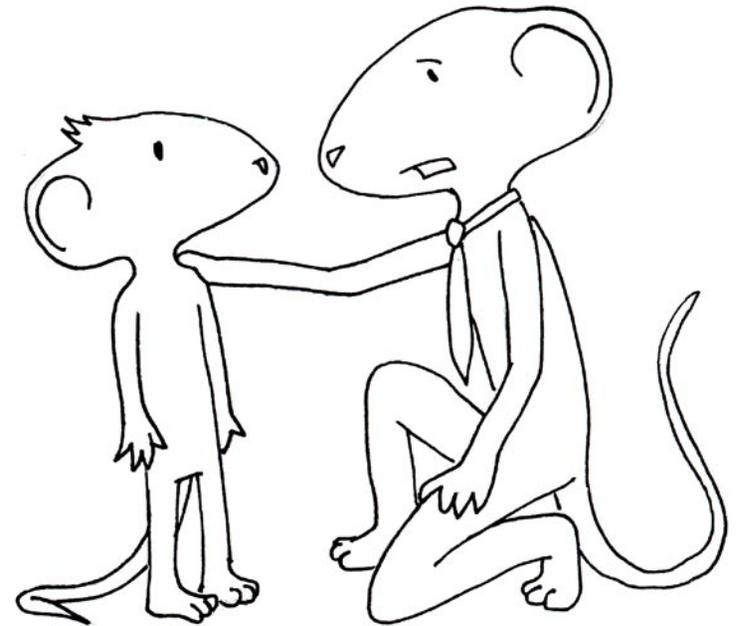
Sam didn't say anything. But he felt  
like the wind was in his tummy.



Trinka's mom was tired, but she understood.

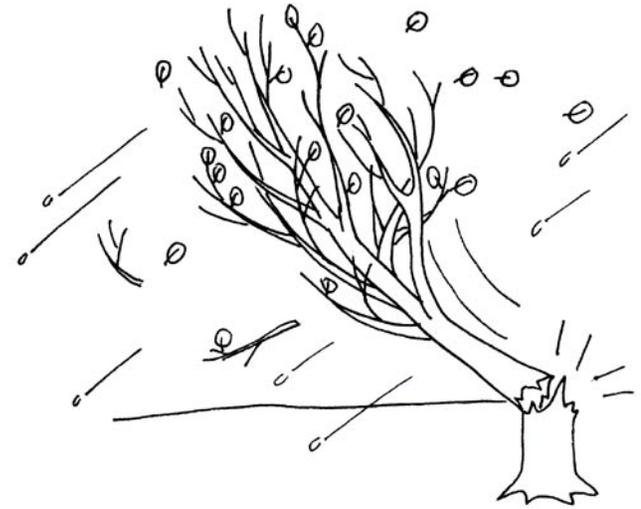
*Sam, you need to listen -*

*Be a good brother -*

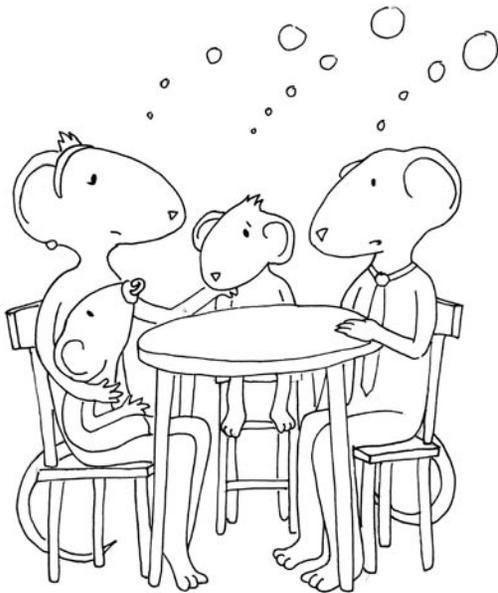


Sam's dad was mad, but he understood.

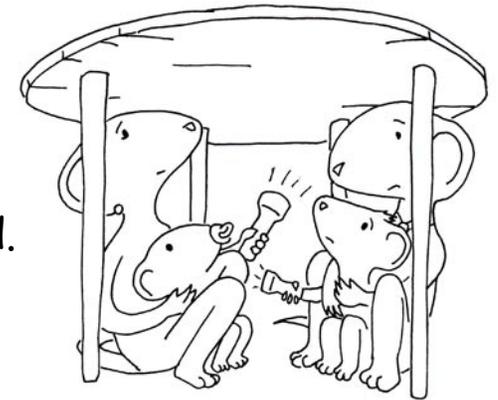
Trees fell down.



Houses were hurt.



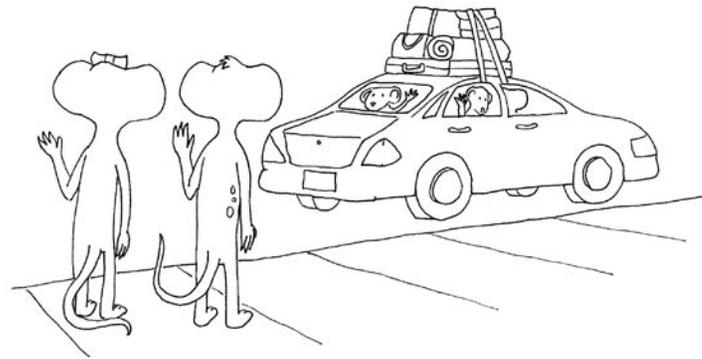
They were scared.



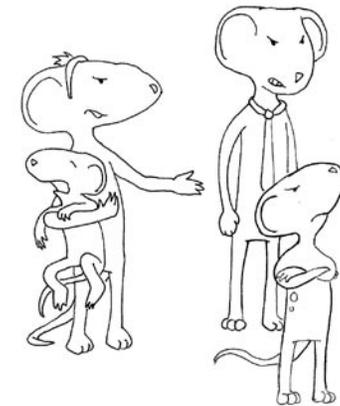
They all remembered that day the rain and wind had been so big and scary.



Houses and schools stayed hurt.



Friends moved away.



They were upset with each other.

They all remembered how hard life was after the rain and wind stopped.

*I think you are worried and scared -*

*This time is different -*

*They will warn us if we  
have to go -*

*Our family has a  
good plan-*



Trinka's mom picked up Trinka.

*I love you so much -*

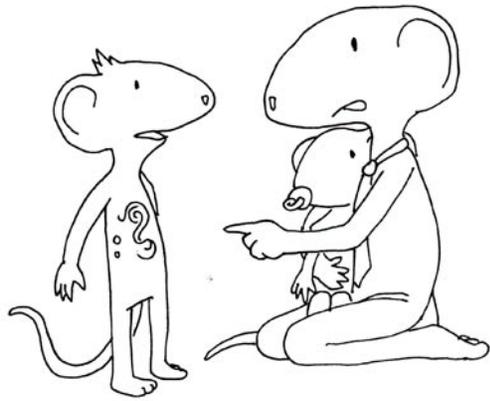
*If the wind gets bigger,  
we will go somewhere safe -*

*We are ok -*



Trinka snuggled closer.

The wind is scary.  
It makes me feel icky.



- I know.  
It is scary.



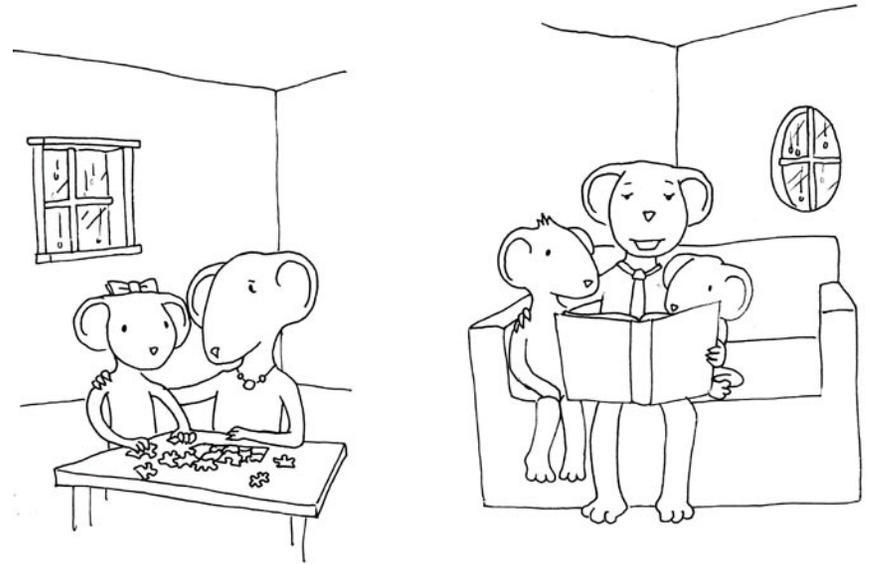
Sam's dad asked, "Is the wind in your body? Let's get it out. Let's run around just like the wind."



They did, and Sam felt better. His little brother did too... and so did his dad.



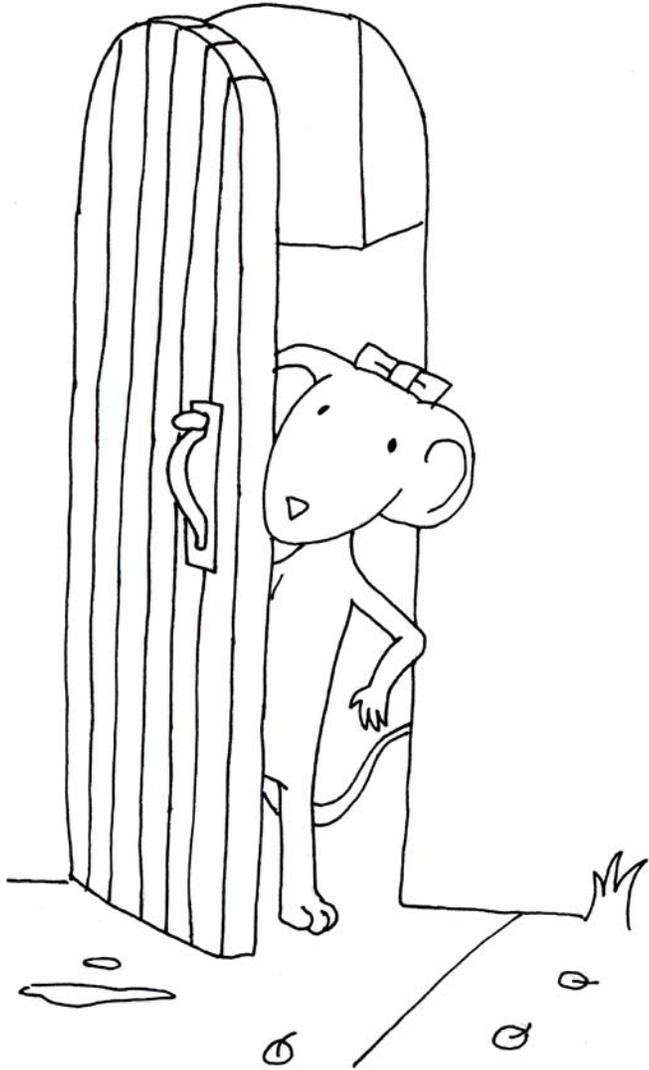
It rained for a while. The wind  
blew.



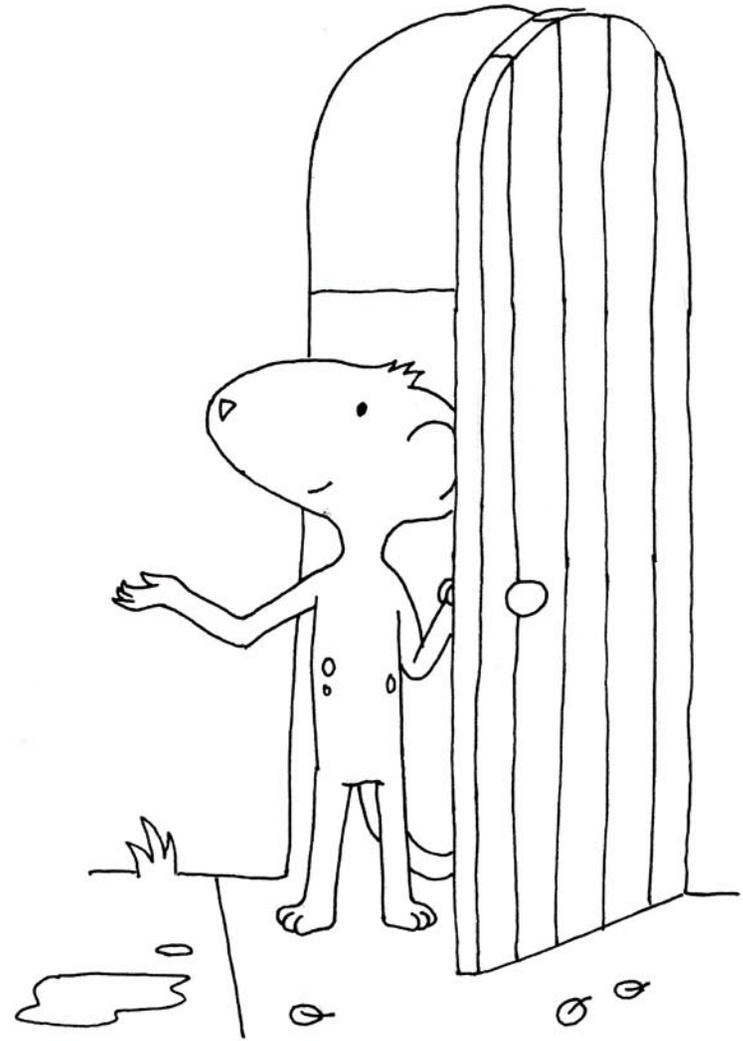
They were scared, but they were  
together.



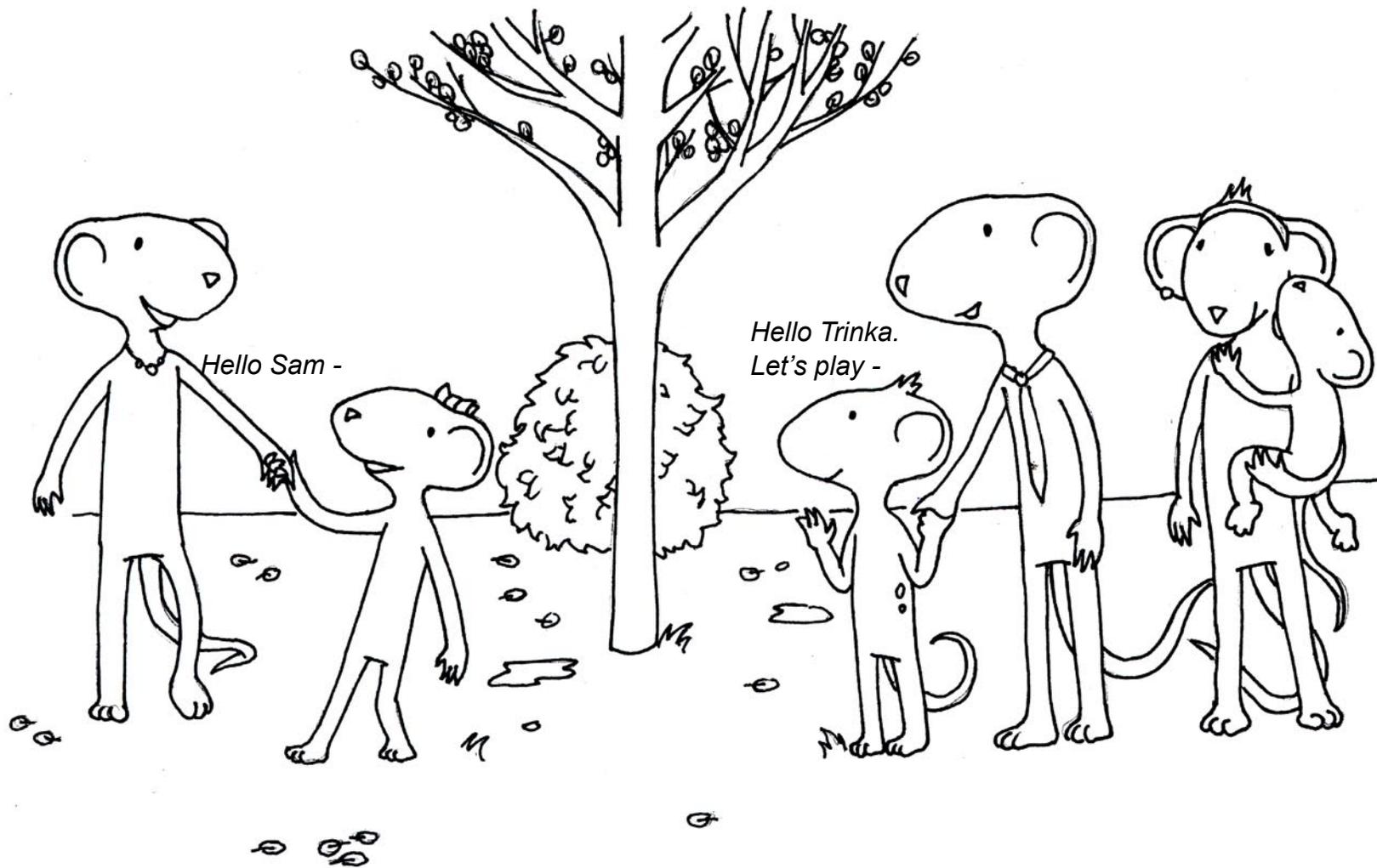
Eventually the rain stopped, and the sun came out.



Trinka opened the door.



Sam opened the door.



And they all went out to play.

## Parents' Guide

The purpose of the story is to help children who have experienced a hurricane learn to deal with their fears and worries. As the story shows, you can help your child by letting your child know s/he is safe and loved.

### Ways to Use this Story

- 1) Read and talk about this book with your child.
    - Follow your child's lead.
    - Some children may want to stop and talk about what's on the page. Let them. This is how they will begin to express how they feel and what they remember.
    - Some children may get worried while reading the book and need to take a break. That's ok. You can say something like "It's hard for me to talk about the hurricane too. It is good to take a break."
  - 2) Use it as a coloring book.
    - Coloring is fun and relaxing.
    - Children can use different colors for different feelings. For example, on page 11, when Trinka and Sam are sad and disappointed because it begins to rain, they might color that picture blue. When Sam gets angry, they might color that picture red. Doing this will help your child begin to think about different feelings.
    - As children are coloring, they will often begin to talk about what they are thinking.
    - Some children may want to scribble on the hurricane pictures to show how angry they are with the hurricane or how much they didn't want the hurricane to happen. This is a good way to share feelings.
  - 3) Use it to begin talking about what happened to your family during the last hurricane.
    - Stories are important to young children. They help them understand what happened.
    - When you read the story to your children, they will know it is ok for the two of you to talk about what happened.
    - By talking to you, they may be able to share difficult feelings. This may help improve their behavior.
    - To help your children begin to talk, ask them what they remember and whether they ever feel the way that Trinka and Sam felt. Offer that you remember that day too and be open to answering their questions.
- 34 Sometimes when children do not want to talk about themselves, they can talk about how the characters felt or behaved.

- 4) Use it to begin talking to your children about hurricanes.
  - Young children may have a lot of questions about hurricanes, but because they are little, they may not know how to ask them. Here are some questions they may have.
    - What is a hurricane?
    - Will it happen again?
    - How do we know if it will happen?
    - When will it happen?
    - What will we do if it happens?
  - When children have their questions answered, they feel less scared. Even when they are still scared, they know they are not alone. They know that they can talk to you.
  - Here is some information you might share with children to help them understand hurricanes. To start the topic you can say, "It is helpful to know about hurricanes. Here is what I know about them."
    - Hurricanes form in the ocean. In the United States, this usually happens between June and November, when the water is warm. At other times of the year, we usually do not get hurricanes.
    - Hurricanes are large storms with very strong winds and lots of rain. Sometimes these winds stay in the ocean. If the winds come on land, they may be strong at first, but then they get softer and softer and eventually they stop. The rain makes very big puddles. If there is too much rain, it can cause floods.
    - Some hurricanes are very strong and can blow off roofs. If a hurricane is this strong, people will evacuate.
    - Evacuate means you leave an area that might not be safe and you go to a place that will be safe.
    - Other hurricanes are not as strong and may only knock down trees and fences; people don't have to evacuate for these hurricanes.
    - Weather forecasters are scientists who study the weather. Some of their information comes from satellites. Satellites are in the sky. They can show us pictures of the earth and of our weather. This helps weather forecasters know ahead of time if a hurricane is coming, whether it will be big or small and whether people need to evacuate.
    - If we need to evacuate, the weather forecasters on television and on the radio will help people know what to do and where to go. They will also let people know when it is safe to come back.

## Key Points to Remember

- Even after an event like a natural disaster is over, it can continue to affect us.
- Many things may remind you or your child of the hurricane.
  - Rain
  - Separations
  - Seeing people upset or crying
- Young children often cannot tell us that they are remembering. They show their fear through their behavior. Trinkia wants to be picked up. Sam takes his brother's toy and runs around the house. Some children get stomachaches.
- Different children react in different ways. Trinkia is scared, and she becomes clingy. Sam is scared, and he acts out.
- In the story, the parents are upset and frustrated by their children's behavior, but they try to understand why their children are behaving this way.
- Even when children are scared, angry, or sad, it is not ok for them to behave aggressively – setting limits for your children will help them feel safe.
- Young children ask the same questions over and over. This is not because they forget what you told them but because this is their way of learning about what happened and making sense of it. They need you to answer the same questions over and over, as patiently and lovingly as possible.
- Let your children know that even though scary things may have happened in the past, they are safe now. Remind them of the family plan to keep safe.

## Thinking About Your Child

- Has your child acted differently since the hurricane?
- What makes your child scared?
- How do you know when your child is scared?
- How does your child tend to behave when stressed or scared?
- What can you and your child do together that will help your child feel better?

## Ways You Can Help Your Children

- Help your children talk with you about what happened.
- Help your children identify feelings they may be having, and let them know it's ok to feel that way.

## Ways You Can Help Your Children (continued)

- Help your children feel safe.
  - Young children feel safe when you hold them.
  - Children feel safe when they have predictable routines (regular meals and schedules and consistent rules) and know what is going to happen next.
  - Develop a family disaster plan, so that your children know what will happen if there is another hurricane. Include in your plan. . .
    - Where you will meet.
    - Where you will go.
    - What you will take.
    - What you will do with your pets.

## Ways You Can Help Yourself

- Adults can also be affected by natural disasters. You may be scared, and you may feel sad, angry, or guilty about all that has happened.
- In order to best help your children, you need to take care of yourself. Children, even very little children, notice when the grown-ups around them are not doing well.
- The first step to taking care of yourself is taking time for yourself. Ask yourself. . .
  - Does thinking about the disaster keep me from being able to do what I want or need to do?
  - Am I trying to completely avoid thinking about the disaster?
  - Do I feel anxious, distracted, or irritable?
  - Do I feel very sad or depressed?
  - Am I doing things that might cause problems – like ignoring things I need to do or doing things that are not good for me?
  - What good things am I doing?
- If you notice that you are having strong reactions to the disaster
  - Talk to friends or family members.
  - Take time for yourself and do things that you enjoy.
  - Stay healthy. Eat well; exercise, and get enough sleep.
  - Allow yourself to feel sadness and grief.
  - Try to return to a normal routine.
  - If you feel very overwhelmed, try to take small steps to deal with large problems.
- Many adults feel guilty about focusing on or taking care of themselves, but remember your children feel happiest when they know that you are ok.

**Additional Resources**

- NCTSN.org – information about children and trauma
- Futureunlimited.org – information about young children and mental health
- Redcross.org
  - Disaster-related materials for children <http://www.redcross.org/pubs/dspubs/childmatls.html>
  - Hurricane-related activities for families with children ages 5-14 <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/masters/familymodule/fam-cd-hurricanes-17.html>
- Zerotothree.org – information about young children and early childhood development