DEAR PARENT OR CAREGIVER,

Join Big Bird, Granny Bird, and Big Bird’s cousin Natalie as they visit the local food pantry and grocery store. Together they select and prepare foods to make a delicious meal. Like Big Bird and Natalie, your child can help select food items, wash fruits and vegetables, or set the table. As you read with your child, talk about your family’s routines. And, of course, take time to enjoy your food together! Spending time eating and preparing foods as a family helps bring everyone closer.

Big Bird was visiting with Granny Bird and his older cousin Natalie Bird. He couldn’t wait to start the day!

Big Bird wandered into the kitchen. “What are we doing today?” he asked. He peeked at Granny Bird’s shopping list. “Today is the day we go to the food pantry,” said Granny Bird. “What’s a food pantry?” Big Bird asked. “I’ve never heard of that.” Natalie explained, “A food pantry is a place we go to when we need help getting food.” “And afterward,” said Granny, “we’re going to the grocery store.” “Now let’s have breakfast,” Natalie said, “so we can fly this coop!”
When they arrived at the food pantry, Ms. Taylor greeted them. “Welcome!” she said.

Granny Bird waved hello and wrote her name on a list, and the family went inside.

Natalie saw some friends playing a clapping game. “Hi!” she called. “This is my little cousin Big Bird.” Natalie’s friends smiled and showed Big Bird how to play their game.

Big Bird looked around. “I’ve never been to a food pantry before,” he said. “Everyone is so nice here.”
Soon, someone called Granny Bird’s name and led her, Natalie, and Big Bird into a big room with tables and shelves. A friendly worker gave them a large shopping bag filled with canned vegetables, brown rice, a bunch of carrots, and other tasty food.

“Thank you,” said Granny Bird.

Big Bird peeked inside the bag. “Ooh, I love black beans!”

“And,” said Natalie, “we get to choose one more thing. Granny, can we get a bag of oranges?”

“Great idea,” said Granny Bird. “Then let’s head to the grocery store to get some more healthy foods. We’ll make a delicious meal!”
At the store, Granny Bird checked her shopping list. “Ready, helpers? Please find a dark green, leafy veggie.”

“I see one!” said Natalie. “Spinach is on our list.” Big Bird and Natalie chose a fresh bunch.

“Thank you,” Granny Bird said. “Will you also help me pick out 3 nice onions?” Big Bird and Natalie counted: “1, 2, 3!”

“Let’s get some birdseed and frozen green beans, too,” said Granny Bird. “We’ll find them!” said Big Bird and Natalie.
When they got home that evening, Big Bird, Natalie, and Granny Bird washed their hands and began making dinner. Natalie washed spinach and Granny Bird rinsed some canned black beans.

“Can I help?” Big Bird asked.

“You bet, little cousin,” Natalie said. “I’ll show you how to measure rice in this measuring cup. This dinner will be dee-licious — just wait!”
Before long, the kitchen was full of wonderful smells. Natalie and Big Bird set the table. Natalie put her special dinosaur cup at Big Bird’s place.

Big Bird took a big bite of rice and beans. “Mmm, this food we made tastes great.”

“It was a very fun day, my little chicks,” said Granny Bird. “What do you think was the best thing about today?”

Big Bird and Natalie looked at each other. They answered at the same time: “Spending it together!”