The Golden Sweater

A Story by the New York Life Foundation

Dad's Things
Dedicated to the children and families who have lost a loved one.

May this book help you keep them forever in your hearts.
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written by Edward Miller & Katy Moseley
illustrated by Dermot Flynn
Kai had felt sad before...

but this was different, something more.
This was a new kind of down.

One that felt like a lifelong frown.
Without Kai’s dad, their whole world was turned blue.

Mom didn’t show it, but she was sad too.
But this didn’t mean they’d be frightened forever.
Brave sometimes hides in the strangest of places...
for Kai...
That place was a sweater.
Just when he felt
he might never be bold,
Kai’s world was changed by a sweater of gold.
What kind of sweater makes you brave when you're sad?
The kind that is stitched with the love of your dad.
This sweater was special, it gave strength and advice.
It even cheered up his mom when she didn't feel nice.
Suddenly, he realized that right from the start...

The same brave in its stitches was stitched in his heart.
So if ever you feel life won't get any better,

Remember, brave is born from the strangest of places...
Sometimes, that place is a golden sweater.
Strength comes in many forms, you can be one of them.

Since our founding in 1979, the New York Life Foundation has provided more than $300 million in charitable contributions across the U.S. in programs that benefit young people.

Recognizing the critical need to provide greater support to grieving children and their families, the New York Life Foundation established childhood bereavement as a funding focus area in 2008 and has worked to increase research, expand services and bring greater attention to this critical yet under-resourced area.

More at www.newyorklifefoundation.org
from Kai's Mom

❤️ When explaining death to children, it's better to use clear and explicit words. Phrases such as "passed" or "passed on" or "gone away" may be easier to say for an adult but can confuse children. Say "death" and "died".

❤️ Often children and adults keep something special that belonged to a loved one - like a sweater or hat. This is a healthy part of a child's grieving. It helps them feel connected to the person they lost.

❤️ You will be grieving too. It's important to let your children see what you are feeling and to talk about how natural it is. It's ok for them to see you cry, talk with friends, and share happy or sad memories of your loved one. Take care of yourself so you can take care of your family.

from Kai

❤️ Talking about your loss can be hard. Very hard. But it's important. Just as I connected with my Mom, you can talk to an adult, brother or sister, a close friend or even a new friend who has also lost someone important in their lives.

❤️ There are many things that remind you of your loved one - a photo, a blanket, or even something they wore. Like my dad's sweater. Keeping these things close to you can give you comfort and keeps their memories alive as you grow older.

❤️ I loved to play tennis with my dad. Did you have a special activity you shared with your loved one? Maybe it was a sport, game, biking or playing music. These activities will help you keep memories strong and can be another source of comfort for you.