Bereaved mother’s new book explores the death of a baby for younger children

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A bereaved mother from Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire has produced a new children’s picture book called *In the Stars.*

Sam Kitson had always wanted to write something in memory of her firstborn baby daughter Kitty.

Three years ago, she found inspiration and drafted a form of words which eventually became a story book to help children understand about the death of a baby.

Baby Kitty died when Sam was 38 weeks pregnant and was stillborn on 30 July 2009.

When Sam’s two young children Martha and Amos discovered their sister had died before they were born, they asked a lot of questions and didn’t understand why they didn’t have an older sister.

The story in Sam’s book includes Martha who explains to her youngest son Amos about where Kitty has gone. Sam wanted to include all of her children in the story, as she knew they would never otherwise all be seen together.

Sam Kitson, said: “I really hope that families will find *In the Stars* a great help for children through a sad and sometimes confusing time. Whether they have lost a grandparent, pet, parent or sibling, the book’s beautiful, cosy and bright paintings will hopefully bring them comfort and help parents to also answer some of their children's questions.

“I am so very grateful to Sands (stillbirth and neonatal death charity) for publishing the story and helping to get it out there to many families across the country. Katie and I are very proud of the book and are excited to share it.”

The illustrations in the book have been produced by Katie Faithfull. Sam met Katie when they studied together at the University of Birmingham. Katie is an illustrator and they have been very close friends for over 20 years.

Katie’s father died when she was young, so she was able to relate to the story in the book to create a series of sensitive, yet vibrant and positive paintings. Katie had always talked about wanting to illustrate a children's book and she was delighted to be able to help Sam.

Jen Coates, Director of Volunteering and Bereavement Support at Sands, said: “Children will have many questions when a baby dies and it can be hard for grieving families to find the words to answer these or know how to start conversations to enable children to talk.

“Sam’s fabulous book is a beautifully illustrated exploration of how to remember a baby who has died using nature and our surroundings as inspiration. It’s primarily aimed at families with younger children, but is also helpful for children of any age to start a conversation.

“I would recommend the book to bereaved parents, their families and grandparents who need help in explaining the death of a baby to their children or grandchildren.”

Sadly, the death of a baby is not a rare tragedy, as 15 babies die before, during or shortly after birth every day in the UK.

In The Stars is now available exclusively from the Sands website at £8.99 (excluding postage and packing) and 50 per cent from each copy sold will be donated to the charity.

To order a copy visit: http://bit.ly/inthestarsbook or call the Sands shop on 020 3031 8898.

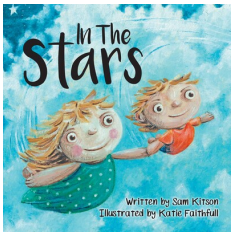
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Notes to editors

For further information, please contact Lee Armitt, Press and PR Officer on 020 3897 3449/07587

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Pictures:

- Author Sam Kitson and her new book, *In The Stars*.
- The front cover of *In The Stars*.

For possible media interview opportunities with Sam, please contact Lee Armitt.

About Sands

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity in the UK. Sands exists to support anyone affected by the death of a baby, before, during or shortly after birth. The charity provides bereavement support services both nationally through its Freephone helpline, mobile app, online community and locally through a network of around 100 regional support groups based across the UK.

Sands works in partnership with health professionals, trusts and health boards and offers a range of training programmes and bereavement care resources to ensure that every bereaved parent and family receives the best possible care wherever they are in the UK.

Sands promotes and funds research to better understand the causes of baby deaths. Sands works with governments in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England, as well as key influencers and other organisations, to create a world where fewer babies die. www.sands.org.uk #15babiesaday

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