



DONNA MAHONEY

**Sam
Gets
Two
Homes**

a
story
of **hope**
after
separation

ILLUSTRATOR JENNY JAMES

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Donna Mahoney



Donna Mahoney, known for her work as a child, adolescent and family counsellor, has a passion for the well-being and protection of children.

Through her work as a children's counsellor Donna uses many children's story books as a therapeutic tool.

Reading a book with a child holds great educational value, allowing them to see the world from another's perspective. This assists their development of empathy with others.

Seeing different strategies used, enhances their problem solving skills to see an outcome to a situation.

Books also provide great social learning and development of communication skills.

At the end of the story there is a list of questions.

You may like to use these suggested prompts to discuss with a child, to widen their learning.

Please note, these questions are a guide.

At any time a child feels uncomfortable and does not want to engage in conversation, please respect their wishes.



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Sam Gets Two Homes



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eBook Edition

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ISBN 978-1-291-74046-2

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This book belongs to:

Hello, my name is Samuel,
but they call me Sam.

This is my sister Kimberly,
we call her Kimmy and this
is our dog Holly.





We live in a house with my Mum and Dad. Sometimes my Nana and Pa stay with us as they live a long drive away. I like it when they stay. We also have a Grandma and Grandpa who live close by.



Grandma
and
Grandpa

Nana
and Pa



Mum and Dad have been fighting a lot. It makes Kimmy and I feel very sad.

When they fight, they yell at each other and say mean things.

Kimmy and I stay in our bedrooms and pretend we can't hear them.

One day, Kimmy and I came home from school and Mum was standing at the door waiting for us.

"Hello," she said and gave us both a kiss and a cuddle.




"Everything is going to be ok, but Dad is home early from work. We need to talk to you about something important."

I did not have a good feeling in my tummy about this.

We walked into the kitchen and
Dad was sitting at the table.
He smiled but he looked very sad.
Dad put his arms out and gave us
both a cuddle.



An illustration of a man with curly brown hair, wearing a red short-sleeved button-down shirt and dark blue trousers, standing in a dining room. He is looking towards a young girl with blonde hair in a ponytail, wearing a light blue sleeveless dress and dark shoes. They are standing near a wooden dining table. On the table, there is a blue mug, a glass of water, a plate of strawberries, and two red tomatoes. A black, shaggy dog with a red collar is standing on the floor to the right. The background shows a window with white curtains and a white chair with a blue seat cushion.

I asked Dad if he was all right.

“I am alright, but I need you both to know how much I love you,” he said.

“I know you love us Dad and we love you,” Kimmy told him.



I did not say anything but the feeling in my tummy was getting worse.

Kimberly and I sat at the table and Mum gave us a drink of water and some fruit.

Mum came to the table, too.

“Dad and I love you both very much and will always love you, that will never change,” said Mum.

I asked Mum what is wrong.

“Nothing is wrong; things are going to be better for all of us,” Mum added.



Dad took a deep breath.

“Mummy and I have decided that we do not want to fight, so I am not going to live here anymore,”





Kimmy started to cry.

Dad lifted Kimmy onto his knee.

“It is going to be ok. It’s just that Mummy and Daddy do not want to live together as we don’t like fighting.” Dad told her.

“I don’t like it when you and mum fight either; it makes me feel sad. Why can’t you just stop?” Kimmy asked.

“It is not that easy to stop,” Dad said.

“You tell Sam and I to stop fighting,” Kimmy told them.

“Who are we going to live with?” I asked.

“You will live with the both of us; we will just have different houses,” answered Mum

“It means that you will have two homes instead of one,” added Dad.





2 lounge
rooms

2 bedrooms

2 back
yards

2 homes

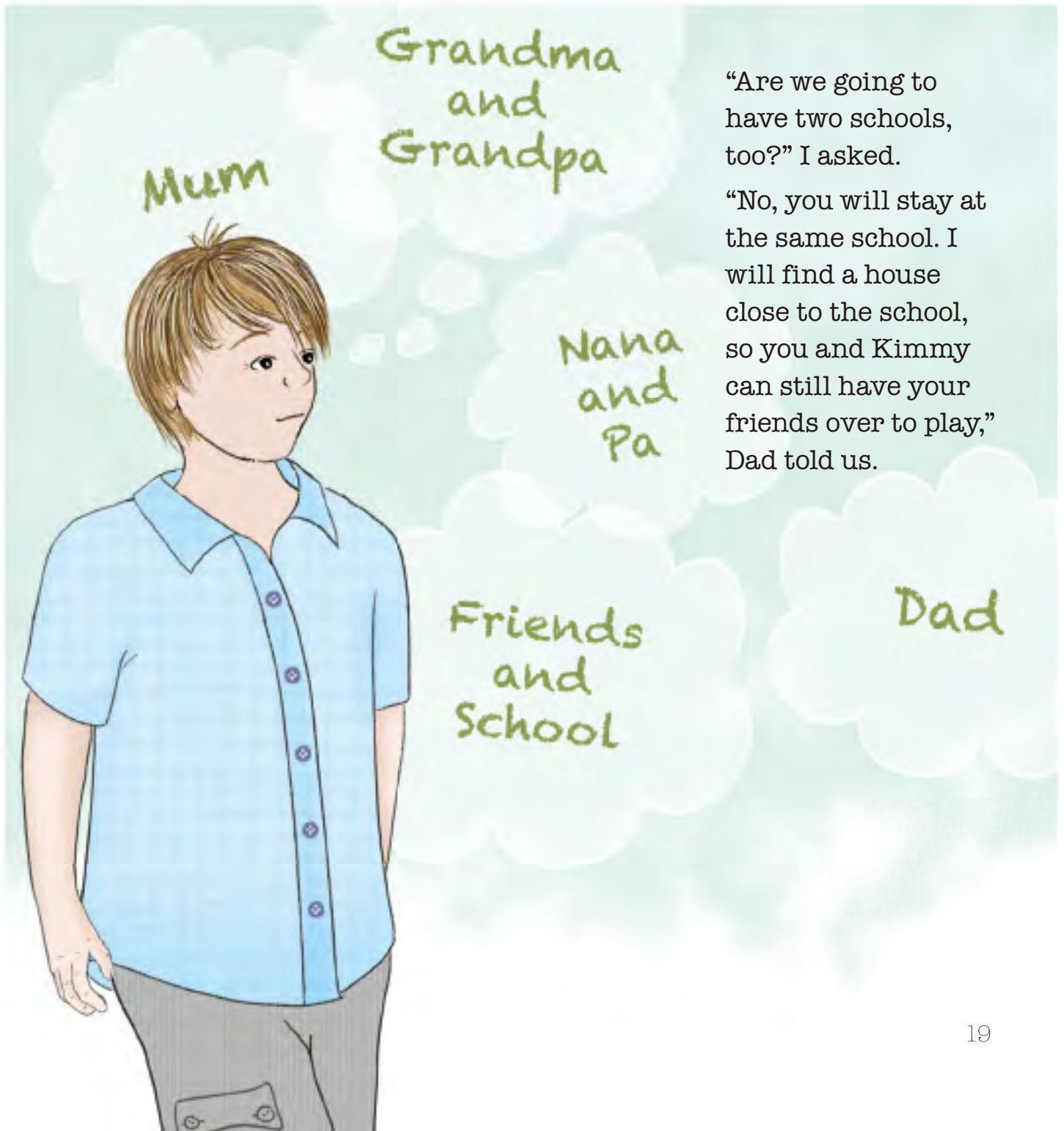
“What about our stuff?” I asked.

Dad smiled, “They are your things and you can decide what works for you. It just means that you will have two bedrooms, two back yards and two lounge rooms.”

“Is Holly going to have two homes too?” Kimmy asked.

“No, Holly will live in this home because she is an old dog and is comfortable here,” Mum told them.





“Are we going to have two schools, too?” I asked.

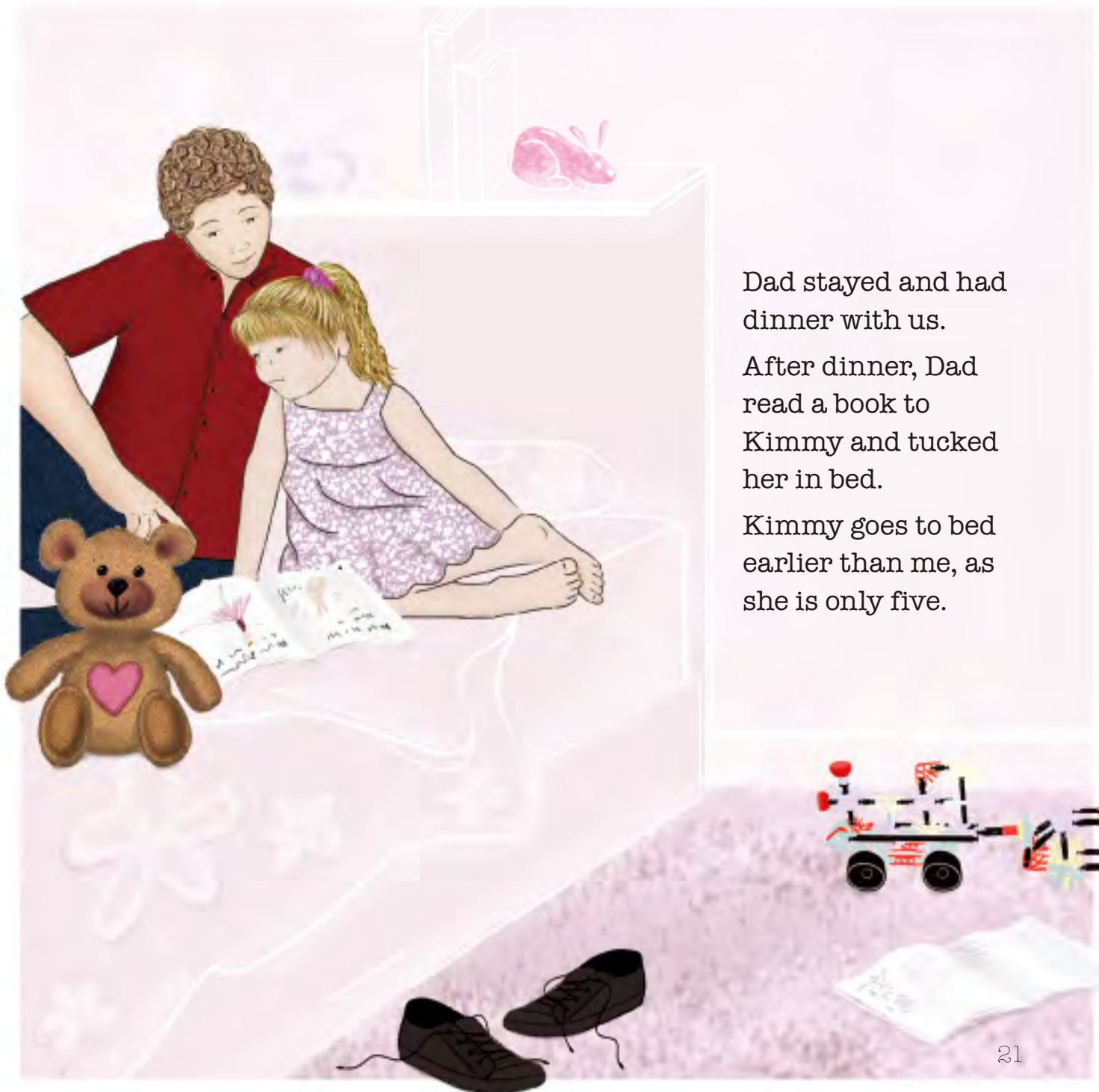
“No, you will stay at the same school. I will find a house close to the school, so you and Kimmy can still have your friends over to play,” Dad told us.

I was trying to brave
and not show Mum
or Dad that my
tummy was doing
somersaults.

“When are you
going to move out?”
I asked Dad.

“I have already
taken my things
to Grandma’s and
Grandpa’s house.
I will stay with
them until I find a
house for us to live
in,” he told us.





Dad stayed and had dinner with us.

After dinner, Dad read a book to Kimmy and tucked her in bed.

Kimmy goes to bed earlier than me, as she is only five.

When Dad came from Kimmy's room he said to Mum, "I better go now, thank you for dinner."

"That is ok," she answered.

I sat on the couch trying so hard not to cry.

My tummy was going round and round, and I could hardly breathe.



Dad walked over to me and said,
“Are you ok?”

I started to cry.

He helped me up and gave me a
cuddle saying, “It is ok for you to be
sad. We are all sad, but this is for
the best. I will always love you and
I am not too far away if you need
me.” Dad said.



When I stopped crying I asked Dad, “What did you mean; you are not too far away?”

“You can call me any time you want” he told me and then asked what else could I do, if I wanted to tell him something?





“I could text you a message on the phone.”

“Yes,” answered Dad.

“Or, I could email you.”

Dad smiled and said, “You can.”

My tummy felt a little better.

“Are you ok?” he asked.

I said, “I am ok.”

Dad asked for a cuddle goodbye and then left to go to Grandma’s house.

I watched through the window as Dad drove away in his car.





Mum came over to me and gave me a cuddle.


“We are going to be ok, remember Dad is not too far away. It is time for bed, come on, I will tuck you in,” she said.

After I brushed my teeth and got into bed, Mum came in and sat on the side.

“Mum, can I please ring Dad and make sure he got to Grandma’s house ok?”

Mum smiled, “I will go and get the phone”.





I called Dad and he was at
Grandma's house.

"You can call me any time
you like and remember, I am
not too far away," he said.

"Good night, Dad."



I kissed Mum
goodnight,
rolled over and
went to sleep
knowing that
my Dad is not
too far away.

I can call him
any time I like,
and most of all,
my Mum and
Dad love me.





SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Follow Up



Reading storybooks to children have many social and emotional benefits to the child. A therapeutic storybook is used as a counselling tool to promote conversation and assists the child to identify feelings and thoughts.

Here are some prompts you might like to ask when reading this book.

- Page 6 Is your name made shorter like Sam's? What is it and do you like it?
- Page 9 Have you ever heard your Mum and Dad fight?
When you heard Mum and Dad fighting, what did you do?
Are you able to tell me a little bit about how it felt for you or maybe we can draw it?
- Page 10 I was wondering "What do you think Sam was feeling in his tummy"?
Have you ever had that feeling in your tummy?
- Page 11 Do you know what Sam means by "Dad was smiling, but looking very sad"?
Have you ever felt sad, even though you needed to smile?
- Page 13 Do you have after an school snack? What is it?
- Page 14 Why do you think Mum's and Dad's fight?
- Page 16 How many homes do you have?
- Page 18 Do you have any pets in any of your homes?
- Page 20 Has there ever been a time when you felt you had to be brave?
Can you tell me why you think Sam's tummy was doing somersaults?
- Page 21 What time do you go to bed?
Does your Mum or Dad read a book to you before you go to bed?
- Page 22 Can you tell me what you think Sam is feeling?
- Page 24 Have you got any other ideas for Sam about how he could contact his Dad?
- Page 28 Why do you think Sam wanted to call his Dad?

These questions are guides only. Allow the child to guide you in how many questions you can ask and the type of age appropriate questions. It is important to remember if they choose not to discuss the book or answer any questions it is their choice. **Happy reading!**



Sam Gets Two Homes

a story of hope after separation

Reading storybooks to children has many social and emotional benefits to the child. Therapeutic storybooks are used as a counselling tool to promote conversation and assist in identifying feelings and thoughts.

'Sam Gets Two Homes' is told by 10 year old Sam. When he and his sister Kimmy get home from school one day, they are confronted with the news of their Dad moving out.

Separation in families is an emotional rollercoaster for everyone. 'Sam Gets Two Homes' will help children deal with any feelings that may arise at such a difficult time.

