General Information

Source: NBC Nightly News  Resource Type: Video News Report
Creator: Brian Williams/Rehema Ellis Copyright: NBCUniversal Media, LLC.
Event Date: 01/23/2014  Copyright Date: 2014
Air/Publish Date: 01/23/2014  Clip Length 00:02:11

Description
When one little boy's best friend was diagnosed with cancer, he thought of a few special ways to help out.

Keywords
Making a Difference, Friendship, Cancer, Vincent Butterfield, Zac Gossage, Leukemia, Acute Leukemia, St. Louis, Stacy Tooley, School, Adrienne Koester, Best Friends, Best Friends Forever, BFF, Hair, Hair Loss, Fundraising, Treatment, Remission

Citation

MLA

APA
Ellis, R. (Reporter), & Williams, B. (Anchor). 2014, January 23. Despite Cancer, Best Friends Strengthen...
Despite Cancer, Best Friends Strengthen Their Bond

BRIAN WILLIAMS, anchor:
Finally tonight, they were already best friends, two boys in first grade. They were all but inseparable. And like all best friends everywhere, when something went wrong, they had each other’s backs. We learned about their story from our friends at our NBC station, KSDK, in St. Louis. And tonight, NBC’s Rehema Ellis has their remarkable story.

REHEMA ELLIS, reporting:
Vincent Butterfield and Zac Gossage are first grade buddies in Union, Missouri, with a very special bond. Sure, they play--

VINCENT BUTTERFIELD: Hi, Mister Camera.
ELLIS: --and tell silly jokes.
VINCENT BUTTERFIELD: Why does the chicken cross the playground?
ELLIS: The answer?
BUTTERFIELD: To get to the other slide.
ZAC GOSSAGE: To get to the other slide.
ELLIS: But in all their child’s play, they’re teaching a very grown-up lesson about the power of friendship. Last June, Zac was diagnosed with an acute form of leukemia.

STACY TOOLEY (Zac’s Mother): As a parent, you want to make sure that nothing bad ever happens to your child and when something does, you want to be able to fix it, and I couldn’t. And-- it was horrible.
ELLIS: Despite frequent trips to the hospital, he continued going to school.
MAN: He is the strongest kid that I know.
ELLIS: Vincent stayed by his side, learning all about his friend’s cancer.
BUTTERFIELD: It’s when your white blood cell and your red blood cell fight.
ELLIS: Vincent wanted to help.
BUTTERFIELD: I took some yarn, then crocheted.
GOSSAGE: He knit scarves and he gave the money to me.
ELLIS: He raised about $200 for Zac’s treatment and then Vincent did something else.

ADRIENNE KOESTER (Zac and Vincent’s Teacher): He came in and he had a stocking cap on and he said, Mrs. Koester, I have-- I have a surprise for Zac. And I said, well, you do? And he said, yes, I do.
And he pulls off his stocking cap and here I see that he shaved his head.
ELLIS: He didn’t want Zac worried about what others might say.
BUTTERFIELD: To make Zac feel like he’s not the only one without any hair.
ELLIS: Zac’s cancer is in remission now. As for their friendship--
BUTTERFIELD: A beautiful thing.
ELLIS: “A beautiful thing,” they say, will last a very long time.
GOSSAGE: I’d say forever.
BUTTERFIELD: Like a BFF?
GOSSAGE: Yeah.