When a child is infected with RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) and has to go to hospital because of it, there is a lot on parents and carers' minds. In addition, it can be difficult to explain to siblings exactly what is going on and what it will mean for them.

This children’s book is designed to open the conversation between adult and child. It helps children understand the situation of their sick sibling better and learn how best to behave to help him or her.

Anne's baby brother has RSV

With special thanks to Brenda Wijninga, whose story has been a great inspiration to develop this picture book.

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This is Anne.
Anne is 6 years old.
Anne lives in this house with her daddy, mummy and little brother Thomas.
Anne has not known her brother Thomas that long. "But he is very sweet and he is always happy."
Thomas is feeling a little ill. He is coughing and has snot bubbles. Thomas is very tired and needs to sleep a lot.
Mummy and daddy are taking Thomas to the family doctor. Thomas has a virus called RSV.

"A virus is like a little bug that lives in a person's body" says the doctor. "The little bug is in Thomas' lungs, which is making him sick."
Most children with RSV can go home, but Thomas has to go to hospital.
Anne misses Thomas very much and visits him as soon as she can.

"Don't be scared" says the doctor, "Thomas looks a little different."

The doctors help Thomas to feel better again.
Anne has to wash her hands well.
"It is very important" says the doctor, "We would not want other children to get sick, too."
Thomas has many tubes attached to his little face. These tubes help him to breathe and eat. He needs that help because he sleeps a lot.

The doctor's visit him in a green suit. That way the doctors and other kids don't get sick off of Thomas.
Thomas sleeps in a very large bed at a large hospital hall. Next to the bed are different kinds of machines. They look pretty scary.

Fortunately, Anne can make drawings for Thomas, and use them to decorate the room.
In the hall there are many sad people walking around. These people come to visit Thomas and the other children. They hope Thomas and the other children will get better soon.
Very slowly, thomas gets better. He can breathe on his own again and he is awake.

Therefore Thomas may move to another room in the hospital. He now has his own room and lies in a cot.
"We cannot play together yet. Thomas is still sick and very tired. Fortunately, the computers are keeping a close eye on him."

Anne goes home again for a while.
At home it is very quiet.  
Mum stays overnight with Thomas.  
Dad and Anne are home alone.  
But fortunately, Thomas is almost better.
Dad and Anne hang garlands. Today, Thomas is coming home. Mum, dad and Anne are very happy.
Thomas does not need to sleep in the hospital anymore, but he is still a bit sick. He is very tired and coughs a lot.

Because of all the tubes in the hospital, Thomas is easily startled when you get close to his face. That's why Anne has to be careful for a while.
Mum and dad are still very careful with Thomas.

Thomas sometimes has to go to the doctor for a check-up. Anne gets to go with him.
Thomas is doing a lot better now.

This makes Anne very happy.
Anne and Thomas finally get to play together again.