



## Kimonos for Kai Talking Points



In Oct of 2014, Kai Wallace Wright passed away at the age of 12. Kai was a vibrant, kind, funny, and compassionate kid. His passing was tragic and affected not only his family, but also his community, from the church, to his school, to his jiu jitsu family.

In the aftermath of his death, his father James wanted to create a foundation and legacy for his son to get the word out and hopefully save one family from going through the horror and pain that his family experienced at the loss of their son. They decide on Kimonos for Kai. Kimonos are the formal name for the gi, which is used in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and judo. Kai was a practitioner of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and judo from the age of 4 ½ until his passing. He was a gifted and talented practitioner of the sport, and held multiple titles from the Pan Americans, Worlds and Nationals. His spirit was fierce and he always gave 110 percent on the mats whether training or competing. He was always humble in victory and gracious in defeat, demonstrating kindness to his opponents and epitomizing good sportsmanship. This held even outside of the dojo and jiu jitsu world, and Kai defended the weak or bullied in school, and those who could not defend themselves. If he saw someone eating alone at school he would invite them to come join him and always made new friends. In this light his family wants to continue his legacy of good deeds.

The focus of Kimonos for Kai are the simple phrases, “You are not Replaceable,” and “There is always someone to talk to.” (#youarenotreplaceable, #thereisalwayssomeonetotalkto) The goal is to get the word out to young kids and teens that there is always someone they can talk to, to help them out with whatever problems they might be facing. If they don't feel comfortable talking to their parents about the problem they are facing, there is always their sensei, a

coach, teacher, or other adults; taking your life is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. You are not replaceable.

Kimonos for Kai, wants to get the word out that taking your life devastates those around you: your family, friends and community. We as adults can help you find a solution to your problems, whether it is bullying, abuse from a family member or outsider, or whether you are just down and depressed -- just talk to someone. At the end of the day, we want each child to know that (s)he is unique, special to someone, and irreplaceable.

### Talking Points

1. Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem:
  - a. It can feel like the end of the world, losing a girlfriend or boyfriend, best friend, parent, grandparent or favorite teacher. It can feel like you might not have anyone to talk to about your sexuality, or bullying problem you might be facing, or the unknown of moving to a new school or area of the country. Sometimes it may seem that suicide is the only way out, it may feel like if you commit suicide that everyone will be better off, but that is NOT true...you are special and people care about you! You are not Replaceable! Your parents, sensei, professor, teacher, coach and many others, would be devastated and they will definitely not be better off without you. In the moment it may seem like your only option, but wait five minutes, then ten minutes and things will slowly begin to change and you will know how irreplaceable you are. You have your entire life ahead of you, and we want you to experience all your firsts, your first graduation, your first new jiu jitsu belt, or your next belt, etc etc.
2. You Are Not Replaceable:
  - a. When Kai passed away, he left an entire community devastated. His school, his dojo, his friends, his church, he left so many people behind that cared for him and loved him. His best friends, jiu jitsu teammates and coaches, and his parents still mourn his loss. His memorial filled an entire church, people could not fathom he had passed, and his parents would give up everything to have him back. When you are gone from this world, the world loses a unique and wonderful person. You may feel differently at the moment, but you truly are not replaceable. Who knows maybe you will be the one to cure cancer, help out a friend in their time of need, become a future president. You are irreplaceable!
3. There is always someone to talk to:
  - a. Parents

- b. Sensei / Professor
- c. Adult helper in jiu jitsu class
- d. Teacher
- e. School Coach
- f. Priest or Pastor
- g. Church Family friend
- h. Church Youth Minister
- i. Family Friend
- j. Neighbor
- k. Friends Parents
- l. Youth Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
  - i. Crisis text line (Text START to 741-741) trained counselor, that is free confidential and available 24/7
  - ii. [https://www.yspp.org/for\\_youth/crisis\\_lines.html](https://www.yspp.org/for_youth/crisis_lines.html)
- m. Teen Health and Wellness Center Crisis Center 1-800-273-8255
  - i. Text line (Text ANSWER to 839863) 24/7
  - ii. [www.teenhealthandwellness.com/static/hotlines](http://www.teenhealthandwellness.com/static/hotlines)
  - iii. Confidential
- n. Trevor Project for LGBTQ youth 1-866-488-7386
  - i. For LGBTQ youth in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe judgment free person to talk to.
  - ii. Confidential
- o. Youthline 1-877-968-8491
  - i. Teen to teen crisis and help line from 4-10pm Pacific Time and adult counselor all other times. Can contact them for anything that is bothering you.
  - ii. Text 839863
  - iii. Listen/Support/Confidential

4. Let someone help you: We your sensei's, coaches, teachers and parents see your potential, and want you to achieve greatness in all your endeavors. We all get down sometimes, but reach out and talk to one of us, and we can impart some of our many years of experience in helping you to solve whatever problems you might be facing. If we cannot help with a specific problem, we can guide you to someone who can. We can help you conquer whatever it is you are facing and get you going back in the right direction. Please let us help you!

5. If you are a friend of someone going through a rough time, it is not a betrayal to your friend if you find an adult who can help out with the situation. Don't be afraid to ask for help from another adult if you see your friend struggling, and especially if they are talking of suicide or self-harming themselves. It is your duty as a friend to talk to an adult and try and get your friend the help that they need!

6. Never Give Up: Just like in jiu jitsu, always working for the position, then the submission, never give up. Although sometimes the problem seems insurmountable, there is always a better path to take and get out of the problem; suicide is not one of those solutions. If you are the one in crisis, seek help from family, teacher's, coaches or trusted adults. If you are the friend of someone in crisis, get them to talk to an adult, if they will not and still insist on the path of taking their life, YOU find a parent, teacher, coach, or responsible adult and get your friend the help they need.

Thank you for your time and attention, and lets help each other during times of crisis. OSS!