

# THE HKMS HERALD

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## COURAGE TO SPEAK—OCTOBER 5TH—7PM

On Thursday, Sept. 22nd, our the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at HKMS had the privilege of hearing Ginger and Larry Katz speak about their son Ian's struggle with drugs and alcohol and how to prevent it.

The Courage To Speak® Foundation Inc., is a nonprofit organization based in Norwalk, CT, whose mission is "to save lives by empowering youth to be drug free and encouraging parents to communicate effectively with their children about the dangers of drugs." Ginger and Larry Katz founded the organization in 1996, just months after her 20 year old son Ian James Eaccarino died of an accidental drug overdose. Ginger pledged that she would do all she could to help prevent such a tragedy from befalling another family. Since then, Ms. Katz has become a nationally renowned speaker and has given over 1000 drug prevention presentations to students, parents, educators, law enforcement and state/national conferences. Reaching hundreds of thousands of people nationwide, she shares the story of her son Ian's losing battle with drugs, helping parents and educators keep our children safe.



This is a picture of Ginger and Larry Katz. They will be teaching the night course. Please attend!

**Ginger Katz Speaks at HKMS—451 Route 81, Killingworth, CT  
Wednesday, October 5, 2011, 7:00 p.m.**

**Knowledge is Power—*Courage to Speak-Courageous Parenting 101®*  
The Lesson That Could Save Your Child's Life**

It is a fact that our children will be offered alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, often many times, starting in middle school and continuing through high school. What can you do about this? Learn about substance abuse and gain the knowledge and skills needed to keep your children safe.

Following this free event on October 5, 2011 featuring Ginger Katz, a free parent education series, entitled *Courage to Speak-Courageous Parenting 101®* developed by the Courage to Speak Foundation will be offered by the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School and Youth and Family Services of Haddam-Killingworth, Inc. The *Courage to Speak-Courageous Parenting 101®* series will be held, free of charge, on Wednesday Evenings 10/12, 10/19, 10/26, and 11/2 from 7-8:30 p.m. Parents will learn effective communication strategies; gain confidence to talk to their children about the dangers of drugs; understand how to set clear rules and boundaries with their children related to use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; and gain confidence in knowing how to deal with substance use among their children.

The course covers: teen drug use trends and party culture; guidance to help reduce the risk of substance use; how to help your child handle stress; warning signs; what to do if use or abuse is suspected and much more. Parents will also develop improved listening and communication skills, which have been shown to be a critical factor in prevention.

For more information or to sign up for the series contact Cheryl Chandler, Executive Director, Youth and Family Services of Haddam-Killingworth, Inc. or Liz Young, Guidance Counselor, Haddam Killingworth Middle School at , 860-663-1241. This program is brought to you in part by the Middlesex United Way. We hope that our parents will be a part of this series and hear what the Courage to Speak is all about.

## WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

We need parent/senior citizen volunteers to play integral roles in our school. We could use some help with office filing, greeting, lunch and recess supervision, copying, etc. If you have some extra time and would like to donate it to us, please email me at [nenglish@rsd17.org](mailto:nenglish@rsd17.org) or call us here at school.

## Upcoming Events

- 10/5—Courage to Speak Presentation—HKMS Auditorium—7pm
- 10/10—Columbus Day—No School
- 10/12—Early Dismissal
- 10/12—Parent Conferences—5-8pm
- 10/13—Early Dismissal
- 10/13—Parent Conferences—1:30-4:30pm
- 10/14—PTO Movie Afternoon—3pm—Auditorium
- 10/18—BOE Meeting—7:30pm
- 10/21—HKMS 5/6th grade dance/activity afternoon—3-5pm
- 10/21—HKMS 7/8th grade fall dance—7-9pm—Cafeteria
- 10/28—Early Dismissal
- 10/31—Halloween
- 11/1—BOE Meeting—7:30pm
- 11/3—National Junior Honor Society Induction—Auditorium—7pm
- 11/4—11/5—HKMS 5/6th Grade Musical—Alice in Wonderland—Auditorium—7pm

## HOW TO GET YOUR KID TO BE A FANATIC READER

by James Patterson special to CNN, Wednesday, September 28, 2011

### Sorry, moms and dads, but it's your job -- not the schools' -- to find books to get your kids reading and to make sure they read them.

Here's some good news: This can often be as easy as teaching children to ride a two-wheeler or to throw a baseball. Case in point: When our son, Jack, was 8, he wasn't a gung-ho reader. Now, I'm sure my wife, Sue, and I have made a half-million mistakes raising Jack, but during that eighth summer of our stewardship, we did something right: We told him he didn't have to mow the lawn (hooray!), but he was going to read every day (boo).

We then told Jack we were going to help him find books we promised he would like: the Mom-and-Dad "Reading Can Be a Joy" Guarantee. We picked out "The Lightning Thief," a book in the "Warriors" series, "A Wrinkle in Time," "Al Capone Does My Shirts," a novel from my own "Maximum Ride" series, and a few others. By the end of the summer, Jack had read half a dozen books that he loved, and his reading skills had improved dramatically.

### Here's a simple but powerful truth that many parents and schools don't act on: The more kids read, the better readers they become.

The best way to get kids reading more is to give them books that they'll gobble up -- and that will make them ask for another. Yes, it's that simple.  $1 + 1 = 2$ . Kids say the No. 1 reason they don't read more is that they can't find books they like. Freedom of choice is a key to getting them motivated and excited. Vampire sagas, comics, manga, books of sports statistics -- terrific! -- as long as kids are reading. Should they read on e-tablets? Sure, why not? How about rereading a book? Definitely. And don't tell them a book is too hard or too easy. "Great Expectations"? Absolutely. "Finnegans Wake"? Well, maybe not. And remember, books can be borrowed free at libraries.

### Some schools and school systems are on top of the reading problem. Is yours?

Many schools around the country are successful at getting kids reading. That raises the obvious question: How come so many schools aren't?

There are terrific models for success with reluctant readers, but many school systems and state governments need to set aside their "not invented here" and "we have more important problems than education" attitudes.

The [Drop Everything and Read](#) program is a brilliant learning tool used by more than a thousand schools. Drop Everything and Read schools devote one period a day to kids -- and their teachers -- doing nothing but reading, and mostly reading what they want to. The results can be dramatic.

The [Knowledge Is Power Program](#) schools in Washington require students to read at least 20 books a year and to carry a book with them at all times. Hooray! The Sun Prairie public schools in Wisconsin stopped buying textbooks and used the money to buy children's trade books. Reading scores improved, because the kids wanted to read. P.S. 8 in the Bronx, New York, has a rotating library of student-published and student-illustrated books. Kids love books written by their peers. One Texas school librarian has a club for fourth- and fifth-grade boys called the BUBBAs. The kids read books such as "It's Disgusting-- and We Ate It!," "Holes," the "Time Warp Trio" series, and the "Joey Pigza" books. Silly, funny, and it works.

### Speaking of boys, here's how to get reluctant readers -- er, boys -- reading and loving it.

First, try to understand that boys can be a little squirrely when it comes to reading, and what's squirrely about them needs to be praised and encouraged.

Boys should be made to feel all squishy inside about reading graphic novels, comics, pop-

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*"It's not a matter of can/can't; it's a matter of will/won't."*

**\*\*If you want a copy of the Herald, you can download it on the district website. Click on the middle school tab and it will be located on the quick links tabs**

# ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

## Writing Challenge

Imagine that you could give advice to someone—it could be someone you know personally, a historical figure, or a famous person living today. Write an essay that identifies the person and the advice you would give. Choose a familiar subject so that you can provide details and elaboration that explain why this person needs your advice.

**Last Month's Answer**  
77 on the island; 35 left

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## HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

The following information was taken from an article in the September issue of the SADDvocate (a monthly newsletter published by the National Students Against Destructive Decisions Organization):

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) research consistently finds that kids who have frequent family dinners:

- Are at lower risk for substance abuse compared to teens who dine with their families infrequently;
- Are less likely to have friends who use illicit drugs or abuse prescription drugs;
- Are more likely to get better grades in school;
- Are more likely to abstain from smoking, drinking and using drugs.

It doesn't matter whether you cook a gourmet meal, order from a favorite take-out place or eat on the go, family meals are a great time to catch-up with your kids and hear what's on their mind.

It's never too early or late to start the tradition of regular family dinners with your children. Make dinnertime special by turning off the TV and not answering the phone during mealtime. Theme dinners are also especially fun and, if planned in advance, will give the whole family something to look forward to. Examples of theme dinners from Mrs. Ouellette's family are:

- Breakfast for dinner
- Taco night
- Backwards night – start with dessert and work backward through your meal.
- Kids choice night – great way to get kids involved in meal planning. Even more fun on Birthdays!
- Salad Bar – serve a variety of vegetables and a lean protein and allow each family member to prepare their own salad. This instills a sense of independence even for the youngest family members.
- Family game and pizza night – Turn off the t.v. and don't answer the phone. Spend the evening playing fun, family games while enjoying your favorite pizza.

To download a [free Family Dinner Kit](http://www.CASAFamilyDay.org) that includes menu cards and placemats that kids can color and recipes that you can use, visit [www.CASAFamilyDay.org](http://www.CASAFamilyDay.org).

~Michele Ouellette

ups, joke books, and general-information tomes -- especially the last. [GuysRead.com](http://GuysRead.com) has categories such as "Robots," "How to Build Stuff," "Outer Space, but with Aliens," and "At Least One Explosion." It's a wonderful site for finding books that will turn boys on to reading.

Teachers and school administrators might want to consider this: in many schools, there's a tendency not to reward boys for reading books like "Guinness World Records" or "Sports Illustrated Almanac" or "The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock and Roll." Too often, boy-appealing books are disproportionately overlooked on recommended reading lists. Big mistake. Tragic mistake. Avoidable mistake. It's all about attitude. If your kids' school library isn't a boy magnet, the school probably needs to check its attitude.

### **Where to find books your kids will gobble up.**

[ReadKiddoRead.com](http://ReadKiddoRead.com), [GuysRead.com](http://GuysRead.com), and [Oprah.com's Kids Reading List](http://Oprah.com) are excellent resources, and they're simpler to use than an iPhone. The [American Library Association](http://AmericanLibraryAssociation.org) and the [Young Adult Library Services Association](http://YoungAdultLibraryServicesAssociation.org) have recommendations for terrific books, easily found by searching "ALA reading lists." [DropEverythingandRead.com](http://DropEverythingandRead.com) has a "Favorite D.E.A.R. Books" tab on its home page.

Most libraries and bookstores are extremely generous with their time and help. Kids and parents should visit Scholastic and other book fairs. Free or low-cost books for schools are available (while supplies last) at [ReadKiddoRead.com](http://ReadKiddoRead.com), [FirstBook.org](http://FirstBook.org), and [ReadertoReader.org](http://ReadertoReader.org).

### **Reading role models, please apply here.**

Let's face it: Most of us don't realize it, but we are failing our kids as reading role models. The best role models are in the home: brothers, fathers, grandfathers; mothers, sisters, grandmothers. Moms and dads, it's important that your kids see you reading. Not just books -- reading the newspaper is good too.

The president and the first lady can be powerful role models if they are willing to pitch in and press the issue from their bully pulpit. In England, the entire country celebrates [World Book Day](http://WorldBookDay.org). Every young lass and bloke gets a pound to buy a book of their choice, and most bookstores lower prices for the day. Cheers for former Prime Minister Tony Blair, who was an active role model for getting kids reading.

By showing more respect for books, kid-influential organizations such as ESPN, the NBA, and the NFL could help thousands of kids become better readers. I cringe when I hear college-educated sports announcers scoff at books during broadcasts because they're afraid to man up to being readers themselves.

Hollywood studios and stars could inspire kids to read, but often don't. Apparently, some film directors think it's their civic duty to teach kids how to smoke. Magazines and newspapers could call attention to the reluctant reader and literacy problems on a daily or weekly basis. Fast-food chains could put stories in their kids' meal boxes -- most publishers will work with them. Video-game makers could incorporate written stories in their games; maybe it ought to be the price of admission for selling to kids. Many publishers could do a much better job of supplying free or low-cost books to schools in need.

Now, this entire article probably took you only a few minutes to read. Please don't let your effort end here. While you're thinking about it, send your thoughts, or even this piece, to your school principal or librarian. Heck, send it to the White House. If you have the means, offer to buy your local school a few good books. But most important, take your kids or grandkids or students to a library or a bookstore or go online to search for some books right now. If you have better ideas than the ones suggested here, terrific -- please share them with your school, or in the comments section below, or at [ReadKiddoRead.com](http://ReadKiddoRead.com).

Your taking action will speak louder than words to kids about the power and glory of reading: First you read, then you get up off your seat and do something to fix the problem.

*The opinions expressed in this commentary are solely those of James Patterson.*