

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 19, 2009

CONTACT: Virginia "Ginger" Katz

**COURAGE TO SPEAK - COURAGEOUS PARENTING 101  
PARENTS ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE**

Ginger Katz, founder and president of The Courage to Speak Foundation, has announced plans to implement a four-session substance abuse prevention and education program, called *Courageous Parenting 101* and is designed for parents wishing to arm themselves with the knowledge of how to keep their children safe.

The next parent series will be starting again at West rocks Middle School in Norwalk, **February 25** with the Courage to Speak presentation and introduction and continue every consecutive Wednesday, March 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2008 at 6:30 pm. **Courageous Parenting will be open to parents free of charge.**

The program had its inaugural run at West Rock Middle School in Norwalk in January 2008. Over 125 parents signed up for the program and in October 85 parents attended the program.

In *Courageous Parenting 101*, parents will learn fundamentals of substance abuse prevention, communication skills, drug trends in America, how to find out if your child is using drugs, what to do if you child is using drugs, how to access help, MTV, MySpace, FaceBook and other timely and relevant material. They will gain the tools and knowledge required to communicate effectively with their children on substance abuse issues. It is expected that participating parents will demonstrate an active role in supporting their children's decision to not use tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. They will also develop improved listening and communication skills, which have been shown to be a critical factor in the prevention of substance abuse by young people.

The Courage to Speak Foundation was born of family tragedy, namely, the death in 1996 of Ian Eaccarino, Ginger Katz's 20-year-old son, as the result of a drug overdose. A well-intentioned, but misguided family physician suggested that the family call his death the result of a brain aneurysm. In their gut and soul, they knew better. They balked. Having fought the good fight for several years, Ginger and her husband, Larry, knew that denial plays an important role in the lives of young people using alcohol and other drugs. They chose to speak out and share the pain of Ian's reality and their horrific loss.

Ginger and Larry founded The Courage to Speak Foundation in 1996 to save lives by empowering youth to be alcohol and drug free. They are accomplishing that mission one child and one family at a time. The Courage to Speak Foundation has gained local, state, and national recognition through its educational programs for children, teens, parents, and communities aimed at breaking through the silence and denial surrounding the dangers of drugs. They help children and families learn to communicate honestly and to make healthy choices.

*Courageous Parenting 101* is the natural next step in the evolution of The Courage to Speak from curriculum and programs for elementary, middle and high schools to a more formal program for parents. If you would like to become a facilitator for *Courageous Parenting 101* or you are a parent and would like to attend Courageous Parenting February 25, 2008 call the Courage to Speak Foundation, Inc. @ **1-877-431-3295** or e-mail [gkatz@couragetospeak.org](mailto:gkatz@couragetospeak.org) and visit the website at [www.couragetospeak.org](http://www.couragetospeak.org)

- END-