

NEWS FROM.....

The Courage to Speak® Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Yale University School of Medicine to Evaluate Courage to Speak® Foundation Drug Prevention Curricula

******Evaluation Made Possible by Federal Grant******

The Consultation Center at Yale University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, has chosen the Norwalk-based Courage to Speak® Foundation's drug prevention curriculum programs as a subject for evaluation.

A nationally recognized service and research organization, the center will evaluate the use of the programs in Norwalk, CT and other public school districts.

The evaluation was made possible when the Courage to Speak Foundation was awarded a federal grant to expand and enhance its efforts. The Foundation also received a Service to Science Award for evaluation technical support from the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

"Thanks to the grant we received in 2009, we will be able to evaluate programs we have been developing since 2002 and to continue to strengthen our message to children and their parents about the dangers of drug and alcohol use," said Ginger Katz, Courage to Speak Foundation Founder and CEO.

The professional staff of the Consultation Center will conduct evaluations of three separate Courage to Speak drug prevention curricula: the elementary school (Grades 4-6) based on the book *Sunny's Story* written by founder Ginger Katz, a curriculum for Middle School students and the *Courage to Speak - Courageous Parenting 101™* free course for parents. All of these programs have been developed by a team of experts in the field of substance abuse.

The Courage to Speak eight-lesson elementary school curriculum will be conducted in Norwalk, CT and in several public schools in Bridgeport, CT. It focuses on *Sunny's Story*, the children's book by Katz that tells the story of her son, Ian Eaccarino, who became addicted to drugs and alcohol and died of a drug overdose in 1996 at age of 20.

The middle school Courage to Speak curriculum is targeted to seventh graders and will be evaluated at Norwalk middle schools. The curriculum, designed to empower students to resist drugs and alcohol and make healthier choices, begins with the Courage to Speak presentation and is followed by 12 interactive classroom lessons to reinforce the message.

Evaluations will be conducted of *Courage to Speak-Courageous Parenting 101™*, a free, five-session substance abuse education and prevention course for parents. The program has trained hundreds of parents and 46 facilitators who teach the program in Connecticut and other states. The course covers teen drug use trends and party culture; drug and alcohol abuse, addiction and its physiological consequences; protective, psychological and developmental guidance to help reduce the risk of substance use; dangers of enabling and hands-off parenting; the adolescent brain, why young people use, communication and listening strategies; warning signs; the power of denial; practical steps if use or abuse is suspected; sources of help and how to access treatment.

A multidisciplinary service, research, and training site, the center is a cooperative endeavor of the Connecticut Mental Health Center, the Department of Psychiatry at the Yale University School of Medicine, and the Community Consultation Board, Inc., a private, nonprofit community organization. It develops and implements prevention programs to individuals and families; conducts prevention and community research and evaluations of community programs; provides services to promote the mental health and adaptation of persons with prolonged psychiatric and/or substance abuse disorders and their families, and provides training, consultation, and technical assistance to professionals and organizations to enhance their effectiveness and the quality of service delivery to the community.

The Courage to Speak Foundation is a Connecticut-based nonprofit organization with a national reach whose mission is to educate parents and students about the dangers of drugs. The Foundation works in partnership with many sectors of the community to build sustaining support for its school-based substance abuse prevention curricula, which includes a curriculum for Elementary School (Grades 4-6) based on the book *Sunny's Story* written by founder Ginger Katz, a curriculum for Middle School and a program for High School students.

Launched in 2008, *Courage to Speak-Courageous Parenting 101™* empowers and equips parents to prevent their children from using alcohol and other drugs, intervene when drug and alcohol use is present and find help for family and friends in trouble. "For more than twelve years, Courage to Speak has given over a thousand presentations and educated over a million students and parents across the country on the dangers of alcohol and other drugs through the Courage to Speak school-based curricula and programs in Connecticut and other states," said Peter Corbett, Chairman of the Board of Directors. Visit www.couragetospeak.org

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