

Courage to Speak – Courageous Parenting 101®

The Courage to Speak® Foundation, Inc. contracted The Consultation Center at Yale School of Medicine to evaluate *Courage to Speak – Courageous Parenting 101®* a four-session substance abuse education and prevention course for parents of upper elementary, middle and high school students. The course covers teen drug use trends/party culture; drug and alcohol abuse, addiction and its consequences; protective and developmental guidance to help reduce the risk of substance use; dangers of enabling and hands-off parenting; the adolescent brain, why kids use, communication and listening strategies; warning signs; the power of denial; practical steps if use or abuse is suspected; and sources of help. For purposes of this evaluation, the *Courageous Parenting 101®* course was delivered in 9 CT and NY locations by professional facilitators trained by the Courage to Speak Foundation. A pre-posttest evaluation design was used and participants were assessed immediately before receiving the intervention and at the end of session 4.

Key Findings

Parents reported statistically significant increases from pretest to posttest in their:

- General communication with their child (i.e., how often their child talked to them about problems in school if problems existed; satisfaction with how they talk with their child; their ability to generate solutions with their child when they discussed problems; how often they really listen to their child)
- Communication with their child about drugs (i.e. increases in the number of times parents spoke to their child about drugs; family rules or expectations about drugs; specific things to do to avoid drugs; drug use in the media; and people they know who were in trouble with drugs)
- Knowledge about their children's lives
- Knowledge and ability to recognize warning signs and reported that they were fairly confident in their knowledge of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Confidence that they could intervene and prevent their children from trying alcohol, tobacco and other drugs

Parents also felt they had relationships with the parents of their children's friends and they would tell those parents if their child was using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Among the recommendations, The Courage to Speak® Foundation is encouraged to continue to build on the strengths and positive evaluation findings of *Courageous Parenting 101®*. The Foundation should continue to serve the types of families represented in this evaluation (primarily women, Caucasian/white, older and well-educated) and determine how to reach other types of families. *

* Note: Since the completion of this study, the written course materials were translated into Spanish, 10 bilingual professional facilitators have been trained by the Courage to Speak Foundation, and the course has been rolled out 5 times in Spanish.