



Courage to Speak® Foundation
Saving Lives by Empowering Youth to be Drug Free

The Courage to Speak® Foundation is a nonprofit organization providing a home, school and community approach to drug prevention through presentations, community forums and research-based school curriculum and parenting programs. The Courage to Speak Foundation delivers social-emotional skill building lessons to increase youth's ability to live healthy lives and empowers parents with skills to communicate effectively with their children about the dangers of drugs. The Courage to Speak® Drug Prevention Programs were evaluated by Yale University School of Medicine and were found to produce significant positive changes in communication and behavior among students and parents.

The organization was founded in 1996 by Ginger and Larry Katz and is devoted to fulfilling a promise Ginger made to her son, Ian, who died when he was just 20 years old of a heroin and prescription drug overdose - to do everything in her power to prevent this tragedy from happening to another family. The heart of the work is the nationally renowned Courage to Speak® Presentation. Ginger Katz tells the story of how her son Ian's losing battle with drugs began with cigarettes, beer and marijuana, and ended with his death from overdose.

Ian's story weaves prevention facts with a family's personal experience to help audiences understand the silence and denial surrounding drug use and connects students, parents and educators to the urgent need to address youth drug abuse. The Courage to Speak Presentation has been featured at many National and State conferences, among the more notable are: National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), National Youth Conference, and Keynote at the National Narcotic Officers Association and the Connecticut PTA 105th Convention.

Developed with teams of experts in the drug prevention field, the programs include: an 8-lesson Elementary School Program (Grades 4-6) based on the book *Sunny's Story* written by CEO and Founder Ginger Katz; a 16-lesson Middle School Program (Grades 7-8); a 12-lesson High School Program; and an After-School Program (4-8) and Courage to Speak®-Courageous Parenting 101® a multi-session course offered in both English and Spanish, providing parents with tools to communicate effectively with their children about the dangers of drugs.

Courage to Speak®-Courageous Parenting 101 "Parenting Through the Opioid Crisis and Beyond"™ is the newest edition and is a single session program covering additional topics specifically related to the Opioid Crisis effecting our nation. Ms. Katz also authored *Sunny's Story*, a drug prevention book narrated by Sunny, Ian's pet beagle, and told from the dog's perspective of the ups and downs of life and how his young master's life was needlessly lost to addiction. The book is read by people of all ages, in schools and homes nationwide and is part of the Courage to Speak® Drug Prevention Programs.

The Courage to Speak® Programs are available nationwide, and over one million students, parents, teachers, health professionals and others across the country have been involved in the programs. To date, 151 professional facilitators and over 350 teachers across the nation have been trained to implement these lifesaving programs in their local communities.