

## "Courageous Parenting 101" Tonight

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Old Lyme New

Lymes' Youth Services Bureau and the Community Action for Substance Free Youth (CASFY) are co-sponsoring *Courageous Parenting 101* developed by the Courage to Speak Foundation, Inc. This is a free, four-session substance abuse prevention and education program for parents wishing to arm themselves with the knowledge of how to keep their children safe.



An introduction and presentation by Ginger Katz, pictured left, will be given on Thursday, March 5, at 7 p.m. at Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School. The parent series will then follow every consecutive Thursday starting March 12 and continuing March 19, 26, and April 2, at the Lymes' Youth Service Bureau at 59 Lyme Street in Old Lyme.

*Courageous Parenting 101* is open to parents throughout the community free of charge.

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 your child is using drugs, how to access help, how to help kids handle stress, 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 an accidental drug overdose. A well-intentioned, but misguided family physician suggested that the family call his death the result of a brain aneurysm. I

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.

Based on her own experience and research, Ginger realized that merely providing information about drug use and its consequences could not surmount the obstacles of peer pressure, cynicism, ignorance, and apathy that our young people face every day.

To truly change their attitude and behavior, The Courage To Speak would have to reach them in a more direct and personal way, encourage their families to support them in rejecting drug use, and engage the community in this battle by increasing its awareness.

Therefore, the organization's strategy begins with a dynamic, riveting, and thought-provoking presentation by Ginger Katz combining the intensely personal story of a family shattered by drugs with the latest information and statistics on substance abuse and prevention.

Told with quiet intensity and rigorous emotional integrity in schools, places of worship, conferences and other community venues, her story calls forth in her young listeners a willingness to trust her and the advice, and information, that she and Larry Katz offer.

The Katzes 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. For more information, visit [www.couragetospeak.org](http://www.couragetospeak.org)

The Lymes' Youth Service Bureau provides services to children and families in Lyme and Old Lyme including parent education, counseling, afterschool programming and positive youth development. For more information, call 860-434-7208 for more information.

The registration form for *Courageous Parenting 101* is available at [www.lysb.org](http://www.lysb.org) This program is sponsored by a generous grant from the Lyme-Old Lyme Education Foundation.