

The ADVOCATE

To the editor:

Every month, the Courage to Speak Foundation hosts a support group meeting for family members who have lost a loved one to drugs. Through sharing our saddest of experiences, we continue to give some comfort and solace to each other.

After my son Ian died in 1996 of an overdose, we started the Courage to Speak Support Group for families who have lost a child to drugs. Since we began the group, many families have walked through our door, and hundreds more have just called to share their sorrow with us. Many have e-mailed us.

We all belong to a club that none of us ever wanted to join. We are the parents and siblings of young people who died too soon because of drugs. We are ordinary people who could be anyone's neighbors, co-workers or fellow members of a house of worship. We loved our children and tried to be the best parents we could be. But drugs took them from us, and some days the grief is still unbearable.

Drug abuse is an equal-opportunity killer. It is not confined to one kind of neighborhood, one socio-economic group or one kind of kid. Drugs simply do not discriminate.

As we continue to meet and grow, we are reaching out to parents like ourselves trying to make all our lives a little easier. Our next meeting will be Sept. 10 at 6:30 p.m. at 3 Quincy St. in Norwalk.

Those interested should call (877) 431-3295 or e-mail me at gkatz@couragetospeak.org for more information.

Ginger Katz

Norwalk

The writer is founder and chief executive officer of the Courage to Speak Foundation and author of "Sunny's Story."