

## **Courage to Speak's 'Empowering Youth to be Drug Free Family Night' slated Mar. 15**

Saturday, February 26, 2011

The seventh annual Courage To Speak "Empowering Youth to Be Drug Free Family Night" will take place on Tuesday, March 15, at 5:30 p.m., at West Rocks Middle School, 81 West Rocks Road, in Norwalk (Snow date: March 16). All are invited to the event, which will bring students, parents, educators, school and government officials, business and community leaders together to affirm their commitment to keep our children safe from drugs and other risky behaviors. A complimentary dinner will be served.

This event will spotlight the outstanding work and words of students who participate in the Courage to Speak Foundation's programs in their schools. Norwalk's Mayor Richard Moccia, Chief of Police Harry Rilling and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susan Marks will introduce the students who take the microphone and speak out with their vows not to use drugs. State Representative Lawrence F. Cafero, Jr. will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

On display will be artwork created by the students during their drug prevention classes with their teachers. Highlights of the event include the students' readings of their drug prevention messages and the Courage to Speak Presentation for parents and students by Ginger Katz, CEO & Founder of the Courage to Speak Foundation. The evening includes presentation of The Courage to Speak Community Leadership Awards and Recognition Awards for parents who participated in the Courage to Speak-Courageous Parenting 101 drug prevention education program.

"Bringing students and parents together to talk openly and honestly about the dangers of drugs is the most important goal of family night," stated Ms. Katz. "By helping our students become outstanding anti-drug advocates and mentors for their friends and younger siblings, we hope to eradicate the problem of drug and alcohol use among young people in Connecticut and across the country.

Sponsors include title sponsor Affinion Group, gold sponsors TD Bank, Pepperidge Farm, Inc., Cablevision of CT, gWay Marketing Gymnasium, Herb Jay, JetBlue Airways, The Blattman Family, Sharp Performance USA and WSTC 1400/WNLK 1350, and silver sponsors Best Friends, Continental Manor Catering, Crystal Rock, The Doyle Family, Norwalk Pizza and Pasta, Patriot National Bank, Silvermine Golf Club, SmartCycles, Stew Leonard's and Webster Bank.

For information about the event, visit [www.couragetospeak.org](http://www.couragetospeak.org), or call 1-877-431-3295.

The Courage To Speak® Foundation, Inc. exists to save lives by empowering youth to be drug free through fostering education and open communication about the dangers of alcohol and

other drug use. Ginger Katz founded the nonprofit organization in 1996, just months after her 20 year old son Ian James Eaccarino died of an accidental drug overdose. She and her husband Larry pledged to do everything in their power to help prevent such a tragedy from happening to another family. The Courage To Speak Foundation develops drug prevention curriculum for elementary (based on Sunny's Story), middle and high school students as well as for parents through Courage to Speak - Courageous Parenting 101. Katz has given nearly 1,000 presentations to over a million young people and the adults who care about them.

Visit [www.couragetospeak.org](http://www.couragetospeak.org).