

Norwalk Citizen

Courageous Parenting 101 available in Spanish

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I just couldn't believe it happened in our family.

I just couldn't believe that children are being exposed to this.

I just couldn't believe that drugs took my son.

My name is Ginger Katz and I live in Norwalk. In 1996, I founded the Courage to Speak® Foundation shortly after my son Ian lost his battle with drug addiction. The doctors suggested we tell people Ian died of a heart attack or an aneurysm. But that was a lie. I never lied about my son and I certainly wasn't going to lie about him at his death. Ian made an unhealthy decision to use drugs and I was not ashamed of him. My husband Larry and I decided to speak out about the impact of drugs on children and families. For the last 14 years, we've delivered more than 1,000 presentations to students, parents, teachers, churches, colleges, law enforcement and civic groups, in Connecticut and nationally.

Since this happened to Ian, our son, I wanted no other family to experience this terrible loss. In addition to speaking out we vowed to team up with experts in prevention and in 2008 the Courage to Speak Foundation developed a free drug prevention education program for parents called Courage to Speak - Courageous Parenting 101®, offering them real-life tools to keep their children safe from drugs and other risky behaviors. This program is taught by trained facilitators who are school counselors, law enforcement officers, social workers, youth serving organization administrators and all 79 of them are experts in the field of prevention. Courage to Speak - Courageous Parenting 101® is delivered in both English and Spanish.

We are offering a two-session course of Courage to Speak - Courageous Parenting 101® in Spanish on Tuesday, May 10 and 17, at the South Norwalk Public Library, 10 Washington St. Please visit www.couragetospeak.org for information.

Ginger Katz

Founder & CEO of The Courage to Speak Foundation, author of "Sunny's Story"