



Schools introduce new drug prevention effort based on 'Sunny's Story'

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A new drug prevention curriculum for schools, which is based on "Sunny's Story," a book written by Norwalk resident Ginger Katz, is being introduced in Bridgeport.

The book encourages young people to be drug-free by telling the story of how a dog's best friend was needlessly lost.

The curriculum, developed by the Courage To Speak Foundation, is built around the book. Connecticut is one of many states to use "Sunny's Story" as part of its substance abuse-education programming.

Copies of the book have been distributed to every sixth-grader in the Bridgeport public schools. A trainer from the Courage to Speak Foundation recently prepared 26 teachers from Bridgeport, Monroe and Norwalk on activities related to the reading of Sunny's Story.

In the book, a family dog and the narrator, Sunny, is an observer of the damage done by alcohol and other drug use to his master, Ian. The heartwarming but tragic story is intended to make readers of all ages think twice about the choices they make every day.

The nonprofit Courage to Speak Foundation was founded in 1996 by Ginger and Larry Katz after their son, Ian, died of a drug overdose. The organization has reached a half-million people in about 1,000 Courage to Speak presentations in the past 12 years.

The foundation has developed elementary and middle school curriculum, as well as a drug-prevention course for parents called Courageous Parenting 101. Visit www.couragetospeak.org