

Courage to Speak® Drug Prevention Education Program for Grades 4-6 Based on the book *Sunny's Story* Written By Ginger Katz

The Courage to Speak® Drug Prevention Education Programs and Curriculum for Elementary School (grades 4-6) teaches students age appropriate social and emotional skills on living a healthy lifestyle, how and why to avoid drugs, communication and decision making strategies, and how to identify and avoid risky behaviors. The program is based on *Sunny's Story: Written By Ginger Katz*, #1 on Google for Drug Prevention. This is a tale of family love and tragedy narrated through the eyes, ears, and mind of Sunny, the family beagle.

The reading of *Sunny's Story* is followed by a nine-lesson user friendly curriculum developed by teams of experts in the drug prevention field. The lessons support children in avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, taught by classroom teachers. Students take part in skill and asset building activities through:

- Creative writing
- Art
- Journaling
- Group Discussion
- Scientific Demonstration

A recent Yale University evaluation reported among the key findings, that the Program increased:

- Knowledge and perceptions of harm regarding alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Parent-child communication about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Coping strategies and assets to avoid use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

Given the cost-effectiveness and ease of implementation for schools, this study demonstrates the program's effectiveness at positively changing attitudes and behavior for students in grades 4th – 6th regarding substance abuse.

Madison School 6th Grade Class Yearbook (Bridgeport, CT):

6th Grade Class Favorite Book: Sunny's Story

A Favorite Lesson: When we read Sunny's Story-Brenda

Best Book I Read: Sunny's Story -Derek

"Sunny's story is a perfect way to introduce the sensitive topic of substance abuse to children in elementary, middle, and high school. It engages the students at the outset and keeps their attention throughout."

Dominic Splendorio, Health Educator

"Educators and parents need to be as strong in voice as Sunny is in the story. This story has to be told, and it will save lives."

David Hay, Brookside Elementary School Principal

