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Riley Stadick's story

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My son, Riley, forever 21 lost his life to fentanyl laced marijuana edible 12/20/2022.

Riley was just starting out in life, trying to figure out how to make his dreams come true. He was passionate about everything he did, Riley loved his family, friends, listening to music, playing hockey, traveling, being out in the nature exploring and fighting fires.

Riley had a beautiful soul and the biggest heart, he would walk into a room full of strangers and walk out having made life long friendships.

Riley left VA to go to school in MO, he wanted to be a paramedic and firefighter. Then decided he wanted to go out west and fight wildfires. I remember the day he got the phone call saying they wanted him to join the team. We went shopping all day getting him the gear that he needed, the next day he got in his car and headed out west!

He fought one season and had to leave early to go back to school. During that school year he passed his EMT course and became certified. He called me and said mom, I am dropping out of school and going out west to fight a full season of wildfires! That is exactly what he did, he went back for a second season. When it was over he headed back to MO and decided to make that his home base. He was busy applying to jobs all over the country, he wanted to either be working outside or with people making a difference. Well that never happened, instead he ingested a marijuana edible laced with fentanyl and died.

It was 10:57pm on 12/20/22, I was just closing my eyes to sleep. Five days before Christmas, excited to see my son and give him a huge hug. Instead the phone rang and I picked it up. It was an officer in St. Charles MO telling me that my son had passed away. There are no words to explain what happened next, my entire world collapsed with one sentence.

Riley was my first born child and my only son, he was my world and my hero. We had such an amazing close relationship. Riley was also a big brother to two younger sisters, he was their protector, their male role model, their friend.

As a mom, sometimes we are a little biased when it comes to how wonderful we think are kids are. Well, I got on Riley's social media accounts and I was flooded with overwhelming responses from his friends, that I had never met, telling me what an amazing person he was, free spirited, supportive, genuine, kind, inspirational and so much more. Some of his friends have become family to myself and his sisters.

Losing Riley, has destroyed myself and my girls. We are learning how to continue living when a huge part of our lives is gone all because of fentanyl.

I didn't even know what fentanyl was until I lost my son. Sadly I learned very quickly the staggering number of children who have lost their lives to this, the number of parents that have to find a way to continue life without their beautiful children. I will spend the rest of my life raising awareness in hopes that it will save a child from dying and save a parent from going through what myself and many others are going through.

It is an extremely emotional and difficult thing to do but in the name of my son Riley I will never quit!

Riley's Mama

Sent from my iPhone