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My son

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My name is Carol Venditto, I am Justin Ian Crist's mom and I would like to thank you for the opportunity to share my story about my son Justin Ian Crist's demise to fentanyl. My son Justin was born on February 23, 1998. He came home to live with my ex husband, and myself at five days old.

My son was born addicted to meth and he was immediately taken from the hospital and from his birth mother. God blessed me the day my son was born the day my son came home at five days old I was a 40 year old woman, today I am 65 That's a 40 year age gap between myself and my son.

Justin was very intelligent, big brown eyes and a smile that lit up my world he was a beautiful boy, full of adventure, he was my only son I loved him dearly more than he probably knew. As he was growing up Justin loved riding bicycles, skateboarding dirt bikes, going out on the water, started riding dirt bikes and quads at two years old NRA training at 9 and as he got older, Justin liked nice cars.

My son started developing mental issues when puberty became prominent at about 13 1/2 years old punching walls and wrecking furniture and yelling and creating chaos, we took him to counseling and had a mental evaluation. Doctor said he couldn't recommend anything and didn't want to label him because Justin was a minor, but said he is having some sort of rages; we drove four hours to get to this evaluation living in a rural city that many years ago and today we still have zero resources here in Lake Havasu City for mental health or addiction issues. We currently have Mohave mental health and Southwest behavior both hiring people straight out of school not that I don't think that they should have a start at a career, but with a complexed person like my son I think he deserved better.

My son started having depression and we went again to counseling which was horrific. My son literally knew more about his condition than they did, Following this for years my son getting know where self medicated and smoked marijuana and smoked spice that was more dangerous As a minor my son went to three rehabs at 3 to 6 months each. He went to juvenile detention and the last time he went when he was 17, he ended up in Arizona department of juvenile corrections or Adobe. For marijuana!

My son was not a criminal! all of this which stems from his mental health and self-medicating with marijuana, I am not justifying drug use. All these rehabs and juvenile hall as a young child really affected him negatively. During Justin's stay at ADJC (ADOBE) my son received his diploma. It was the proudest day for him And for myself when they let my son out on his 18th birthday, he had received no help inside with his mental health condition and no help with his substance abuse. As a young adult my son kept self-medicating, he used drugs ranging from marijuana, methamphetamine heroin to fentanyl and continued in and out of jail for drug use and rehabs, 30 to 60 days.

My personal problem with the rehabs is everybody's situation is unique my son was predisposed at birth to have addiction problems by being addicted at birth it was in his make up and he unfortunately needed a considerable amount of help. Which he did not get, instead he was treated like a criminal.

Everybody's situation is different when they enter rehab it could take one person 30 days to 60 days to 90 days and another person a year and a half two years. This isn't the same for everyone nor should it be, one brain is wired differently than another person's. My son, he is not and was not a criminal. But he was treated like a criminal.

I feel the system failed my son from an early age and now he is gone If love could've saved my son he would still be here. My son was a beautiful wonderful person with a lot to offer the world and a lot the world had to offer him as well, and now he's gone. I blame the system.

My son was taken at birth by the state of Arizona to be given a better life and he came home to me and with tears in my eyes, I will tell you I did everything in my power to give my son the best of the best, when the addiction started I enabled I tough loved and I set boundaries I took him to counseling to court put him out on the street you name it I did it.

The state did not help with his problems. They made them worse by locking a young boy up for marijuana and not helping his mental health issues and drug addiction. I grieve my son every minute of every day My son overdosed June 3, 2023 at 25 years old alone in a car for two days before he was found 3 1/2 hours away from me People fentanyl kills. Most Street drugs are laced with fentanyl. You never know when! One hit one line One pill fentanyl will kill, it took my sons life. He was five months in jail and came out clean and sober and fit, they found my baby on the third day after he got out of jail, he had been there in the car alone already gone for 2 days. He did not want to die...

Believe me when I tell you that my son's addiction was very chaotic for many many years and it caused a lot of pain to me and my family and my son. His addiction became my addiction and my family's addiction and now my worst nightmare! I got that phone call that no mother ever wants to get I am forever broken. Please help save our children



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