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## National Children & Youth Winter E Newsletter

### “Following Their FootSteps... Making History”

***“The mission of the Sons of The American Legion Committee on Children & Youth is to formulate, recommend and implement plans, programs, and activities of The American Legion. The Committee’s responsibility is to promote the care and protection of the children of veterans; improve conditions for all children and youth with due concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home; prevent social and physical ills of children and youth where possible, utilizing services and cooperating with sound organizations and agencies for children and youth; maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs; and such other purposes as maybe assigned to it by The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee; and to assist The American Legion Children and Youth Program in carrying on for God and Country.”***

The Children & Youth Committee will be sending this E newsletter out quarterly so as to keep everyone current on an important Pillar of The American Legion. We encourage any Detachment or Squadron to send information to us of events on involving children & youth in your area.

Our committee consists of 5 members as follows in case you would like to contact any of us for further information or to share information as well

John Waite- [waitejohn@comcast.net](mailto:waitejohn@comcast.net) (802-384-0088)

John Mejia - [rinatso.mejia@yahoo.com](mailto:rinatso.mejia@yahoo.com)

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**We never want to lose sight of what the 4<sup>th</sup> pillar of our organization Children & Youth was founded on:**

- Strengthening the Family Unit
- Support quality organizations that provide services for Children & Youth
- Provide our communities with well-rounded programs that meet the physical, educational, emotional and spiritual needs of our Children.

## **A Real Life Inspiration- 11 year old Rylie Maedler**



In November of 2017, in Rehoboth, DE I had the privilege of meeting this young lady and her Mother pictured above, at one of her Rylie Smiles fundraising events. Believe me she is an inspiration.

In 2013 Rylie developed an extremely rare bone tumor that was aggressively consuming her maxilla and facial bones. After tons of tests, she was sent to Oncology, scheduled for more testing and a port to be put in for Chemotherapy. An hour into the port procedure and bone tap, her doctor came out looking relieved. They had sent another frozen sliver of the tumor to the pathologist they were more convinced it was malignant.

Rylie had a long road ahead of her and she is still on it. The tumor is Aggressive Giant Cell, it mimics cancer well. The Tumor had eaten away at her palate, maxilla, upper lip bone, sinus orbit, eye orbits, cheek and jaw bone. Her parents promised her if she listened to them and the doctors they would give her a prize.

Not long after her surgery, Rylie was sitting in the hospital waiting for the sedation team and playing on her iPod touch keeping herself occupied as usual. Rylie wished that she could give each of the kids she had met an iPod. She said I get to go home and they don't. Rylie had survivor's guilt. Unfortunately the carefree little girl was lost, because it opened up her eyes to many truths.

She asked for that prize that she was promised and that's when she started [Rylie's Smile Foundation](#) which is a 501c3. With this foundation she gifts Apple iPod Touches to children who are faced with similar situations, plus she raises research funds for Pediatric Cancer. Since the spring of 2015 she has given 80 iPod touches in Delaware and would love to triple that.

At only 11 years old now, Rylie is a mover and a shaker, let's keep an eye on her because she has plans to make as much of an impact as she can.

Please click on link above for her complete story and to help Rylie as much as we can.

**John Waite**



### **The American Legion Endowment Fund- Main Focus of Committee (see attached)**

In 1925 American Legion members along with the American Legion Auxiliary & American citizens joined the campaign to take care of World War I veterans, widows and children who struggled to return to regular life. Raising nearly \$5 million and established The American Legion Endowment Fund. Out of this, the TFA was founded and the endowment fund continues to help veterans by funding training for service officers, so that they are up to date on the latest veteran claim regulations, procedures and laws within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Court of Appeals. Donating Works, your donation to The American Legion Endowment Fund goes directly toward helping children & military veterans.

<https://www.members.legion.org/tal/donatenow>

Please remember your Children & Youth Committee is here to serve you and help Detachments and Squadrons. We are here for The Betterment of Our Children as they are our Future.

**John Waite (VT)**

**National C&Y Chm.**

## **The Children & Youth committee supports many different programs.**

Here is a summary of a couple of those programs.

The [Family Support Network](#) is a system designed to help the family of active military personnel who have been deployed. The assistance comes in many forms it can be financial, helping with minor vehicle repairs, helping with yard work around the house or someone to talk to that understands what they are going through. The American Legion Family Support Network nationwide number for assistance is 1-800-504-4098 or you can go to the web site

The [Temporary Financial Assistance](#) (TFA), was established to provide financial aid to the children of veterans. The monies provided can be used for all basic needs of the family. The veteran does not need to be member of The American Legion but must be eligible to join. TFA applications must be submitted through the department adjutant or the department chairman of Children & Youth and must be verified by the department adjutant or Children and Youth Chairman.

<https://www.legion.org/familysupport>

<https://www.members.legion.org/tal/donatenow>

**John Lawrence (LA)**  
**National C&Y Committee Member**

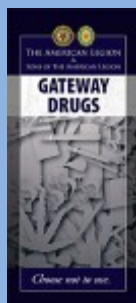
## **The American Legion & Sons of The American Legion**

### **Legion Members Helping kids make the right choices**

The Sons of The American Legion are very concerned about young people destroying their lives by using drugs. **Alcohol, tobacco, inhalants and marijuana** are often readily available and considered the entryway to a life of drug-dependency and delinquency.

**Gateway drugs** are so-called because the use of these drugs often leads to drug abuse, addiction, and to the use of other drugs such as heroin, cocaine and LSD.

For the past two years the Legion family members of American Legion Post 159 in St. Clairsville, Ohio, has provided support to the Belmont County Schools, to help fund a program designed to help students in all the county's schools stay drug-free.



This program is known as the **Staying Clean Club**. Students may join the Staying Clean program at the beginning of the school year by filling out the program's form. There is a \$10 fee that covers all drug testing, and any rewards earned throughout the year.

More than 400 students in the school system have signed up for the Staying Clean program.

By joining the program, students agree to be randomly drug tested throughout the school year. All results of the tests are kept confidential. If a student tests positive, only the club coordinator and the parents are made aware of the results. School officials are not provided the results.

Students who test positive for drugs lose their club ID cards and don't have them returned until testing negative.

Patrolman Jeff S. Gazdik, a member of the St. Clairsville Police Department and the School Resource Officer for St. Clairsville-Richland City Schools said "We are so fortunate in St. Clairsville to have Post 159 support our schools and community the way they do.

"Our students appreciate the support of Post 159 in rewarding them to stay drug-free. Without support from fellow classmates, staff, administrators, parents and community organizations, students could very easily choose drugs, which would lead to bigger problems in their life."

Post 159 Adjutant Rick Johnson said. "We've been very supportive of (the program) and will continue to do it probably annually as long as the program is successful."

Drugs ruin the lives of users and often the lives of their friends and families. Think that it couldn't happen? People now suffering with terminal health problems or serving prison sentences used to think so too.

**Alcohol:** About one in five youth drinkers develop alcohol dependency.

**Tobacco:** Used in many forms, tobacco delivers nicotine to the body and is extremely addictive.

**Inhalants:** Inhaling or "huffing" commercial chemicals, solvents, gases, and nitrates is extremely dangerous and can cause immediate death or irreversible damage.

**Marijuana:** Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main mood-altering chemical found in marijuana, adversely affects the brain, lungs, heart, reproductive and immune systems.

One thing that is currently effecting people's lives are **Opioids**.

**Opioids:** are drugs that are used as painkillers. Continued use and abuse can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms.

Let us Sons of The American Legion take the time to learn and familiarize ourselves with the information about Gateway Drugs. "Choose not to use" and live a healthy and productive lifestyle. After all, you are worth it.

**Every life is sacred and must be preserved,**

**Greg Price (MI)**

**National C&Y Committee Member**

## **Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program**

I first learned about this program last year on a trip to Connecticut. Connecticut is one of twenty-one states that has a Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program sponsored or supported by The American Legion. Each state has a different name for the program such as Trooper Week Program, Law Enforcement Training or State Police Youth Week. As Boys State trains our youth for roles in government, Youth Cadet Law Enforcement is a program that provides first-hand experience and insight into the operations of law enforcement agencies. This program will give both male and female high school students exposure to careers in law enforcement. This program will teach our youth an understanding and respect for the law enforcement profession and their techniques. It's a great way for our youth to see first hand what challenges law enforcement make in the community.

It's great that 21 states have this program, but it should be expanded to all states as it is a worthwhile and challenging program for our youth. To learn more about this program go on The American Legion website ([www.Legion.org](http://www.Legion.org)) and there is a connection under Programs. Also, there is a listing of the 21 state Departments offering the program. If your state is not one of them, please consider adding this to your states offerings.

**Joseph A. Korba (NJ)**

**National C&Y Committee Member**

## **Comfort Tool or Toy**

For over ten years the Josh Dog program has brought joy to the recipient's.

Originally intended for our children confined to hospital beds to help cope with their speedy recovery by providing a friend that would never leave their bedside.



If mom or dad had to leave the room, and with Josh already being part of the family, all they had to do was say, "don't worry Josh will be here to take care of you until we get back".

Having Josh as a comfort tool instills a sense of feeling that nothing will harm you in any way.

The same goes for our "G.I Josh" when mom or dad have to be gone for a while on active duty, if G.I. Josh has been presented to the child, Josh will remind them that mom or dad will be thinking of them until they return.

So, Josh Dog, comfort tool or toy?

John Mejia (CA)

National C&Y Committee Member





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**April is  
Children & Youth Month**





National Children & Youth Committee

Is

Challenging You for a Personal Donation for \$50.00

And receive a "Commander Challenge Coin"



Remember it's For The Betterment of Our Veterans  
and their Children

Please contact your committee at

[waitejohn@comcast.net](mailto:waitejohn@comcast.net) or text to 802-384-0088