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New youth Act fulfills commitment

The federal government on March 11 introduced the proposed Youth Criminal Justice Act to replace the Young Offenders Act.

The new law fulfills a commitment made by the government when it launched its Youth Justice Strategy last year. The strategy includes a broad range of measures to make Canada's youth justice system more effective in protecting the public from youth crime. The strategy's primary goals are to prevent young people from turning to crime in the first place, ensure both violent and non-violent youth are given meaningful consequences that reflect the seriousness of the crime, and effectively and safely rehabilitate young people so they won't re-offend.

The new Act will:

- Encourage a full range of community-based sentences and effective alternatives to the formal court process for dealing with non-violent youth that focus on accountability and repairing the harm done to the victim and community. These include compensation to the victim and community service.

- Establish tougher consequences for serious youth crime, by expanding the offences for which a young person convicted of a serious violent offence could receive an adult sentence, lowering the age

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Julian Reed

of youth who could receive an adult sentence for serious violent crimes from 16 to 14, and allowing the publication of names of all young offenders who receive an adult sentence.

- Create an intensive custody and treatment sentence for serious, violent offenders who suffer from a mental, psychological or emotional disorder.

- Establish an effective rehabilitation and reintegration process that would require all young people who have served a period in custody to also serve a period of controlled supervision in the community. The current system does not require this.

- Expand the role of victims in the system to ensure they receive the information they need and are treated with respect.

For more information:
<http://canada.justice.gc.ca>

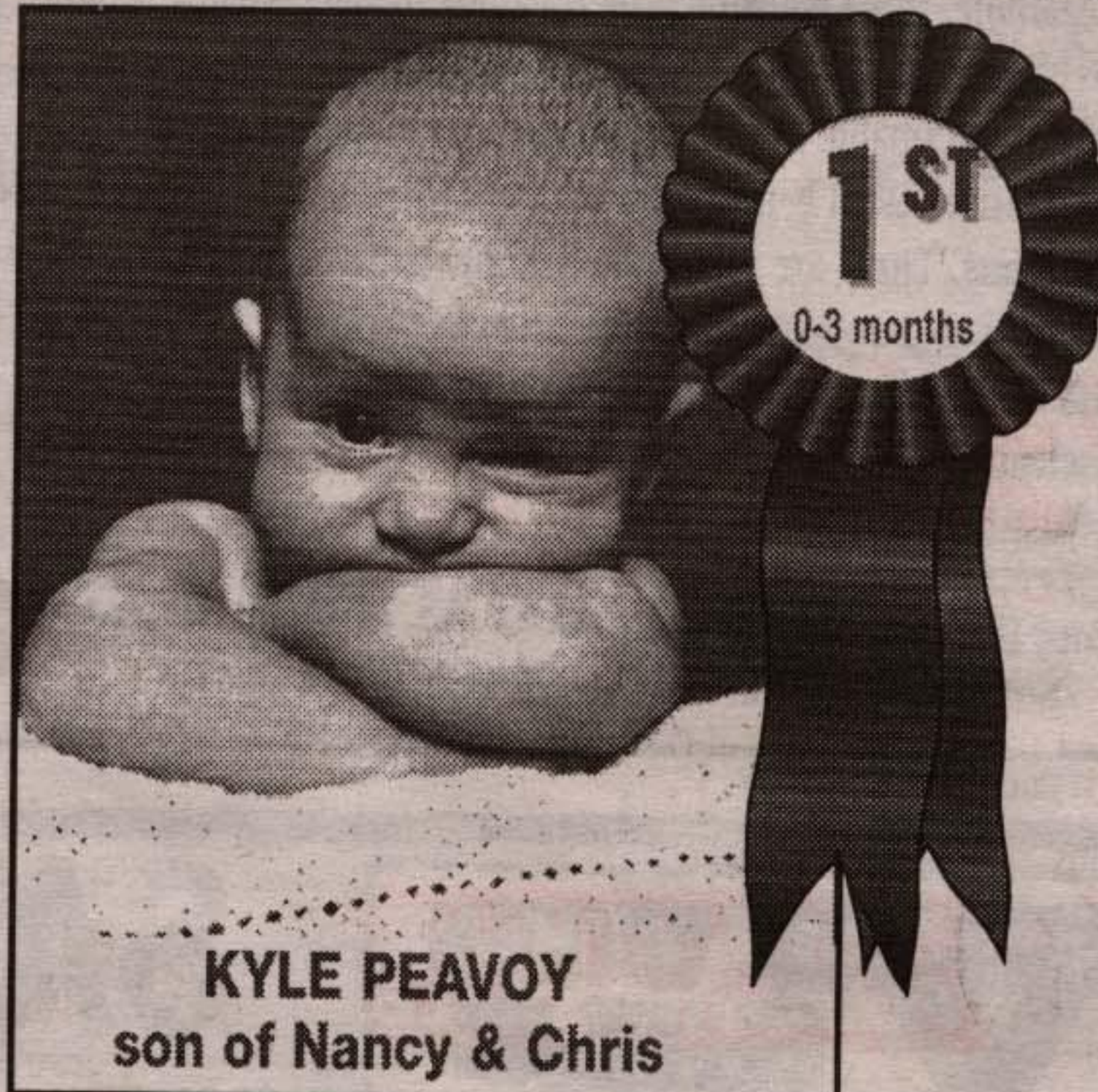


Chess masters

Winning competitors in the annual Chess Bonanza tournament assembled for a photo after the competition. Seated, from left, winners in the junior category were first place, Tommy Beedham, 10, third place Charles Edwards, 11 and second place Ryan McLean, 8. In back, senior winners were, first place Andrew McLean, 12, and Steve Kogan, 14, and Jonathan Southgate, 12, who tied for second place. The tournament was sponsored by the Optimist Club of Georgetown, Halton Hills Chess Club and C&S Printing.

Photo by Ted Brown

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