

It has been 4 years of hell for our family. Our eldest son started smoking skunk at about the age of 15. Within a year, he had his first psychotic episode, banging his head on the table and smashing things up. His drug habit had become completely out of control, his only purpose for getting up in the morning was to smoke. My husband and I both thought that he must have been on something other than cannabis as he seemed unable to function at all. We decided to take him out of school and away from the people he was mixing with. He never went back! My husband took him to Australia as friends of ours have a coffee farm and they very kindly offered to have him there for a few months. The idea was that he could help on the farm and hopefully when he was lucid enough, maybe have a fresh focus on life. All of this was four years ago. My son is now 20 and in a psychiatric hospital for the second time in a year. He has been on a section 3, but at the moment he is a voluntary patient. He has attacked me, my husband and an elderly gentleman... all from the voices he has in his head. The amount of violence has been unbelievable, tempered only by numerous different medications. None of which have helped him significantly. His life has been totally ruined by this insidious drug. Our son has become the complete opposite to the person he was. He was a fantastic footballer and played volleyball for the county. He was a great sportsman. He dressed very well and was a healthy eater. Our son is none of these things now, and shows interest in absolutely nothing. The Early Intervention Service have tried with him, but they can offer nowhere near the amount of time that he needs. His 3 years with them is now up and they don't really know what service to pass him onto. Its a complete joke. Do we just have to give up on all these young people but let the dregs of society keep making all this money from our misery? This life changing experience has impacted our lives so intensely that nothing will be the same again for any of us. I weep when I think of how different our sons life could have been had he never smoked skunk. I could go on and on but I'm sure that many of you already know how the story goes. My thoughts are with everyone who has suffered like our family