

Our son Max is now 19 and coming to the end of a music course. He was turned down for 6th form by his school due to behavioural problems, after having a late diagnosis of a mild learning disability which means that a lot of information goes over his head and he has organisational problems. He started smoking skunk when he was around 15 and has continued to do so on and off. We had a terrible time with him when he was 16-18. The skunk smoking made him paranoid, unpredictable, unable to sleep and very angry - he thought everyone was out to get him, especially me, his mother. We've had quite a lot of damage in the house during violent rages, never physically towards us, but towards walls and doors. He's damaged his hands quite badly on occasions, punching things, not great for a musician... He seems to have almost stopped smoking skunk, and is a different person recently, much calmer and more reasonable, more reflective and open to talking. The change in him is huge, but also goes hand in hand with a growing maturity. I think that the worst thing was having a son who acted like a stranger and viewed us as 'The Enemy', when we were only trying to help him. Any kind of questioning or attempts to reason with him were seen as interference and "treating me like a cretin". He insisted on trying to organise everything himself, any attempts at help with things that he obviously found difficult because of his poor organisational skills were seen as attempts to belittle him, coddle him and undermine his independence. It's been like walking a tightrope for me and my husband, and has had a very bad effect on younger sibling. We all feel like there is now a light at the end of a long dark tunnel. The c Your kid will turn round one day and realise their own mistakes and their negative effect on the family. When you're actually down there in the pit, you can't see that, but you have to keep that image firmly in mind. Love and best wishes to all those families out there who are dealing with a similar mix!