

Our son died in february 2006.This is the date that Ethan's cannabis habit stole his soul.He was just thirteen years old and had up to this date been a bright,articulate and witty person.He became paranoid,aggressive,uncontrollable and violent.He became everything he had never been,and we became bereft. We were an ordinary family,we lived in a nice neighbourhood and Ethan's friends were all lovely kids.His two younger sisters looked up to him as he could always make them laugh.They could argue occasionally over the tv handset or some other triviality but it would be soon forgotten and it never became physical.Ethan's school record was excellent both accademically and in regards to his behaviour.In his year six report it said how he was a good role model for the less well behaved students! When Ethan's behaviour first deteriorated we were unaware of his smoking habit.The signs were there but we were naive.He changed his friendship group,personal hygiene went out the window and boy could he eat!We had both commented to each other that there was never as much money in our purse/wallet as we thought there should be but both of us put that down to old age! I attended a workshop run by the school about teenage issues and it was only when one of the facilitators,who was talking about drugs,looked straight at me and only me and said,"even children from middle class backgrounds take drugs" I was quite shocked because,a,i had never thought of myself being middle class and b,it had never entered my head that Ethan would take drugs.He was too sensible to do anything that stupid.How stupid was I! We confronted Ethan with our suspicions which he not only didn't deny but almost glowed in the knowledge that we knew.His behaviour rapidly went downhill.The girls were terrified of him.If he was upstairs they would only go upstairs with one of us.If he was downstairs they would stay in one of the rooms with us.We tried allowing Ethan's new friends to come into our home,the idea being to get to know these people and at least we could monitor their behaviour.It was disastrous,their language was vile,they never slept which meant nor did half the street,they broke things just for fun including the girls toys and a window,and we were considered out of order when we expected an apology! Eventually we had Ethan arrested for trashing the house yet again.The two police officers who came round were very supportive.I suppose they've seen it all before,although they were surprised at the amount of damage.This proved to be a tuning point for us.It seemed to be the wake up call Ethan needed.He looked really angry for a couple of days and then there were optomistic signs of the old Ethan coming back.But Ethan flatly refused to go to school,in fact he flatly refused to go anywhere but we consoled ourselves with the fact that at least he wasn't smoking skunk anymore.We took him out of school and home educated him for a while waiting for our appeal to get him into another school some forty minutes away.On the day of the appeal Ethan was almost back to his old self and was very articulate and he won his appeal and was soon enrolled back into school.Things were great for a while,he went to school,his girlfriend came around after school, we even all went on a fami ly holiday.In this country of course just in case things changed! Ethan had been off of skunk for thirteen months when the sudden explosions erupted again,he wouldn't come home,was playing up at school,etc ,its all started again.That was eight weeks ago.A living hell again.We suspected that he was smoking skunk again but couldn't quite believe it after coming this far. I cannot thank one of his friends strongly enough for phoning and telling us what he is doing.She is a true friend and i prey that one day he may thank her. Tomorrow we start again,contacting services to try and get Ethan the help he needs.We've had a few months repreive to recoup our strength,we've warned the girls and we will not settle for"if Ethan doesn't want help,there is little we can do"he is worth too much to us to give up and we will have our son back.