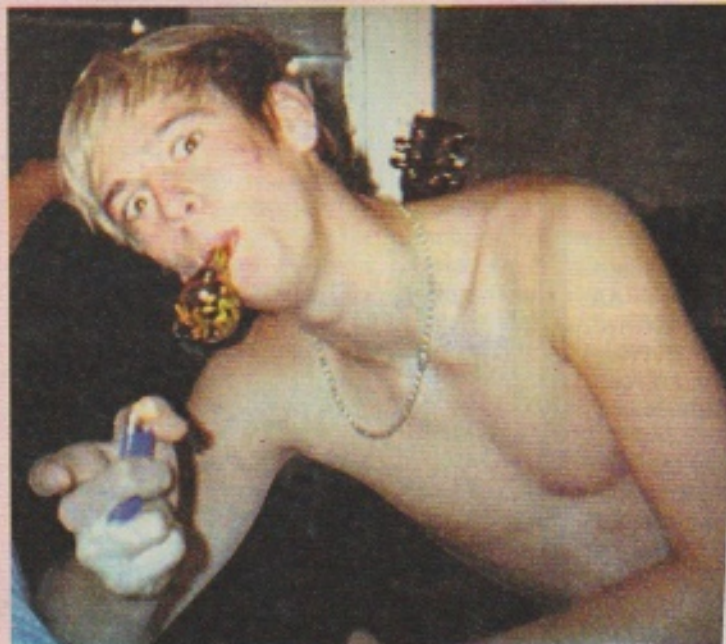


Despite Aaron's early success, he has been plagued with substance abuse problems for years



Aaron Carter joins **'CELEBRITY REHAB'**

— after career goes to pot!

AARON CARTER is joining the upcoming edition of "Celebrity Rehab with Dr. Drew" in hopes of relaunching his stalled career.

The former teen heartthrob has two reasons for appearing on the VH1 reality show – to get sober, and to raise his profile so he can get back to work, *The ENQUIRER* has learned.

"Aaron has a terrible marijuana problem, and he's no longer being offered much work," said a family friend. "At least by appearing on VH1, he will be back in the spotlight and get used to being in front of the camera again. And hopefully he can get sober at the same time."

AARON'S MOTHER JANE AND HIS former manager Johnny Wright are now working together to revive what was once a very promising career.

The 20-year-old – who has been linked with Lindsay Lohan, Hilary Duff and Brooke Hogan – has recorded seven albums and appeared in various TV shows, as well as on Broadway.

But despite his early success, Aaron has been plagued with substance abuse problems for years.

When he was 15, he was

photographed smoking pot out of a bong. In February of this year, police stopped him for speeding and arrested him after finding pot in his car.

"Aaron is a pothead. He smokes it morning, noon and night – and it's kept him from dealing with his problems," continued the friend.

"He made good money as a teenager, and when he turned 18, he got access to \$2.7 million – but before he knew it, it quickly was being whittled away.

"Now he's blaming his father Robert for allowing that to happen – but once Aaron became an adult, the money was

his to do with what he wanted."

In a 2006 effort to revive the sagging careers of both Aaron and older brother Nick (of Backstreet Boys fame), he and his four siblings were featured in the reality show "House of Carters," in which the five Carter children reunited to live in the same house.

Added the friend: "Aaron has had it really rough the past few years – his parents' divorce in 2004 hit him hard – and it's good he's doing something to dig himself out of the hole he's in."

by **ROBIN MIZRAHI**

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This season's cast of "Celebrity Rehab" at Pasadena Recovery Center