

Case Study 9 Session 4

Please spend some time reading the case study on your own. Think about what your responses are to the situation described and to the questions asked at the end. Think about what your relationship might be to those involved.

Mrs Jones mentions when she sees you that she is worried and concerned about her youngest son, Gareth, who is 17 years old.

Gareth is supposed to be studying for his exams but she and her husband do not think he is doing very much. Over the past couple of months he has started to act a bit strangely.

They didn't worry about it too much at first—he is a teenage boy, after all—but his behaviour has become very odd and he no longer seems like the boy they knew.

He is insisting that no-one goes into his room and he keeps the door locked, refusing to let her in to tidy up and change the sheets, which haven't been changed for weeks.

She sneaked in when Gareth went to the loo and was shocked by the state of it. There are dirty plates and cups everywhere, books and CDs scattered about.

The room is dark, he's pinned a blanket up over the curtains. Stranger still, he has covered the mirror on the wardrobe door with a sheet.

The TV is turned round to face the wall and he has built a pile of books round it, as if he is trying to hide it. All his posters are ripped off the walls and he's written something

about Satan on one of the walls.

He was furious with her when he found her in his room. For a few seconds, she was frightened that he was going to hit her, which is not like him at all. He has always been such a quiet, gentle boy. He kept staring at her as if he did not recognise her.

He and his dad had a big fight about how loudly he was playing his music. It just seemed to get louder and louder. His dad took his speakers away. He's stopped going out with his mates and they've stopped calling for him—they say that he's 'gone weird'.

Mrs Jones wants to know if she is worrying about nothing. Her greatest fear is that Gareth is taking drugs.

Questions for discussion:

1. What is your reaction to what Mrs Jones has to say?
2. What is the next step that you take?
3. How do you discuss your concerns with Mrs Jones?
What do you say?
4. Who do you contact and what do you expect from them?
5. What approach, if any, do you make to Gareth?