

# 'We wanted to knock each other out!'

**Backstreet Boys singer Howie Dorough relives the boyband's time at the top**

**C**hances are, like us, you stuffed your stuff to the Backstreet Boys throughout the 1990s. The band – AJ McLean, 37, Nick Carter, 35, Kevin Richardson, 43, Brian Littrel, 40 this week, and Howie Dorough, 41 – sold more than 130 million albums, making them the biggest-selling boyband of all time.

But fame came at a price and the boys battled personal demons, such as AJ's well-documented drug and alcohol addiction. Their story is now being brought to the big screen in new movie *Backstreet Boys: Show 'Em What You're Made Of*, so we caught up with Howie to find out what the journey was really like...

**Hi Howie! Tell us about the film...**

We've always felt there was a story behind the group that is more than what people know. When Kevin came back, it felt like it was the right time. We wanted to take everyone back to our home towns to see where we came from.

**Was it emotional to make?**

We decided to be very upfront and honest and not hold back. We're not perfect. We have moments when we love each



other and moments when we want to knock each other out!

**Did you struggle with fame?**

Personally, I didn't think it was hard. It affected the younger lads, who missed out on going to school, dating normal girls, going to dances... Luckily, most of us had families who kept our feet on the ground.

**Was it difficult to take everything in at the time?**

It's definitely difficult to understand. It's weird for anybody to fathom having thousands of people screaming for you. There have been crazy times when there were thousands of people and we had to figure out a way to get to our tour bus. You would have thought the Queen was there or something!

**AJ has battled drug problems.**

**Was that hard to watch?**

I didn't even know about it, I was such a late bloomer. Drugs would

be around me and I didn't know what they were! Once we found out what was going on, we had to intervene. We all love each other too much to see somebody go down that path.

**Why do you think he got drawn into all of that?**

He's always been one of the most "out there", trying to figure out his own identity. The tattoos, the nails and the hair... he's tried everything you can think of. He spent years trying to do "bad boy", but if you knew him as a young kid, well, he was probably one of the biggest-hearted, geekiest of all of us.

**You've had quite a journey to get where you are today... We've all grown up over the past**

20 years. When we started out, Nick was just 12 years old and now he's 35! We spend more time with each other than we do with our families, so we're like brothers. Going through some of the best and worst times of our lives – losing family members, illnesses, drug addicts, break-ups – has helped us to get where we are now. ■

Daisy Jordan

*Backstreet Boys: Show 'Em What You're Made Of* will be screened on 26 February, before a special performance by the band, broadcast live. For more info visit [backstreetboys.com/international](http://backstreetboys.com/international)

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**EXCLUSIVE!**



Howie and the boys at the 1998 VMAs